

CB Radios - Not Just For Truckers, Good Buddy!

by Norm Arbuckle

Having participated in and lead several touring events, I've found that CB radio's are especially important for safety and better caravan flow. Non clue touring events tend to be more spirited for some since there is no need to drive slower to hunt for clues. The Lead car (Rudolph) reports back to the tour event participants when animals are in the road; cars are stopped in the road, tree limbs down, turn instructions and other safety messages. Also, when wide loads and on coming vehicles are heading towards them when in spirited driving mode at turns and hill crests.

The CB group also has a "sweep" car, the last car in the caravan with a CB. The sweep is also known as Randolph, the one with the brown nose. :) The sweep's job is to let the lead car know when the entire group has safely made the last turn, if there is someone missing or any other reasons to communicate with the lead car. Others in the group can participate with information also.

I investigated many different CB set-ups and purchased a unit made by Cobra called a Cobra 75 WXST (picture below). You can learn more about it at this web site. http://www.pacetrronics.com/prodpage.cfm?Cat_Selected=19&Subcat_Selected=109&Group_Selected=197&product_Selected=1030. It is popular because the brain box is about the size of a



soap bar and that it can be velcroed beneath the passenger's seat making this unit completely portable. It has a co-ax connection to the microphone, which has the channel select; squelch and volume controls built into it. It also has a weather channel and is easy to store out of sight. You can buy this in the \$110.00 range and under if you shop. They are also available at most truck stops. The antenna of choice is the K40 base loaded antenna. More

details at: <http://k40.com/Products/Antenna/k40baseloadcbantenna.html>. I like it as it is quick and easy to install, stores in your trunk at night and has a cap available to put on the top when the antenna is off. The cost for this antenna is around \$76.00. Also, Harris Barbier (hbarbier@ameritech.net) of the Windy City Miata Club sells an easy to install mount for \$18.00 including shipping. The cap and antenna mount are pictured at right. Gary Collings and I both use this mount and antenna. One more advisable item to purchase is an external speaker so you can hear when you're at those top down 70mph speeds. A good one can be purchased for around \$20.00.



You can also purchase CB hand helds (walkie-talkie styles). On the same Internet Cobra site mentioned above, check out the 38 WX ST. I started with one and then moved up to the better unit as I experienced the importance of a better CB and longer antenna. When you have a CB you are always in tune with what is happening on a tour and you are ready for action if need be.

If you can't handle the expense of a CB, purchase one of the FRSC radios for under \$40 at any of the stores. They are not on the same CB channels, but you can communicate with others that have one. Some of our club members and most of the Cincy Miata Club members use these.

Hope to hear you say "10-4" on your next tour with a CB in your Miata.



Norm's car with the K40 CB antenna installed.

Mazda Sets '06 Miata Pricing

Mazda has officially set the starting price of the new MX-5 at \$20,435 (MSRP), which is \$1,663 less than the current model. This is great news as the Miata's price has been rising for a while. Here's how the prices break down on all of the different models :

Club Spec (5-speed): \$20,435
 MX-5 (5-speed): \$21,435
 Touring Edition (5-speed): \$22,435
 Sport (6-speed): \$22,935
 Grand Touring (6-speed): \$24,435
 Limited (6-speed): \$26,700

A 6-speed automatic is available for another \$1,100 only on the Touring, Grand Touring and Sport models.

Only 3,500 Limited models will be produced with just 750 slated for the U.S market.

Was Mazda's decision to drop the price in response to the Pontiac Solstice? The battle between these two roadsters may shape up to be one for the ages, but remember, the Fiero beat a Miata on paper. So did the Capri. And the Del Sol. Maybe I'll go buy a new one of those, oh, wait, that's right...they don't make those cars anymore! Right on, Mazda!

Gary Fischman from [miata.net](http://www.miata.net) has driven the new car. His verdict? It rocks! Here's his review: <http://www.miata.net/news/ncfirst.html>.