



## A salted duel on the great dry lake

Top Oil-Ack Attack streamliner slowing down./Cigare Top Oil-ack Attack en ralentissement.

The famous and historic salt of the 'Bonneville Speedway' is the most well-known of the salt lakes (the two others are Lake Gairdner in Australia and el Salar de Unuyi in Bolivia, 3400 metres high, difficult to access...). It has been host to many world record attempts.

The 'International Course', as it is known by the aficionados, is a straight and level track of seventeen kilometres, measured & certified, well marked, approximately 30 metres wide (90 feet). One cannot see the middle nor the end, as the curvature

of the earth is apparent. There are no speed limits here, no radar traps, only two pairs of photo-electric cells, placed one thousand metres apart and another pair, one thousand six hundred and nine metres apart for the official timing. The mile markers along the track show the participants where they are, in case they have lost their sense of direction at the end of a record run in this vast open space.

For any FIM World Record attempts over a 'short distance', the participants need to make two passages (in opposite directions) over the same

surveyed and timed section of real estate, all within a two hour time-frame. The track provides eight kilometres (five miles) to get up to speed, pass the photo-electric cells and which mark the measured kilometre and magic mile, then there is another eight kilometres to slow the vehicle down by the aid of parachutes, before the last marker appears.

History has been (re-)written many times over at Bonneville. This piece of dry lake has a particular attraction to the land speed racing community and once you have put your feet on the salt crusted surface, you will never forget your visit.

Bonneville has a particular place in the history of motorcycling. We recognize famous names like Ernst Henne, Wilhelm Herz, Cal Rayborn, Don Vesco and Dave Campos to name a few 'big' players. These people were also active riders in road racing, off-road, and track racing, etc... Today's group of racers are no different for all love motorcycles and the adrenaline of speed.

The salt crust at the Bonneville Salt Flats has never been so good as this year. It was dry and hard as concrete, according to observers and land speed racers.



Riders' briefing by Ken Draper (Race Control)/Briefing des concurrents par Ken Draper (contrôle de course).



For the 2006 event at the Bonneville raceway, it was a great success! No less than five streamliners had entered the '2006 International Motorcycle Speed Trials by BUB', sanctioned by FIM and AMA, now in its third year. This 'motorcycle' only event also attracted a high number of participants on 'normal' motorcycles with only one goal: to go as fast as their motorcycle could propel them across the track towards a new world record. And quite an event it would be!

The outright motorcycle world record was set 16 years ago, by Dave Campos with the 'Easyriders' Harley Davidson, at 518.372 km/h for the kilometre and 518.449 km/h for the mile. It was 'high' time to break the record.



Ack Attack team preparing for a run./L'équipe Ack Attack se préparant pour un essai.

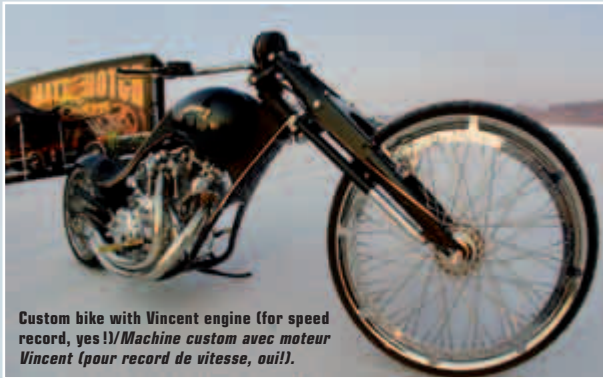
streamliner was clocked at his first attempt at 555.164 km/h (344.963 mph) and on the return run, he reached 549.254 km/h (341.291 mph), making a average of the two runs at 552.209 km/h (343.127 mph). This was the first time in history that a two wheel vehicle had gone faster than 550 km/h. After the two runs, the Ack Attack team returned to their pit area to give a 'debriefing' of the first days' activities and the rider had reported some

Life on Mars?/Vie sur Mars?



Rocky Robinson (left): first day's smile./Rocky Robinson (à g.): sourire du premier jour.

crosswinds but handling was still. On the return run, the speeds had not been as high, since the cooling system had not worked properly. In any case, the two, turbo-charged Suzuki Hayabusa engines had run only at 75% of the available power, so there was more to come the following days. However, a few little problems had to be corrected. The Ack Attack Team was the new record holder as of Sunday, but as rocky said, this had only been the



Custom bike with Vincent engine (for speed record, yes!)/Machine custom avec moteur Vincent (pour record de vitesse, oui!).



Best design award: Goldammer./Lauréat du meilleur design: Goldammer.

first day of a special 'competition', the quest for the new world record!

And how true this would be, a genuine 'world class' event, for the new record would only stand less than 48 hours intact.

On Tuesday (5 September), the BUB Enterprises 'Lucky 7' streamliner built by Denis Manning (a 'well seasoned' builder of streamliners and holder of a previous record in 1970 with Cal Rayborn, a 'factory rider from Harley Davidson), and his new rider, Chris Carr (7 times AMA National Dirt Track Champion), set out on what was to be a 'practice' run, or was it? The crowd cheered when they heard the new magic numbers: 571.309 km/h on the outgoing run, 558.649 km/h on the return run, making this a new world record at 564.979 km/h (351.061 mph) for the kilometre and an average of 564.693 km/h (350.884 mph) for the mile, both with a flying start.

That same day, the Ack Attack Team prepared itself for another attempt. But his two runs never exceeded the speeds of the BUB streamliner, set earlier that day.

On Wednesday, a new but long awaited contender appeared on the salt. Sam Wheeler, a very experienced land speed racer and gentlemen 'extra-ordinaire' staged his streamliner, the green 'EZ-Hook' powered by a single, turbo-charged Kawasaki engine (with a capacity of only



Dave Campos, previous record holder since 1990./Dave Campos, précédent détenteur du record depuis 1990.

1150cc). The EZ-Hook 'liner is the lightest, slipperiest streamliner with the smallest frontal area.

On his first run, Sam went through the photo electric cells, setting a speed of 572.094 km/h (355.483 mph) over the measured kilometre (571.804 km/h or 355.303 mph over the measured mile), clocking the fastest speed of the event.

A huge cheer went up in the pits when this happened...unfortunately for Sam, during this run, the front tyre had started to lose pressure and just after passing the last timing cell, the tyre destroyed itself and Sam Wheeler was trying to handle a streamliner with the front rim on the salt. Luckily for him, he deployed the parachutes before the streamliner went on its side, coming slowly to a halt after a 600-700 metre slide. Sam crawled out of the cockpit and his first request was to have a look at his front tyre, which was still spinning very rapidly.

On the last day (Thursday), tensions were high that morning since the Ack Attack Team was to challenge the record set by Chris Carr in BUB's

'Lucky 7'. A first attempt by Rocky Robinson in the Ack Attack 'liner was aborted in the morning, the cause being a broken drive shaft and chain. All this time, being a racer and competitor, Chris Carr had been strapped in the cockpit, ready to take off as quickly as possible after the Ack Attack streamliner had cleared the track. But more 'drama' was to come. The Ack Attack streamliner returned to the pit area and after a close inspection, the team decided to repair the damage to the transmission and, as a total surprise to all in the pits, they decided to make another attempt before the cut-off time at noon, since any attempts were to start before the 12h00 mark to be able to give competitors the required turn-around time before the end of the event. Dennis Manning and Chris Carr were obliged to make another trip to the start line, just in case.

During the last 30 minutes before noon, on the start line, the stress levels were rising like the temperature in a pressure cooker. The Ack Attack streamliner left the starting line, at 12 minutes before the hour. At 11h51, Rocky Robinson tripped the first timing lights. Everyone was now waiting for the numbers...only to hear shortly after that he had aborted his run between the kilometre and the mile timing lights due to re-occurring transmission problems, and exiting the track at slow speed. When the race control announced the news that the Ack attack run had been aborted, a very happy, very emotional Chris Carr appeared from Lucky Seven's cockpit, very much relieved that he and his team were the new, outright land speed world record holders for motorcycles.

