

NC (or any) Battery Service Rich Velardo

I've been having issues with the "no maintenance" battery in my '08 Miata, it's been showing low voltage and it won't hold a charge for very long. Does this sound familiar? It's a common problem with NC batteries and there are many complaints about the "no maintenance" batteries in the NC Miatas.

It was looking like time for a new battery, so I started doing my research on Miata.net to see what would be a good replacement battery. Along the way to a making a decision on which battery to buy, I made an interesting discovery. The batteries in the NC Miatas are not no maintenance batteries, as we all thought, they need to be serviced on occasion. Doh, well slap myself on the forehead for being such an ignorant mechanic! I just hope that I've done no permanent damage to the poor, abused battery.

So, after beating myself up for not realizing that the battery was indeed serviceable, I got myself out to the garage to see if the battery needed service. Yepper, it sure did, the water level was way down, I mean way down. Well, no wonder the battery wasn't acting right.

It was well past time to refill the cells with distilled water, I keep a gallon in the shop for batteries and also a big syringe to squirt it in with. The battery top was filthy, so that was dusted off but a lot of dust remained in the openings and I had to be careful not to knock any dust into the battery cells. Filling is easy, just fill to the bottom of the split ring in the opening with distilled water and you're done. I did have to loosen the positive cable clamp and the hold-down clamp to get two of the filler caps off but otherwise this is an easy to do service. A better idea would have been to remove both the positive and the negative cables so that no accidental shorts could occur while working on the battery.

To service your battery you'll need a supply of distilled water (never use tap water since it has minerals and chemicals in it), a light to see into the cells, a syringe or small funnel, 10mm wrench for the cables & hold down clamp and a large flat blade screw-driver for the filler plugs.

