

Bonneville Speed Week 2014: 9 Cars Capable Of Smashing The Wheel Driven Record – Here They Are



Outside of the 100th year anniversary, outside of the pomp and circumstance of the normal Bonneville Speed Week, the 2014 iteration of the event has another edge to it that lots of us are kind of freaking out over. That edge? The fact that there are a multitude of cars coming capable of resetting the wheel driven land speed record and they're all about as similar as snowflakes. We know as well as anyone else that their performance is largely dictated by the "quality" of the salt. Last year damp salt conditions caused the place to behave like the world's largest skating rink with a number of spins and aborted runs that rivaled anything that even the hardest core of the old timers had ever seen. We've got our fingers crossed for as good a surface as mother nature and the hard working SCTA people can provide, like everyone does. So back to our starry eyed wishful thinking for a moment.

In pouring over the SCTA's pre-registration list (and understanding that it is a pre-registration list and doesn't mean that everyone on it is coming) we started looking at cars running in the streamliner classes. Taking into consideration cars classing a lot closer to the start of the alphabet than the end, we came up with 9 machines that have been designed and engineered to run well into the upper regions of the 400mph envelope and a handful that are proudly seeking 500mph as a performance goal. On paper, Chad and I could announce that we have a 500mph car ready to hit the salt with as well. It is meaningless until

someone does it, but the fact that there are near DOUBLE DIGIT numbers of cars coming that have either run their way up over 400mph or are set up to do so is incredible. That is a LOT of heavy iron on the salt and each of those teams is showing up with the intention of throwing themselves at the big numbers before the other guys do. Last year we were hoping for a shootout between *Speed Demon* and the Vesco team but it never materialized. The *Flashpoint* car ran 382 despite the conditions and the fact it was a new effort, and there were other points of light in there as well. The reality is that when we look at the list of people “coming” it is damned impressive.

You didn't ask, but we're going to list off the 9 cars (in no particular order) that have a shot to reset the wheel driven speed record (piston or turbine) at SCTA Bonneville Speed Week 2014 – Here they are:

Flashpoint – Team of Dalton, Jackson, and Mayer



WHY: Went 382 last year in freshman effort. Have mega horsepower with blown hemi on nitro wearing a Darren Mayer supercharger, have stated that the goal is to go 500mph.

WHY NOT: Still pretty new in terms of an LSR car and even on a good surface, can they go another 118mph on top of 382 with a single engine? Some of the old timers weren't crazy about the uprights and rudder design in rear.

Speed Demon - Team of Poteet and Main



WHY: If you are asking why, you have not been around this stuff for very long. This car has dominated the headlines for years and continues to today. It has gone 462mph and it is the fastest piston driven car in the world currently. They have Duttweiler horsepower and plenty of it. They have experience, they have made more runs over 400 than anyone. They know others are trying to come for them.

WHY NOT: There are zero gimmies at this deal and they could have an off year. The surface may not support it. We're having to reach for lame reasons. These guys are THAT good.

Turbinator II - Team Vesco



WHY: This is the fastest wheel driven car in the world with a best speed of 470mph. Note we didn't say RECORD SPEED. That was the fastest speed achieved in Turbinator II. The car came back after 10 years off the salt in 2013 and it was not a smooth week. They have something to prove and they would love nothing more than to win the race to 500mph with

turbine power.

WHY NOT: The huge team worked feverishly for days on end to get the car through tech and when they finally did, the runs did not come near what they hoped in 2013. Confidence is a big factor and this is a team that needs their mojo back after a tough week in 2013. Could time have passed the big land laden missile by?

Carbinite - Team Carbinite



WHY: The entire mission of this project is to exceed 500mph. The design angle of this car is vastly different than any of the others in this elite group. The car ran recently at the USFRA test and tune meet and performed to 278mph with a fuel issue hampering the team after that.

WHY NOT: Brand new car to the salt. The team is in full thrash mode to get it fully prepared after testing at the USFRA meet, they are running a smaller inch turbo combo which will be working REALLY hard, they have made 1,330hp to the dyno rollers, it would be amazing but exceptionally rare to see a freshman effort take the glory.

Challenger II – Danny Thompson and cast of thousands



WHY: Sometimes things just take on a life of their own and the adventure that Danny Thompson has been on to complete this car has been amazing to watch. There may be destiny in play here. The car went 317mph at the USFRA meet and both injected, nitro-burning hemi engines performed well. Because you can never count a guy named Thompson out at Bonneville.

WHY NOT: Virtually brand new car so there will be things that need to be ironed out when the wick is really turned up. Lots of pressure and a bright light being shone on the team at every turn.

Nish Motorsports – Nish Family Team



WHY: The Car has been 412mph. They are using a Jerry Darien, 521ci injected nitro

burning hemi on a 70% load. The car has been somewhat redesigned in the front end for improved aerodynamics. The family has been at this a long time and they are due for a couple of big numbers.

WHY NOT: The 412mph run was made back in 2010 and since then it has been an uphill fight. In 2013, the first year out with the nitro hemi the learning curve was steep. Older car that has made some big laps but may not be a technological front runner any more.

Spirit Of Rett – Nearburg Family and Team



WHY: The car has been over 410mph before. The crew is experienced and knows how to turn the car around/service it properly. It is one of a handful of cars that has ever set a record over 400mph.

WHY NOT: Single engine car on gasoline and naturally aspirated. This is the outside of all outside shots. Incremental improvement will be great news for the team. The darkest of the dark horses.

Richmond and Stark Streamliner – Rich Richmond and Bud Stark



WHY: Built by two lifelong friends and hot rodders, this is a true backyard effort with no sponsor help. 2012 was first appearance of car and it ran a best of 251 after a couple days of work to get it through tech. This is the feel good story of the summer if they can get it together. The spirit of Bonneville IS this car.

WHY NOT: See virtually all of the reasons above. Having only made 251 in their first effort, they are a long way from being contenders. They will be coming out of left field if they manage to run over 400 and threaten some of the more established names.

Hass Shipley Streamliner – Team of David/Todd Haas and Jeff Shipley



WHY: Body modeled by Cal Tech to be good for 500mph. A pair of turbocharged small

block Chevy engines making the power. Salt veterans that may be on the list of teams “due” to rip off a big number. All the parts and pieces seem to be there.

WHY NOT: Tough trying to find info on when last time car was out. The teams that have been at it year after year may have advantage. Car has not shown that it has the oats to mix it up with the huge names on this list. Another for the corral of dark horses.