

SAFE SPEEDING

BY NORM HARDINGE

***Speedweek
#26 went
off without
a hitch, and
the world is
watching...***

Once a year in the outback of South Australia, on the now famous salt lake, Lake Gairdner, people from all over the world brave the crap road, red dust, heat and flies to watch speed freaks thunder across our salt lake at full noise. DLRA is now 26 years old and Speedweek 26 was the best so far!

Lake Gairdner is a three hour drive that is mostly on dirt from the nearest town, so running an event this large in such a remote location is a mammoth task. Congratulations to the DLRA committee that put Speedweek 2016 together, the event was a huge success, a well organised and well run event. They even organised the weather without a fault. We had good weather, very little wind with a race track that stayed hard till the end of the week - perfect race conditions. A week later, it rained like hell and turned the whole area into a 4x4 mud pit!

Tech inspection was tough and so it should be. "The rule book is written in blood" is what the US tech inspectors pointed out one year. A sobering thought and one hundred percent true. Following the rule book is not only a good idea for self-preservation but also means those before us have not suffered in vain.

SpeedWeek 26 was a safe meeting with only two spins and no major incidents thanks to Chief Tech inspectors Bob Ellis, Graeme Hadley and associated teams. Thankfully, these guys take their jobs very seriously.

A big thanks to the starters, Peter and David Leikvold. These guys not only looked the part, but along with a handful of DLRA volunteers, they kept the event moving while upholding strict safety practices. In total

790 passes were sent down the track with only short queues at both start lines. When it's often 40 plus degrees out on the salt, this is an important issue.

169 unique competitors participated. Thanks to so many hands on, highly capable, officials and volunteers, the racers had plenty of opportunity to achieve their goals. With record after record broken, nine of our racers joined the 200mph club. Congratulations should go to each and every one of them, it is not easy to do!

Amongst our international guests at Speedweek

this year was Les Davenport. Les is a partner in an American Streamliner Target 550. You can find details on their race team in last month's Cruzin magazine. These guys are talking about breaking the wheel driven land speed record, which at the moment stands at 439 mph and held by George Poteet in Speed Demon, by over one hundred mph!

Hopefully only temporarily, bad

environmental conditions at Bonneville has wiped the venue out for high speed record attempts. In the meantime, the fast guys are itching to find a new place to race. Australia may be the winner.

Target 550 are hoping to have their race car at Lake Gairdner for Speedweek in 2017. Also several very fast motorbike teams from the US and Europe are looking at making the trip. Should be a big meet. The dates for Speedweek 2017 are Monday 27th of February until Friday 3rd of March.

For more info on salt lake racing, check out www.dlra.org.au

See you at the salt,
Norm Hardinge.



Bronze Aussie Race Team



wanted to continue chasing the dream. Rod made the decision to hand over the driving duties to Lionel West, and hand the whole Bronze Aussie operation to the crew in appreciation for their years of hard work and dedication.

The guys made Rod proud at Speedweek 26 by taking out the top speed of the meeting with a 271mph pass. It's only a matter of time now, Oh and lots of dedication, hard work, heart break and money, and we'll be reporting on the fastest sedan on the planet .. The Bronze Aussie.

After the 2015 SpeedWeek event at Lake Gairdner, Rod Hadfield told me that he was retiring from salt lake racing. Rod is the only DLRA racer to race a car at every race meeting since DLRA's inception 25 years ago. Rods latest car in a long line was The Bronze Aussie. It started life as a Commodore but grew up to be one of the toughest street

machines on the salt running a Big Block Chev and NOS. Rod has dreamed of making this car the fastest sedan on the planet. Lionel West, Brian West and Danny Hancock have shared Rods dream from the start and dedicated untold hours and effort on making Rod's dream a reality.

Rod was ready to retire the car but the crew



Peter Warren

Peter Warren, with help from Robbie Carroll, built this all new gas lakester. The body is a fibreglass copy of a fuel tank from a WW2 P38 fighter plane.

The belly tank with a tubular frame is powered by a 351 Ford boss motor driven through a 3 speed toploader gearbox. The car is well built - it went through tech inspection without any modifications needed to comply with the strict rules.

The three speed decided to become a two speed at Speedweek. Peter Warren was left with only 1st and 3rd gear but still easily smashed the current record by 27mph.

A 205.456 mph pass put Peter into the 200 mph club. Congratulations!



Flatattack

Mike Davidson's crew won best presented crew for Speedweek 2016. Mikes Streamliner Flatattack is powered by two Flathead Fords and would have to be one of the best looking cars at Speedweek.

It certainly was the crowd favourite. 2016 was Flatattack's third year at the salt this year it was great to see the car having a run at the lake after having the initial steering and clutch problems in the first few years.

Steering and clutch problems have been sorted, however during SpeedWeek 2016, new problems emerged. Flatattack relies on a periscope to provide vision as you drive across the salt. At high speed, you need to be able to see very well but the periscope was found to be lacking. New vision systems are currently being worked on.

Mike Davidson is always pushing the envelope. Instead of running the two flatheads

as independent motors, Mike has on board computers running the motors in sync as a single v16. You can probably imagine that this would take a bit to get right and yes, it has created some timing and tuning problems.

The team are hoping to cure these issues and have Flatattack run some big speeds in 2017.

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Craig Rogers

Craig wasn't the only rookie at Speedweek but he certainly made the biggest impression. We have followed the 30 foot long Lakester whilst being built in Cruzin the Salt expecting big things from the BA 6 cylinder motor. Hooked up to one big arse turbo, the BA produces 850hp. SpeedWeek 2016 was the debut

event for the car and we weren't disappointed. This Speedweek was just a shakedown for Craig and the brand new Lakester. Both Craig and the Lakester had to go through several licence passes. They both breezed through without a hitch.

One very happy Craig ended up with a 202.020mph record and membership into the 200mph club. With the licensing out of the way, Craig will be heading back in 2017 to see what the car is really capable of.



Mark Dunn

The Dunn family built and runs this record holding belly tank powered by a small block Chevy. It made its debut at Bonneville USA where it passed tech inspection without having a single fault noted. The car has been campaigned in the US and Australia ever since. Father Mark, son Kurt and daughter Gemma all work on and race the belly tank.

This year Mark ran 228mph, Kurt managed 231.660mph while Gemma had a scary moment trying for a 240mph pass - she had the car sideways but luckily the parachute straightened her up before anything nasty could happen.



Mick Percy

Mick Percy won Rookie of the Year at Speedweek in his 1956 VW Beetle. Mick ran 109.469mph across the salt giving him a class record. The Vee Dub is powered by a stock 1600cc motor with a small blower fitted. Mick plans to return next year with a purpose built engine. Salt fever has bitten!

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Dave Rosewarne and Mark Love

Dave and Mark from Christchurch New Zealand made their first trip to Lake Gairdner in 2010 to check out the salt and have now become regular visitors.

Each year they bring their 1992 Chevy Camaro, with a one piece front it looks a lot like a Pontiac. They travel with two engines, one Ford and one Chev, both hooked up to their own 5 speed Tremec gearboxes.

Mark holds the AA/Gas at 259mph with his Big Block Ford while Dave runs a 427ci Small Block Chevy stroker engine. They swap the engines over during the event. This year Dave ran a record 212.94mph earning a red hat and entry to the 200mph club. Mark was trying to bump up his existing record with the big block but no luck this time.

In total 790 passes where sent down the track with only short queues at both start lines. When it's often 40 plus degrees out on the salt, this is one an important issue...



Big Knob Racing

The 1934 Ford roadster ran strong all week setting a new B/Gas roadster record of 212.653mph. Matt Lagoon from Engine Action in Echuca, Victoria worked magic with the big block Ford. It is able to hold at 8000 revs for three miles. This gives the Big Knob race team four Australian land speed records. The car is already stripped down and being prepared for Speedweek 2017.



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