

## A Lap of Wakefield Park, the Main Circuit

The Wakefield Park circuit consists of 10 corners and is 2.2 kilometres in length. It is a relative safe & open circuit, ideally suited to the great handling characteristics of an MX-5. In the 5 or 6 years that the MX-5 Club of NSW has been conducting events here there has not been any major incidents involving an MX-5. To drive the circuit well require smoothness and good car control. Here is a suggest way in which to lap the circuit quickly in a standard MX-5. This approach is purely a suggestion and whilst it may suit most, others may find a slightly different approach will suit them.

As you approach the start/finish line under the control tower you will have changed into 4<sup>th</sup> gear. Keep to the left hand side of the track close to the Armco. **Turn 1** is a fast right hand kink that with practise can be taken flat out in 4<sup>th</sup> in a standard road car. Turn in at the end of the Armco planning to apex at the middle of the turn and then head for the left side of the track just before the turn in point for turn 2.

Keeping the car in a straight line you will need to brake hard after the apex of the kink changing back to third gear once you have knocked down the speed but before turning into **turn 2**. The straight after turn 2 is long and uphill so it is important to have good exit speed out of turn 2. Before turn in you should be on the left hand side of the road, turn in as the track starts to curve right, you need to aim for a late apex. Apply throttle about midway between turn in and apex, achieving full throttle at the apex then allowing the car to drift to the outside of the circuit.

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On the **uphill straight** you need to stay on the outside of the track until you can straight line the slight right sweep so that you can be on the right hand side of the track for the turn in for **turn 3** which is a 135 degree uphill left turn. The turn in point should be at the end of the last ripple strip on the right hand side of the track. You will still be in 3<sup>rd</sup> gear, back off slightly before turn in to balance the car. Get back on the throttle again heading for a late apex in turn 3 as you want the car between the centre and left hand side of the road for the right hand turn 4.

As turn 3 is a relatively fast corner you may not be able to be completely to the left for turn in at **turn 4**, this is not a problem the middle of the circuit is fine. Once straight after turn 3 you will need a touch of the brakes before turn in for the uphill turn right at 4. As it is uphill you can negotiate it faster than if it was level, get the power on early and let the car drift to the outside of the circuit.

Keeping to the left and still in 3<sup>rd</sup> gear you will need a short sharp dab of the breaks for **turn 5**. This is a 90-degree right downhill corner. The apex should be mid corner, don't turn in too early, on exit you should be heading for where the hillclimb leaves the main circuit and then run the car along the edge of the ripple strip staying to the left.

Turn in for **turn 6** is at the small piece of ripple strip on the outside of the circuit as you come down the hill. This corner is a very fast, downhill, off camber right hand sweeper. With experience and warm tyres it can be taken flat out. Don't apex too early or you will be off line for the kink at 7. The apex is about half way along the concrete kerbing.

After 6 and still in 3<sup>rd</sup> gear, maybe 4<sup>th</sup> depending on your car you can straight line the kink at **turn 7** and then down into the breaking for turn 8. After the kink drift towards the outside of the track before the tight left handed **turn 8** known affectionately as the "fish hook". There is an 80-metre braking marker here to assist. Don't worry if you are not completely on the left as this part of the circuit is quite often dirty and covered in "rubber marbles". Change back to second just before turn in. A late apex is required here otherwise you will spend a lot of wasted time drifting out to the outside of the circuit, gentle throttle application avoiding excessive wheel-spin can quite often be quicker here.

