

Kickstart Mickey Thompson's Streamliner

Written by: [Diego Rosenberg](#) on August 1 2013 5:10 PM

The late Mickey Thompson embodied the spirit of HOT ROD, but his life was tragically cut short in 1988. What wasn't short was his list of achievements, from his success in drag racing, his engineering acumen, his talent for salesmanship, and his speed and endurance records.

Mickey never was able to update the speed record books with his name, but his stillborn [Challenger II is being resurrected by his son](#) for an attempt at the record books.

[But he needs your help.](#)

In 1960, the Challenger I became the first land vehicle to be clocked at over 400 mph. However, Mickey didn't make the record books because of a breakdown on the return run. Determined to outdo himself, he spent years planning a new car – this time with more of a nod to technology – and the Challenger II was born in 1968.



Images: Kickstarter.com

With its hand-formed aluminum construction and twin engines, 400 mph was within reach for the sophisticated cigar, but weather conditions at Bonneville delayed the tweaks. And then support from [Ford](#) withered away as the “Total Performance” company abruptly pulled back from racing.

On the other hand, Mickey's star in other racing ventures continued to rise, keeping him distracted from attempting the land speed record. By 1987 he began to ruminate about the stillborn Challenger II and the world record that hadn't been beaten since 1965. Bringing his son Danny on board, they aroused the car from the dead . . . but then Mickey's murder put an end to that.

Until now.

Danny is keeping the same chassis, aerodynamics, and body but updating the engine and safety equipment. The twin Ford 427s have been replaced with nitro-fueled Hemis putting out 2000 horses each (twice the horsepower of the Challenger II) driving all four wheels.

But Danny needs your help. [He's raising \\$200,000 through a Kickstarter campaign](#) to finish the restoration of the so-called Challenger 2.5 and use it to break the piston-driven world land speed record. Depending on your donation, you can vote on the paint scheme (implemented by Chip Foose, no less),

snag some vintage MT decals, get a commemorative T-shirt, or receive an invite for the kick-off party in Huntington Beach, CA, among others. Visit [Kickstarter.com](https://www.kickstarter.com) for more information.

