

UNDERGROUND MIATA NETWORK TOURING INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

Of all the activities organized by the Underground Miata Network (UMN), driving our wonderful little cars with the tops down on twisty, scenic, country roads in the company of other enthusiastic Miata owners and friends best captures the social and tangible reasons for our club's existence. Touring, be it a multi-day trip, a day tour or an evening ice cream run (ICR), is the club's most popular activity.

This document describes how UMN touring activities should be conducted in a safe and organized manner for the enjoyment of all participants. The information is organized into six sections:

- (1) What is a Tour?
- (2) Participating in a Tour – the Driver's Responsibilities
- (3) Leading a Convoy
- (4) Sweeping a Convoy
- (5) Organizing a Tour
- (6) Touring Guidelines

1) What is a Tour?

A tour is a pre-arranged club activity that includes a group of UMN members traveling together in a convoy led by a designated tour leader (TL) along a pre-determined route using public streets and highways. Tours provide opportunities for UMN members to enjoy the fine driving characteristics of their open-top sports cars in scenic surroundings combined with visits to places of interest and socializing with their friends and fellow Miata enthusiasts. Tours are not speed events. Whenever driving in convoy, TLs, sweeps and participating drivers must observe all laws (speed limits, traffic control lights & signs, etc.) that are in force along the selected tour route.

Participation in a tour is open to any UMN member in good standing. In most cases, there is no formal pre-registration for day tours or ICR; but individual TLs may ask participants to indicate their intention to attend specific tours in

advance. TLs also have the right to limit the number of cars in their tours. If a participant or car limit is imposed, it will be included in the tour information at the time the tour is announced.

Regardless of whether any limit is set, a TL should limit the number of cars in a convoy to no more than 12 for the safety and enjoyment of tour participants and their fellow drivers. This means that larger groups should be split into two or more convoys, each with designated leads and sweeps. TLs may also consider running an extremely popular tour on multiple days, should the number of interested participants warrant this.

Overnight tours always require pre-registration; so that hotel reservations, lunch reservations and tour convoys can be organized in advance. Tours that can accommodate only limited numbers generally fill up quickly; so register early if you are interested.

Ice Cream Runs

Throughout the driving season, one of the most popular UMN tours are our ICRs. ICRs typically happen weekly on an evening in the middle of the week (but may get bumped a day or two due to foul weather). Tour participants assemble after supper at a pre-announced start point and drive in convoy to an ice cream vendor. Distances are typically short enough to get there, enjoy a cone or sundae and get home at a reasonable hour.

Day Tours

Day tours are also scheduled in advance. Participants assemble at a pre-announced start point (typically a Tim Hortons or gas station) in the Ottawa region, early in the morning. Often, the TL will have chosen the rest stops along the route, the restaurant for the lunch break, and, if necessary, made lunch reservations for the group. At some destinations however (Mont Tremblant and Saint Sauveur are examples), it is nearly impossible to arrange lunch for large groups during the "high season". In such cases, the TL should allow a lunch break of sufficient time for individual participants or small groups to spread out and find their own places to eat before they are expected to reassemble for the homeward drive.

At the end of the day, these tours usually end "on the fly" – as the convoy returns to Ottawa individual cars will "peel off" when they arrive at convenient routes to get home. There is usually no defined end point where everyone stops and the tour is officially over.

Overnight Trips

Overnight trips encompass both weekend trips of one or two nights, and longer trips, typically to Miata reunion events in the United States. Overnight trips are organized far in advance because they involve hotel reservations and other logistical considerations, and event pre-registration is required. Overnight trips are typically limited to a pre-determined number of participants. In the past, the UMN has organized trips of two to six days duration to events including regional Miata meets in the U.S., weekend events hosted by other Miata clubs in Quebec and Ontario, tours to the Muskoka region, and long-weekend trips to New York State and Vermont.

Overnight trips may be organized like a tour – leaving from a predetermined start point and proceeding in convoy to a destination for that day, often traveling over multiple days. Overnight trips may also be organized with individual participants making their own way to the final destination or joining a convoy at some point along the way.

Because overnight trips are often as much about the journey as the destination, convoys usually stay on secondary, more scenic roads and avoid “droning” along highways.

At regional Miata events, UMN participants take part in the event and, at the end of the event, can either return home by convoy with other members or choose to stay in the area, extend their trip and make their own way home.

Get-Togethers

Miata enthusiasts are naturally social people. So, it’s no surprise that UMN members make close friends in the club and invite other members to join them when they decide to go for a drive. Such spontaneous, informal, impromptu, “Who wants to join us?” get-togethers, even if communicated via the UMN group email system, are not official UMN tours and are not published on the UMN events calendar. Only tours pre-approved by the Tour Director are official UMN tours and subject to the Touring Information and Guidelines.

2) Participating in a Tour – the Driver’s Responsibilities

What to Expect

Surely, it is the Miata-driver who has the best seat in the house and derives the most enjoyment during a tour. However, as a driver on a UMN tour, you

should be aware that the UMN and your fellow participants rely on you and each other to ensure that all UMN tours are conducted with due regard for the safety of all tour participants and the public.

What can you expect if you have never toured with UMN? Expect lots of fun, fresh air, camaraderie and, above all, the enjoyment of your Miata. You'll be led along some interesting roads, through scenic countryside, stopping for rest stops and lunch breaks, visiting points of interest and sharing the companionship of other people who love their little cars. The ideal "Miata-friendly" road is twisty, smooth pavement, two lanes wide, passing through beautiful, rolling countryside, cruising through quaint towns and sweeping past sparkling lakes. We try to drive with the tops down as much as possible, regardless of the temperature (why so many have jackets, tuques and blankets in their trunks). Liquid weather does force us into tops up mode, but only for as long as necessary.

UMN tours are scheduled and announced in advance – by email and on the UMN Events calendar, setting out the date, assembly time, start point, destination or general route, and the approximate finishing time. The TL may decide to limit the number of participants and may ask participants to indicate their intention to attend in advance. If you are interested in a specific tour, get your name(s) in early because tours tend to fill up quickly. TLs will usually have a waiting list of names to replace participants who withdraw from the tour. If you do not have a Citizens' Band (CB) radio and would like to borrow a club CB, please indicate that to the TL as far in advance as possible so they can arrange to get sufficient loaner CBs.

At the start of each tour, the TL will hold a drivers' meeting (mandatory attendance for drivers, encouraged for passengers) to describe the route, confirm the CB channel, if applicable, and announce any other arrangements that he or she may have made. Then, off you go for a day of fun!

Before driving in any UMN convoy, UMN members are required to have read and understood this Touring Information and the Touring Guidelines set out in Section Six below. The Touring Guidelines are also issued separately to each UMN member as a laminated card that can be kept in your car.

Preparing for a Tour

In preparation for any tour:

- refresh your memory of convoy driving etiquette by reviewing the Touring Guidelines;
- ensure your Miata is in top operating condition, with fluid levels and tire pressures checked;
- give your Miata some TLC – a clean and shiny Miata will always enhance the touring experience while promoting the image of the club and our members;
- check the weather forecast and wear clothes appropriate for the possible weather conditions; your primary concerns should be sun protection (hats, long sleeves and sunscreen), hydration (suitable liquids in spill-proof containers) and snacks (granola bars, nuts, etc.);
- plan to start the tour with a full gas tank, either filling-up as soon as you arrive at the start point (if a gas station) or enroute to the start point;
- arrive early, allowing spare time before the drivers' meeting to attend to any food and drink or bathroom needs;
- apply sunscreen before the departure and during breaks, as necessary;
- wear a wide-brimmed hat (chin straps recommended) and sunglasses to protect your head and eyes from the sun;
- make sure your CB radio and antenna are installed and in good working order before the drivers' meeting, if applicable;
- inform the TL if you do not have a CB radio (the club has a number of CB radios that are available to borrow); and
- adopt a positive "Miatitude" - be prepared to enjoy the day and the company of your friends.

Note: Drivers especially should drink water or other hydrating fluids regularly during convoy driving. Don't wait until you get thirsty or until arriving at the next rest stop. Driving in an open car accelerates dehydration (signs include headache, fatigue and light-headedness) and your ability to focus on driving will degrade as you become dehydrated.

Waiver of Liability and Minor Consent Forms

Before the start of each tour, you and your passenger will be required to sign a Tour Waiver of Liability & Sign-In Sheet. Anyone less than 18 years of age cannot legally sign a waiver of liability, so the written consent of a parent or legal guardian is required in order to participate in the tour. Electronic copies of both the waiver & sign-in sheet and the minor consent form can be seen on the UMN website in the Club Documents section, under the Library tab. The minor consent form should be downloaded and printed from the website, then completed and signed by the parent or legal guardian before heading to the start point for the tour. Minor consent forms must be submitted to the TL before the tour or the minor will not be permitted to participate in the tour.

Driving in a Convoy

During the tour, we try to keep our convoy of Miatas together, with the TL at the front of the convoy and the sweep bringing up the rear. All convoy cars should be driven with low-beam headlights turned on as an added safety measure, and to help the TL and sweep identify convoy cars.

Although the TL sets the pace based on posted speed limits, it is each driver's responsibility to control their vehicle safely. Close attention to the directions and instructions given by the TL will help to keep the convoy on course and together while keeping you aware of the situation. It's important to maintain a reasonable distance from the car in front so as to ensure a safe stopping distance while at the same time avoiding large gaps that might cause the convoy to break up or spread out so far that the TL and sweep lose CB radio contact. If one driver consistently allows a large gap between their car and the car ahead, the TL or sweep may ask that driver to close the gap.

When passing through towns or driving on city streets, don't expect to simply "follow the leader". In urban areas, it is almost impossible to keep a convoy together. Other traffic will get mixed in with the Miatas and convoy drivers may lose sight of the Miata they are trying to follow. To reduce the risk of anyone getting separated from the convoy and lost, some basic measures are recommended:

- In addition to giving directions, TLs should indicate how long the convoy will be staying on the current road, for example: "We follow this road until just after the overpass, where we take the on-ramp to the right."

- Keep the convoy tight – drivers should close-up to the Miata ahead (keeping a minimum safe distance).
- When stopping at traffic lights, if there are two lanes, Miatas should double up so more of the convoy can get through on the green.
- Any cars that get held up long enough to lose sight of the Miatas ahead should inform the TL and sweep of their situation (e.g., “Three cars stopped at the railway crossing.”).
- Throughout any urban transit, the sweep should continuously inform the TL when the convoy is together or split up.

Marking the Turn

Whenever the tour route makes a turn onto a new road, there is a risk that the driver(s) following the car ahead may miss the turn and continue straight on, particularly if some cars do not have CB radios, if there are other vehicles mixed in with the convoy or if there is a long gap and the driver loses sight of the Miata ahead. If any driver in a convoy (except the sweep obviously) is unable to see the next Miata behind them, it is that driver’s responsibility to “mark the turn” whenever the convoy turns off the current route.

One marks the turn by signalling and slowing down as they approach the turn or, if necessary, by pulling over and stopping, until they can see the next Miata in the convoy approaching. The driver marking the turn should not proceed around the corner/make the turn until they are confident that they have been seen, either by the following driver activating their turn signal, flashing their high beams or by replacing the car that is currently marking the turn (if the car behind them is also out of sight).

If any driver in a convoy sees a Miata from the convoy miss a turn, they should immediately use their CB radio to alert the TL and sweep using the emergency signal: “*Stop, stop, stop!*”. If not equipped with a CB radio, they should flash their high beams three times and/or sound their horn three times, repeating the signal until they get the attention of the Miata ahead of them. Emergency signals should be repeated by each car up the convoy line (by radio, headlights or horns) until all cars in the convoy have safely pulled over and stopped. Once the convoy is stopped, keep the CB channel clear for the TL and sweep to assess the situation and issue instructions.

Overtaking

Overtaking other Miatas within the convoy is not permitted. If you wish to be in a different position within the convoy, you should change position as the cars line up to pull out from a rest stop or lunch break.

When a convoy encounters a slow-moving vehicle ahead, the TL may simply opt to follow that vehicle at the slower speed (perhaps the convoy will be turning shortly and overtaking is unnecessary). The TL has to take into consideration that they have a train of cars lined up behind them and each will have to wait for an opportunity to overtake the slow vehicle. A convoy of vehicles, passing one at a time, can make overtaking just one vehicle a prolonged manoeuvre that requires patience.

When a TL decides to overtake a slow-moving vehicle, each driver in the convoy is solely responsible for the decision to overtake safely and legally as the opportunity arises. No driver in the convoy shall encourage another (over the CB or in any other fashion) to overtake. For example, cars that have successfully passed a slow-moving vehicle must not broadcast that the road ahead is clear for overtaking.

The sweep will alert convoy drivers anytime a vehicle approaching from the rear starts to overtake the convoy. All convoy drivers should adjust their speed to create more space between the Miatas and stay vigilant that the overtaking vehicle may suddenly pull in to avoid on-coming traffic.

The "Accordion Effect"

In road traffic, the accordion effect refers to the impact of decelerations and accelerations of vehicles, particularly when the vehicle(s) at the front of a line of traffic stops or decelerates and then pulls away or accelerates. These fluctuations in speed propagate backwards and typically have a ripple effect – being more pronounced the farther back each car is in the line.

In the case of a convoy, any time when a vehicle or vehicles at the front of the convoy are moving while vehicles behind are still stopped or slowed will cause large gaps between cars and inevitably compel drivers at the back of the convoy to drive significantly faster (i.e., to speed) in order to catch up with the cars at the front of the convoy. The only way to avoid the accordion effect is for the TL to maintain a pace below the speed limit (or pull over onto the shoulder) until the sweep confirms the convoy is together.

Leaving a Convoy

If, for any reason, you want to leave the convoy before the tour is finished (e.g., to take a more direct route home), you must inform the TL and sweep. It is best to leave the convoy during a stop, before the convoy sets off on the next/last leg of the tour. If the convoy is moving when you have to split off, it is crucial that you alert the TL, sweep and other drivers that you are about to leave the convoy to ensure no one inadvertently follows you off course. A CB message is preferred.

Volunteer Appreciation

UMN tours are typically so well organized and run that you might believe they are the work of professionals. It's important to remember that TLs and sweeps are UMN members just like you, members who have donated their time and energy (not to mention gas money) preparing for this day, wanting only to ensure the tour goes smoothly, and that you and the other participants enjoy yourselves. Please be patient and cooperative with them. After rest stops and lunch breaks, please respect reassembly times so the entire convoy is not held up, waiting for one tardy car.

CB Radios and Touring

The use of CB radios on tours is strongly encouraged, for safety, control and to enhance the touring experience of all participants. TLs and sweeps typically use CB radios to communicate between themselves and with cars in the convoy. The TL announces turns and stops in advance so that participants know where they're going and to prevent them from becoming separated from the convoy. TLs will also announce potentially dangerous situations along the route as they are encountered, such as pedestrians walking on the shoulder, cyclists, tight/blind corners, debris on the roadway, large bumps/potholes or the sudden need to decelerate or stop.

We ask tour participants to avoid talking or keep chit-chat to a minimum on the CB channel. As described above, CB radios are primarily for the TL and sweep to manage and direct the convoy. Occasionally, a CB handset press-to-talk button switch can get stuck, resulting in a radio transmitting continuously. This can "jam" the CB channel, effectively blocking all other radio transmissions. If you become aware that one of the CBs in the convoy is on permanent send and is jamming the channel, signal to other cars in the convoy by having your passenger hold your CB handset straight up in the air

(or out a window if the tops are up). All other cars in the convoy should repeat the signal and press their handset buttons a few times to unstick the problem button. If the problem cannot be resolved on the go, the TL may have to stop and get everybody to check their radios. It may be necessary to have each car turn off their CB, one at a time and one after another, to isolate the malfunctioning radio.

Occasionally, a CB channel is being used by other mobile users or base station operators. While other users don't usually "jam" a channel, other radio traffic on a channel can cause confusion about who is talking to who, rendering a channel unusable. In such situations, the TL may switch the convoy to another CB channel. Channel changes should only be done during a stop to ensure all cars are on the correct channel.

Some TLs with a lot of local knowledge about an area and its history may provide commentary along the route. Ideally, such "colour commentary" should be shared while the convoy is stopped briefly on the shoulder, so everybody is free to look around and appreciate the "show and tell" moment.

CB radios are one of the most efficient ways to alert everyone and respond to an emergency situation, if one should arise. During a tour, all CB transmissions should be kept as short as possible so that the TL and sweep can maintain effective communication. When passing through cities and towns, only the TL and sweep should be communicating on the CB. An exception to this would be when the convoy gets separated, cars get held up (e.g., at a traffic light) or a car misses a turn, at which point participants have to inform the TL and sweep of their situations.

Another exception is anytime someone becomes aware of an emergency or sees an unsafe situation developing. Tour participants are encouraged to use the CB radio ("Stop, stop, stop!") or the other emergency signals (flash high beams three times and/or sound horn three times, repeating as necessary) to get the attention of all convoy drivers and stop the convoy. As soon as everyone is aware of the situation, keep the channel clear to allow the TL to give any instructions necessary.

Many models of CB radios and antennas are available at reasonable cost and several UMN members experienced in CB radio use are always willing to assist new members in choosing a radio, deciding which installation option is best for them, and guiding them on tuning their antenna. It should be noted

that there are many options available for equipping your car with a CB radio – permanent installation, temporary installation and using handheld units.

3) Leading a Tour

Tour Leaders and sweeps are UMN members who volunteer their time and energy to set up a tour for the enjoyment of other members. Anyone who knows an interesting road leading to a place worth visiting and/or good eats ... can plan and lead a tour!

Planning and Preparations

What's involved in leading a tour? First, is the plan - you should select the route, identify where rest stops will be, decide where to break for lunch (make arrangements with the restaurant if eating as a group) and determine if there are any points of interest worth visiting along your route. See Section (5) – Organizing a Tour, for more details. Second, you should drive the route at least once and, if only once, shortly before the scheduled tour date (e.g., in case there is construction.) Third, on the day of the tour, you will need to arrive early at your start point, choose a good place to park (ideally, so all the Miatas can be parked together) and find a suitable spot to hold the drivers' meeting. You should have the following materials ready before the meeting:

- a printed copy of the route for yourself and your sweep and, if possible, a copy for each car;
- maps covering the entire route;
- a GPS navigation unit (optional but very handy);
- a copy of the UMN Tour Waiver of Liability & Sign-In Sheet with all applicable information filled in;
- a blank minor consent form (just in case a parent arrives with a minor but no signed consent);
- a pen;
- a clip board for passing around the sign-in sheet; and
- a copy of the Touring Guidelines card.

Sign-In

As cars arrive, get drivers and passengers to sign in. For anyone who appears to be less than 18, confirm their age and, if applicable, ask for the minor consent form. If there are any drivers who you don't know, ask if this is their first tour with the club. Ask first-time tour drivers if they familiarized themselves with the Touring Information and Guidelines, if they have any questions and provide any additional touring information they may need. It is suggested that new tour drivers, with or without a CB radio, are positioned near the front of the convoy.

Drivers' Meeting

At the drivers' meeting, you will describe the route that will be followed, direct how you want cars to depart from the start point, and provide all other pertinent details about the tour, such as rest stops and lunch break arrangements. You will identify the driver who has been assigned as your sweep for the tour and which CB channel you will be using. You will then briefly remind everyone of the Touring Guidelines, to turn their low beam headlights on, the importance of "marking the turn" and the emergency signal procedures (CB, high beams, horn). Lastly, ask if there are any questions from the participants.

CB Radio Check

Once everyone is in their cars, you should perform a CB radio check, going down the sign-in sheet and checking each car to confirm they are on the air and receiving your transmissions. If anyone does not have a CB radio, offer the loan of a UMN CB, if available (make a note to whom a UMN CB is loaned). Any car without a CB should be placed immediately behind the TL. The TL and sweep should confirm the car count as you leave the start point.

Note: the car count should be re-confirmed as you arrive at and leave every stop on the tour.

On the road, your principal activity is leading the convoy along the tour route. It helps that you have set up the route and driven it before, so you should know every turn and road in advance. As you approach a turn, you should announce it over the CB radio in a clear manner such as: "We are now turning right onto Highway 138" or "We are turning left at the stop sign". The safety of the cars you are leading should always be your foremost concern. For example, if you are leading a convoy of cars that will be turning left from an 80 kph road onto a side road, you might announce: "Turn left onto Concession Road 9; be careful of oncoming traffic".

After each turn or manoeuvre, wait for the sweep's confirmation that all the cars in the convoy have completed the course change and acknowledge your sweep's confirmation. If the confirmation is delayed, ask the sweep if they have completed the turn or manoeuvre yet. Be prepared to pull over anytime you do not get a confirmation from your sweep.

Tag-Alongs

On rare occasions, a chance encounter may result in the non-UMN Miata attaching itself to a UMN tour convoy. As the saying goes: "Birds of a feather

flock together." At the first stop, the TL should politely ask the tag-along to leave the convoy. If an unaffiliated Miata driver approaches a member during a stop to ask if they can join the convoy, they are to be taken to the TL. The TL should inform the driver that they are free to follow the convoy behind the last car (the sweep). At no time should a tag-along driver be invited to drive in a UMN convoy.

Tour Leader Tips

Some tips for leading a smooth tour:

- Always drive your Miata as if you are the engineer driving a train – a "train" made up of multiple Miatas attached together, with your sweep riding in the caboose. Avoid pulling over to the shoulder any place where there isn't enough room for your entire "train" to safely pull over with you.
- Keep an eye in your rear-view mirror to see how your "train" is behaving and listen to your sweep's comments from the "caboose" to get a feel for how things are going behind you.
- Wait for a large break in traffic before pulling away from a one-way stop sign. Waiting, rather than merging with passing traffic, may allow most or all of your convoy to make the stop and turn without breaking into small groups of cars.
- In urban areas with low speed limits, when pulling out from the curb or shoulder, your sweep may elect, strictly at her/his own discretion, to perform a "blocking manoeuvre" by moving into the lane and allowing all convoy cars to pull out at the same time. Sweeps: make sure you give an appreciative wave to any cars you briefly blocked.

Notes about blocking: if the sweep intends to block the traffic lane for the convoy to pull out, they must alert the convoy: "Stand-by, the sweep will block". The TL will acknowledge the message and ask all cars to indicate their readiness to move by activating their turn indicators. When there is a break in traffic (do not cut off moving vehicles), as soon as the sweep moves into the lane, all cars including the TL should quickly pull into the traffic lane and move off.

- Have patience if you come up behind a slower moving vehicle on a two-lane road. If you pass the slow vehicle, the cars following you will

each have to overtake it, one at a time, and it may take many kilometres for all the cars in the convoy to complete the manoeuvre. It may be safer just to wait a while and see if the slow vehicle turns off the tour route.

- When leaving a stop sign or entering a higher speed zone, accelerate slowly so that you don't create a gap between the lead cars and the rear cars (the "accordion effect"). Drive well under the speed limit until the sweep confirms that all cars have made the turn or cleared the stop sign and have caught up to the rest of the convoy.
- Always be aware of speed zones; you don't want to be responsible for a whole bunch of Miatas being ticketed for speeding. A police officer only has to visually observe or radar "clock" one car to ticket all cars in the convoy.
- When pulling off the road into a rest stop or gas station, lead the convoy far into the parking area to allow enough room for the cars following you to get off the road.
- If you haven't heard from anyone over the CB for a while, do a radio check with your sweep to confirm they can hear you and to make sure your CB is operating correctly.
- If you lose contact with your sweep, ask someone in the middle of the convoy to relay CB messages to and from the sweep. If the sweep does not answer, even when the convoy is together, her/his CB may not be working. If there is an ongoing problem communicating with your sweep, you may need to ask another participant to take over as sweep.
- If the weather worsens and it starts to rain, be ready to find a safe place with enough room to pull the convoy over to put up the tops. Inform the group in advance of your intention to stop so that they are prepared. Ideally, look for a gas station or store with a large parking lot or a wide shoulder along a straight stretch of road with enough room for everyone to pull off the road safely (keeping in mind that some may have to get out of their cars to deal with CB antennas).
- Stay, as much as possible, on schedule. When arriving at a rest stop or lunch break spot, give the participants a specific time to reassemble

for the departure and try to stick to it. A few beeps on the horn may be needed to get everyone back in their cars.

- Don't be too hard on yourself if you make a wrong turn when leading. We've all done it once or twice. The important thing is to find a safe place for a large convoy of Miatas to turn around safely, regroup and get back on course. Waiting for a parking lot or other suitable spot to U-turn will always be preferable to having 12 cars do a three-point turn on a public thoroughfare!

Tour Leader Responsibilities

A TL has many responsibilities when leading a tour:

- Before the start of each tour, ideally some days in advance, the TL should assign one participant to be the sweep. The sweep must be aware of their responsibilities and should be equipped with a reliably-functioning CB radio.
- The TL must conduct a brief drivers' meeting before starting a tour and at the start of each subsequent day (in the case of a multi-day trip), as applicable. If possible, the TL will distribute a paper copy of the tour route for that day to all drivers. In addition to tour-related points, a brief review of the Touring Guidelines and the emergency signal procedure should be given. The CB channel will be announced, if appropriate.
- At the start of the tour, and at all subsequent stops, the TL will do a count of the number of cars on the tour to ensure that no cars are missing or left behind. The TL must alert the other convoy drivers anytime a car will be leaving the convoy, to avoid an unannounced departure from a convoy being mistaken as an emergency or other drivers unwittingly following the departing car.
- The TL has the authority to limit the number of cars that will be allowed on a tour. When the tour is announced, the limit should be noted in the email and on the web site. The normal maximum for a UMN convoy is 12 cars.
- The TL also has the authority to split the tour into two or more convoys. Each convoy will need a leader and sweep.

- The TL must manage the overtaking of a slow-moving vehicle by the convoy. If the TL decides that overtaking a slow-moving vehicle is necessary and safe, they will inform the rest of the convoy of his/her decision to overtake. After overtaking the slow-moving vehicle, the TL will move ahead of the vehicle a sufficient distance to allow room for all convoy cars to safely pass. Once the TL has over-taken the slow vehicle, they should only move far enough down the road to allow all cars in the convoy to pass. The TL should only accelerate and pull away once the sweep has indicated all cars have overtaken the slow vehicle.
- After the tour, the TL will report to the Tour Director:
 - any case of a car not starting the tour or being left behind during the tour because of serviceability problems;
 - any case of a member abandoning the tour due to an irreconcilable concern or complaint with the TL, sweep or any other tour participant;
 - any case of a driver and/or passenger being asked by the TL to leave the tour for any reason; and
 - when submitting the waiver & sign-in sheet, and any minor consent forms for the tour, the TL shall provide the total mileage of the tour route, along with the sweep's name and comments about any noteworthy events that occurred during the tour (e.g., "We had an impromptu get-together with 15 cars from the Montreal Mustang club at our afternoon ice cream stop.").

4) Sweeping a Tour

The sweep plays an important role in the management and smooth running of a convoy and, even though they aren't normally involved in organizing the tour, sweeps are still UMN members who have volunteered (sometimes at the last-minute) to help ensure that each tour is conducted safely and is an enjoyable experience for all participants. If you aren't ready to try leading a tour, we recommend offering your services as a sweep to get up to speed on touring.

The sweep is the last car at the back of the convoy, the "caboose" of the train. His/her principal responsibilities can be summed-up as being the TL's

ears and eyes on everything happening behind the TL, especially at the back of the convoy. At any moment during a tour, the TL can be performing multiple tasks – driving, navigating, controlling speed, and communicating directions to the convoy. While all that is happening, the TL also needs to know what is happening in the convoy behind them. The sweep is much better situated to watch over cars in the convoy and be on the lookout for situations that may need to be addressed.

The sweep informs the TL each time they complete a turn, passes through an intersection or overtakes a slower vehicle, to let the leader know that the entire convoy has completed that maneuver. The sweep also notifies the TL when the back of the convoy has caught up the front of the convoy or when the convoy is together (i.e., there are no other cars, “tin tops”, mixed in among the Miatas). This lets the TL know whether the cars in the convoy are keeping pace with them, falling behind or the convoy is broken up. If part of the convoy gets held up at a traffic light, the sweep will inform the TL so they can adjust their speed or, if necessary, pull over to allow the rear of the convoy to catch up and regroup. Should one or more cars miss a turn and the convoy breaks up, the sweep will inform the TL and, if possible, shepherd the wayward car(s) back into the convoy.

Note: The risk of a car getting separated from the convoy underlines the value of giving each driver a copy of the tour route, specifically identifying the planned rest stops and venue for the lunch break, in case they have to navigate on their own and link up with the convoy later.

An important responsibility of the sweep is to repeat any directions that the TL sends out on the CB. This includes stops, hazards on the road ahead, and any specific instructions the TL may feel the convoy needs to stay on course. For example: the TL arrives at a traffic light in the centre of a town; they send out an instruction: “Turning right at the light onto Main Street, continuing to follow highway 43”. The sweep will repeat the TL’s instruction: “Turning right at the light onto Main St., continuing to follow highway 43”.

Why is this necessary? Sometimes, especially in a town, the convoy will get spread out and other cars will mix in among convoy cars, to the point where there may be many other cars between the Miatas in the convoy. Also, not all CB radio antennas pull in a signal as well as others, particularly in built-up areas and as the convoy gets stretched out. The TL’s instructions might

be received weakly, so the sweep repeats the TL's instruction as a backup for the benefit of all drivers in the convoy.

Anytime another vehicle catches up to a convoy and starts to overtake the sweep, the sweep must alert convoy drivers that the convoy is being overtaken. Convoy drivers should create more space between Miatas and anticipate that the overtaking vehicle may have to pull in between Miatas.

5) Organizing a Tour

If you're the sort of person who appreciates driving an open top sports car, you probably also appreciate the "driving experience" and have one or more favourite roads that you really enjoy in your Miata, roads that are such a pleasure to drive that you naturally want to share them with your fellow UMN members! If you can string together a few stretches of these roads, enough to form a loop that starts and ends in the Ottawa region, you have the basis of a day tour!

Some roads seem tailor-made for Miatas. The ideal road for touring is a good condition (no potholes) two-lane road with plenty of curves and elevation changes to make driving interesting. We try to avoid highways and roads with heavy traffic. If possible, we avoid unpaved roads and patches of loose gravel. Nicely waxed and polished Miatas do not like dirt and we all hate stone chips.

Note: When it is necessary to drive on gravel roads, we do so at a reduced speed. It is normal for cars in a convoy to leave extra room between cars, so any gravel thrown by tires can hit the ground and stopped bouncing by the time the next car comes along.

Because of the limited time available and allowing for rest stops and lunch breaks, day tours are best limited to around 300 or 400 kilometres but can also be shorter distances with more stops at points of interest. We try to avoid driving through cities and towns with many stoplights since it will be difficult to keep a large convoy of Miatas together. Once you have the basic route in mind, drive it once from the start point, following the route to the end, keeping in mind where rest stops and lunch breaks can be made and how the roads will feel in a Miata. Consider how well the parking lots at your proposed stops will handle the number of Miatas on your tour. Be very conservative in estimating driving times; a convoy of Miatas is always slower than a single car.

If you are using someone else's route, either a tour from a previous year or a tour planned by someone who's no longer available to lead the tour, then much of your work may have already been done. You will still need to confirm that the previously planned rest stops and lunch break spot are available and suitable. It is strongly recommended that you drive the other person's route at this point to be sure you will be comfortable leading it as your tour.

Plan for a rest stop (toilet, coffee, snacks) about mid-morning and another mid-afternoon (ice cream is popular in the afternoon). These rest stops might take 20 to 25 minutes (longer for ice cream). About halfway along the route, you should try to find a place for the group to have lunch. If you have a good, reasonably-priced restaurant in mind for lunch ... so much the better. Some restaurants will agree to seat a large group of people arriving at the same time for lunch. You will have to give them a rough number of tour participants ahead of time and then call ahead to confirm an exact number on the morning of the tour. In that case, you will need to ask people at sign-in whether they intend to eat with the group or not. If there is no restaurant big enough to handle the whole group, you may need to turn the tour participants loose to find their own lunches and set a time for everyone to regroup ahead of the afternoon departure.

Another choice for a day tour is a picnic lunch if you know of or can find a nice, quiet spot. Keep in mind that many UMN members won't be getting down on the ground with blankets. If there aren't enough picnic tables, participants will have to be forewarned to bring camp chairs.

Once you have a route planned and you have an idea when you would like to run the tour, contact the Tour Director to submit your proposed tour and date for approval. The Tour Director coordinates all tours and other UMN events to prevent double booking and optimize the club's event schedule.

Once the tour is officially scheduled, an e-mail announcement should be sent to the UMN membership. It should include a short narrative description of the tour including the date, start point, timing for the drivers' meeting, departure time and estimated return time to Ottawa at the end of the tour. If, for some reason, you need to limit the number of cars on your tour, this should also be clearly stated in the announcement.

The Tour Director must review and approve each tour before it is announced to the membership and placed on the UMN Events calendar. The Tour Director may suggest or request changes to a tour or the date of a tour, but deference will always be given to the preferences of the TL who stepped-up to organize the tour. Tours are the bedrock of our club and our volunteer TLs our most valuable resource. Only in unusual circumstances would a tour proposal not be approved.

One or two weeks before the tour is run, it's a good idea to drive the tour route again, just to make sure there are no new obstacles such as road construction, paving activities or one of the intended stops has burned down (it happens). Check in with the management at your planned lunch spot to confirm your arrangements. Make changes to the route if needed.

If you can, it is always nice to provide each car with a printed copy of the route and some description of the points of interest that will be seen along the tour.

6) TOURING GUIDELINES

These are the official UMN Touring Guidelines that apply on all UMN tours and are approved by the UMN Board of Directors.

Driver's Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of every driver to:

- a) Hold a valid driver's licence and be:
 - i) a UMN member in good standing;
 - ii) a guest of a member approved in advance to drive by the Tour Director; or
 - iii) an official guest of the club approved in advance to drive by the Tour Director.
- b) Attend the pre-tour drivers' meeting, having ensured that they and their passenger have attended to their personal needs (food, drinks, bathroom, etc.) and that their car's fuel tank is full.
- c) Be solely responsible for the safe operation of their vehicle. Drivers shall rely on their own judgement as to the safety and legality of any driving manoeuvre before executing that manoeuvre. If a TL is informed that a

member of a convoy is driving in an unsafe manner, they have the authority, under these Touring Guidelines, to ask that member to leave the tour.

d) Not operate a vehicle while intoxicated or under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Certain tours include meals and site visits that may offer optional consumption of alcoholic beverages. If the driver chooses to consume alcohol before, during, or after the tour, he/she accepts full and sole responsibility for any legal ramifications and for his/her behavior, well-being, and health.

e) Have, in effect, automobile insurance as required under applicable provincial law. All drivers and passengers participating in a UMN tour do so at their own risk and must sign a waiver of liability to that effect at the start of every tour, including any guests on the tour. If a guest refuses to sign the waiver, they will not be allowed on the tour. Anyone less than 18 years of age must have the written consent of a parent or legal guardian in order to participate in a tour.

f) Not try to block or otherwise impede a non-UMN vehicle from moving into a UMN convoy or overtaking Miatas in a convoy.

g) Not encourage another convoy driver to overtake by indicating that the road ahead is clear, or it is "safe to pass".

h) Ensure the safe and reliable mechanical condition, and proper registration and licensing of their vehicle before the start of the tour. Drivers shall report to the TL, at the earliest opportunity, any mechanical or electrical problems with their own vehicle, or any other tour vehicle, which could give rise to safety concerns while travelling in a convoy (e.g., brake lights not working). If the TL decides that a car is not safe to be driven in the convoy, they have the authority to exclude the vehicle from the convoy for the duration of the tour.

i) Obey all laws related to distracted driving in the jurisdiction of operation.

j) Advise the TL or the sweep of any potentially unsafe situation or practice, by a convoy driver or anyone else, including other road-users, observed during a tour, either by CB radio or at the next stop.

k) If they observe an imminent safety hazard, accident or other emergency involving a participant or vehicle in a UMN convoy, immediately give the EMERGENCY SIGNAL:

i) by CB radio - "Stop, stop, stop";

ii) by horn - 3 horn blasts; or

iii) by headlights - flashing high beams 3 times;

Note: in the case of horn or headlight emergency signals, other cars in the convoy should send a CB emergency signal or repeat the horn and headlight signals until it is clear that all cars are stopping.

- l) Not reduce speed while driving in a convoy solely for the purpose of dropping back and then charging forward at higher speeds than the convoy is traveling.
- m) Maintain a reasonable distance from the car in front to provide a safe stopping distance while not allowing excessive gaps between Miatas.
- n) Make more space between Miatas anytime the sweep warns that a vehicle is overtaking the convoy from the rear. Do not impede the overtaking vehicle from merging into the convoy.
- o) Make any CB transmissions as short as possible so that the TL and sweep can maintain effective communication.
- p) Drive with headlights on (low beams) whenever in a convoy.

Guest Drivers and the Touring Guidelines

Whenever official UMN guests are approved by the Tour Director to take part as drivers on a UMN tour, they shall be required to adhere to these Touring Guidelines.

Guests invited to accompany members on a UMN tour are always welcome (many UMN members start out as guests of another member). Guests who wish to drive during a UMN tour, whether in the member's Miata or their own Miata, require the approval of the Tour Director, shall be briefed on the Touring Information and Guidelines by the UMN member who is hosting them and shall attend the drivers' meeting. In the absence of the Tour Director, the member may obtain permission for a guest to drive on a tour from the President or Vice-President of the club.

The UMN reserves the right to deny driving privileges to any guest who is not sufficiently experienced or proficient to take part in convoy driving, in the opinion of the Tour Director, President or Vice-President.

Contacts Concerning Tours and Touring

Any concerns or questions regarding specific tours should be directed to the TL responsible for that tour. Any concerns or questions regarding a TL or these Touring Information and Guidelines should be directed to the UMN Tour Director in person or by email to: tours@ottawamiata.net.

Dated: 12 August 2024.