

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**The Piston Foundation**

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## Mazda Miata MX5 Racer and Bonneville Land Speed Record Holder Goes Up For Bid on BaT to Benefit The Piston Foundation

Miata is a two-in-one race car with Bonneville engine and spares included; will be featured at MiataCon at Lime Rock Park on Oct. 27-28

GREENWICH, Conn. (October 23, 2023) – A 1999 Mazda Miata MX-5, which set a Bonneville Salt Flats G/GT class land speed record of 165.296 mph in 2011, and was also raced in the SCCA Spec Miata class, is the latest car donated to The Piston Foundation to go up for a charity auction on Bring a Trailer, a digital auction platform.

The auction begins on October 23, and ends on October 30, [at bringatrailer.com](https://bringatrailer.com), with 100 percent of the proceeds, including the buyer's fee, going to The Piston Foundation scholarship program.

The two previously auctioned vehicles – a 1973 Datsun 240Z and a 1960 Willys Wagon – sold for a total of \$154,240, creating scholarships for 27 aspiring technicians. The sale of the Miata will create several more scholarships for 2023.

Car owner and Piston Foundation Founders Club member Harvey Siegel, of Long Valley, New Jersey., donated his prized race car for this cause. “I am a big believer in chasing one’s dreams and, as such, I hope this contribution will help these kids pursue their car-fueled dreams the way I once did on the Bonneville Salt Flats,” he said.

An accomplished racer, Siegel is known for resurrecting VIRginia International Raceway and developing New Jersey Motorsports Park.

“We are thrilled to have received this donation from Harvey Siegel,” said Jeff Mason, President of The Piston Foundation. “The provenance of this car can’t be duplicated. It’s a piece of land speed history.”

Built by Ryan Pilla of Car Doctor Garage in Water Mill, New York, a successful Miata racer himself, “the car is top-notch and ready to keep racing,” added Mason.

Aptly named the 2160 (as in, “Going to-160-mph”), the Miata racer’s drivetrain, chassis and suspension had been modified to reach high speeds on the Salt Flats, with the naturally-aspirated Bonneville engine producing upwards of 290 horsepower, more than double the output of traditional Miata engines. The highly modified inline-four Bonneville engine was later replaced with a 1.8-liter powerplant as part of the the car’s conversion for Spec Miata competition.

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The Mazda Miata RX5 at the Bonneville Salt Flats. (Image courtesy of Harvey Siegel)



The Mazda Miata RX5 at a recent test session at Lime Rock Park, Connecticut.  
(Photography by Automotive Restorations Inc).

Together with his son Luke, Siegel's goal was to set a land speed record on their rookie attempt, with Luke in the driver's seat. After an immense amount of engineering and preparation, the mission was accomplished. (Read the full story at <https://pistonfoundation.org/blog/the-rookie-record/>).

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Recently, the Miata, in fully-restored Spec Miata configuration, was tested at Lime Rock Park in Connecticut, by NASCAR Xfinity Series racer Parker Kligerman, also a former Spec Miata Racer. "I love these Miatas," he said of the car after driving it on the 1.5-mile race track and on LRP's Autocross course. "They're so nimble and light, and that's what makes them one of the most popular race cars in the world, and especially in the U.S.

"What's great," he continued, "is the buyer can either race it in Spec Miata or swap the engine and go for a new record at Bonneville.

"Thank you to The Piston Foundation and Lime Rock Park for supporting future automotive restoration technicians."

The buyer will also receive the Bonneville engine, the aerodynamic wheel covers and other components used to set the "rookie" record. The Bonneville engine received fresh bearings, rings and gaskets in preparation for sale.

The Miata will be featured at MiataCon at Lime Rock Park this coming weekend, on October 27-28, just as the auction ends. More information may be found at <https://limerock.com/events/miatacon/>.

The Piston Foundation accepts donations of classic, historic, and vintage cars to be auctioned to benefit the Foundation's scholarship program, giving collectors a unique way to make a positive impact in the car community.

Together, the Piston Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, Bring a Trailer, Lime Rock Park, and the community of donors are working to support the next generation of collector car technicians.

Car donations can be made by completing the online submission form, at <https://pistonfoundation.org/cars-for-piston-scholars/>. Industry sponsorship opportunities are available for future auctions.

A full photo and video gallery of the Mazda Miata may be found at <https://pistonfoundation.org/media/2160-mazda-miata-photo-gallery/>. FOR EDITORIAL USE ONLY. Please credit Photography by Automotive Restorations Inc.

Other details on the history of the Mazda Miata may be found at <https://youtu.be/vrn08NuJ7mw?si=0K1llunxpyDUugdZ>. (The Siegel Story - in Bonneville, 02:01)

And also at: <https://youtu.be/pk5siL9ARZA?si=9xc4DeVX9IOeEh3S>. (Been There, Got the Record, 06:21)

(YouTube videos are courtesy of Harvey Siegel.)

About The Piston Foundation:

The Piston Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) public charity helping young people acquire the education and hands-on training to build a career in the collector car industry. The Foundation provides trade school scholarships, supports shops and aspiring technicians with apprenticeships, and advocates

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for skilled trade careers in automotive restoration. [www.pistonfoundation.org](http://www.pistonfoundation.org), [Piston Scholar 2022 Yearbook](#)