



With DLRA Speedweek over and done for 2015 it is shed time again and the Big Knob race team, like all the other teams that race at Lake Gairdner, are trying to come up with ideas to make the race car go faster. Next year's dates for Speedweek are Feb 29th to Mar 6th 2016

John Dent and his good mate Norm Bradshaw have been keeping Australia moving for the past 45 years driving big rigs all over the country. In 1994, these two blokes decided it would be great fun to race in the Cannonball Run, a race on the Stuart Highway from Darwin to Alice Springs and back. Both guys being one eyed Ford crazy managed to find a basket case rolling shell of a 1967 Mustang coupe.

They put together one tough Mustang, with a 540 stroker big block Ford and Trick Flow A460 heads. The Cannonball Run 1995 was banned after a couple of Japanese guys in a Ferrari F40 were killed in a high speed crash along with two race officials. The accident happened at Hugh in the Northern Territory during a "Flying Mile" section of the race. John said looking back it was probably a good thing the race had been cancelled as he may not have been around now to tell the story.

The two mates then tried sprints and circuit racing with little success. There was even talk of an attempt at the Targa Tasmania. Finally John and Norm decided to try Salt lake racing and have been coming to Speedweek ever since.

The Mustang's maiden trip to the salt managed a 170mph pass. After campaigning the Mustang for thirteen years, John had the car running 203 mph passes. He felt that he couldn't squeeze any more out of the big block Ford so he started looking for a more slippery body shape.

At the same time Al Fountain put his beautifully engineered belly tank on the market to help pay for another project. The two guys reached an agreement and the big block Ford was installed in the belly tank. Bob Ellis preformed the installation with mechanical expertise and continues to look after the mechanics of the race car. The new body saw John travelling at 255mph. John said he is surprised at how stable the car is at high speed and has nothing but praise for Al Fountain and his great work.

Meanwhile, the Mustang has been purchased by Gary Quigley. He's installed a 620 ci Big Block Ford. Mark expects to be on the salt in 2016 with the beast.

John Dent's race team consists of his wife Carol and good friend Shane Benson. John says he doesn't know what the car is capable of and doesn't want to "shoot his mouth off but hopes it is always quicker than last year". John also wants everyone to know his life is pretty quiet except for "two weeks of the year when I do something really good and head out to Lake Gairdner".

What happened to old mate Norm Bradshaw ... he built and now races the world's fastest taxi and is president of the DLRA.

See you at the salt,
Norm Hardinge.



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