

Membership Profile

Meet The Indy Club Vice President

This month's profile is of Jay Hofacker, IMC's Vice President. He responded to our probing questions with the following replies.

Q. What year and color is your car?

A. I have a 1997 Montego Blue that I purchased in 1999. It's the second car I ever owned, the first was 1990 Honda.

Q. How did you decide to buy a Miata?

A. I got mad at my Honda because of an accident, so I decided I wanted a brand new car. I was very close to buying a Saturn sedan with everything, when I got the notion I wanted more than a sunroof, I wanted a convertible. Before that, I don't think I'd ever even ridden in a convertible, so I have no idea where that notion came from. I happened to spot a little convertible at a used car lot at a price I could afford. I knew nothing about Miatas before that moment. Except for video games and 30 minutes of instruction from my dad (years earlier) I'd never driven a stick shift. A friend gave me a couple lessons of driving a stick, so with a total of 90 minutes of experience, I boldly stepped into the car for a test drive. I managed to get it around the block without incident. Driving the car home for the first time, I stalled it at half the stop lights and squealed the tires at the other half.

Q. Does your car have a nickname?

A. For a long time, my car didn't have a name and I thought people who named cars were a bit odd. Browsing the web one night, I stumbled upon Project Gutenberg (<http://www.promo.net/pg/index.html>) which has the full text of various books now in the public domain, including Peter Pan. I realized my car does have a name. Her name is Tinker Bell, because she doesn't ever want me to grow up.

Q. How did you become interested in autocrossing?

A. I didn't know I'd bought a real sports car until I played the Sony Playstation game Gran Turismo. GT includes many actual cars including the Miata. I had such a blast driving the Miata in the game, I began to look for ways to drive my real car on a race course. In the Spring of 2000, I went to my first Indy region SCCA Solo II competition of the season and was hooked. I went to every event that year and ended up winning the season championship for my class, an accomplishment I repeated in 2001 and 2002. The first two years of autocrossing, I won mainly by being the only person in my class to go to every event. Last year there was some competition, but I still managed to win most of the events. This year I'm in a different class because of modifications I've made to my car.

Q. What modifications have you made to your car?

A. Here's a list: A NEO35 MP3 player with 30GB hard drive, K&N air filter, Hard Dog Hard Core Single Diagonal roll bar, Hawk HP+ brake pads, Rota Sub Zero 15" wheels with Bridgestone S-03 tires (summer), OEM 14" steel wheels with Yokohama snow tires (winter), OEM 14" steel wheels with Kuhmo tires (competition). Fidanza lightened fly-wheel, ACT clutch and pressure plate, Racing Beat Power Pulse muffler, front sway bar kit, and Ultra ignition wires, Ground Control coil over kit with KYB AGX shocks, Eibach sway bars (front and rear), a '94 style oil pressure gauge, and '94 visors.

Q. Stepping away from Miatas and the club, what do you do?



A. I work at SePRO Corporation. SePRO manufactures specialty herbicides and pesticides. I'm the IT department there and keep all the computers and networks running, handle purchasing computer equipment, write any custom software that is needed and maintain the website.

Q. What do you do in your spare time?

A. I'm an internet junkie. In the past, I've played MMORPG's (Massively Multi-Player Online Role Playing Games), but I've gotten away from that as they are such huge time sinks.

Let's Play "What's My VIN"?

Ever wondered if the VIN number of your car meant something? Put away your Space Rangers secret decoder ring, here's the answer. The typical Miata VIN number looks something like this: JM1NA3538S0607810.

JM = Japan Mazda (made at Japan plant)

1 = Vehicle type (1= car, 2=truck/van, etc.)

NA = 1st Generation (NB = 2nd Generation)

35 = Body Style (convertible)

3 = Thought to be engine code

8 = Check digit (to detect fake VIN's)

S = Model Year (L=90, M=91, etc. skip Q & O)

0 = Plant number (0 = Hiroshima)

6 = Year of production (0=89, 1=90, 2=91, etc.)

The final five digits are the vehicle number, reset to 00001 every year. This car was the 7810th car made of that model year.