

Hanging A Hardtop

by Chuck Wills

You may remember that over the winter I purchased a hard top for "The Blue Beast". It kept me snug and warm through the winter and really made the M'ster an enjoyable cold weather car. In case you hadn't noticed, though, spring is here. Once it's above 60 degrees, it's time to ditch the hard top. (Though according to Teresa Turbo, anything above freezing is top-down weather!)

I had looked at various scenarios for summer hard top storage, but none seemed like good solutions to me. There are various carts and wall hanging devices, as well as ceiling hoists, but I tend to over-engineer things and the commercially available hoists seemed a little "wimpy" to me. So, I took it upon myself to engineer my own hard top hoist system.

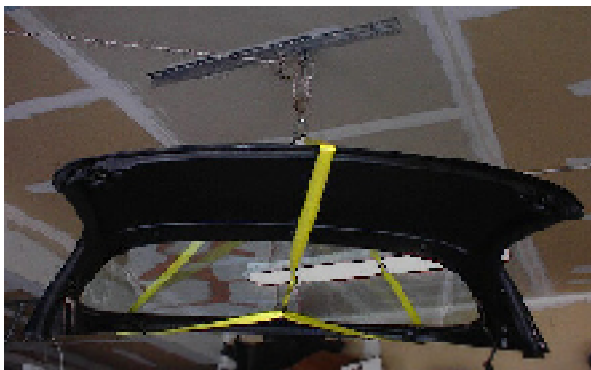
It took a Saturday to collect the necessary parts and put it all together. Most parts can be sourced from your local home improvement center.

I started by running a piece of 1" angle iron across the rafters and attached it with three 1/4" lag screws. This hardware is similar to what holds up your garage door opener. To this angle iron I attached an industrial grade 2" metal pulley and 2" shackle. Next came the top straps.

They wrap under the top and attach to another pulley and shackle. By using two pulleys, the top raises and lowers with ease. The rope runs along the ceiling to another pulley in the corner, and then down the wall to a cleat that is solidly mounted into a wall stud.

To raise the top, simply pull the car under the hoist, undo the latches and slip the straps under the top. A few tugs on the rope and your top is hanging out of the way at ceiling height!

If you would like a custom made top hoist of your own, just let me know. I would be happy to put together a package for you with or without installation. You can reach me at 317-291-5563 or chuckwills@comcast.net.



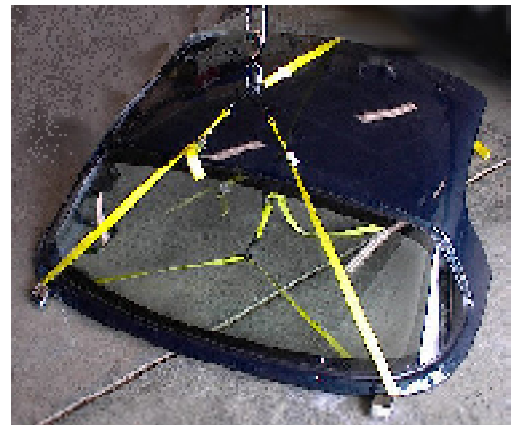
D. Finished! Hardtop securely out of the way.



A. Angle iron on ceiling



B. Top straps, pulley and rope



C. Straps on the hardtop

Midwest Miata Challenge V - August 3rd

Join the NorthCoast Miata Club in a day of autocrossing in Akron, OH at the Firestone parking lot, Emerling Rd. Akron, OH (maps will be furnished to all who preregister.) This event is open to ALL Miata drivers. They will have a car classification for ALL Miata's. You may autocross with your everyday driver on normal street tires, or race your "track only tweaked up racer" with extra sticky gummy tires. Whether experienced or novice, you will have fun.

Just think, a day of racing, a box lunch and trophies. All of this for the paltry sum of \$30.00 if paid before August 3rd, or \$35.00 at the gate on race day. After the racing is over, there will be refreshments, burgers, lots of stories and good fun at the White Rhino, located at the Portage Lakes.

For more information please write, call, email or fax: Dick Pickles, 1689 Chatham Ave. NE, North Canton, OH 44720-1713. Voice or Fax (330) 499-9801 <dpickles@speedynet.net>