

LAND SPEED NEWS

DECEMBER 1998



D.R.L.A. NOTES

There has not been a lot to report on since our Last March Lake Gairdner meeting, but we can make up for that in this edition.

As most Hot Rodders would know, it is 50 years since the first organised Land Speed Trials were held at Bonneville Salt Flats, Utah, USA.

Over the years since, many Australians have attended meetings there but only as spectators. Most Americans are unaware of the fact that Australia has its own equivalent to Bonneville with Lake Gairdner in South Australia. But after their 50th Speed Week held from the 15th to the 21st of August, many of them must be wondering what is happening, after an Aussie 40 foot container lands in their pit area. Followed by a large group of people in motor homes who suddenly raise a couple of foreign flags, unload three cars complete with spare parts, benches etc and a sign announcing that Dry lake Racers of Australia were there.



But what really caught their attention was when Leigh Fielder took his Pontiac to the short track, qualified immediately for the long track, then smashed the A/GALT record by approximately 15 mph. He was then protested against for a rear spoiler infringement, which was rectified, then went out and raised the record by

approximately 22mph. This resulted in a night in the impound area ready for first run the next morning, which he completed again well above the record. He then survived a motor pull down for a capacity check, as a result he raised the A/GALT record by a whopping 18mph average and thus became the first Australian member of the elite 200mph club. A truly magnificent effort for both Leigh, wife Tracy, his crew and George Haddad for his engine work.

John Lynch was another member of the team with his KB powered bellytank. Unlike his last March effort when everything he touched went wrong, he really had his toy sorted, finally recording a 254mph run before having to extinguish a fire in the engine bay which resulted in his retirement. But he was smiling and glad that he had put the effort into the trip. I was not smiling much at any time throughout the meeting,

We just couldn't get lucky with the Studebaker and its new 488 cu.in. Rodent. Nothing we did seemed to stop the dropping off in fuel pressure resulting in high speed lean out, a new fuel pump, lines, tank and still no luck, a broken gearbox was replaced after one attempt to get a full pass on the short track. I was forced to concede defeat, recording a best of 202mph, far short of the 240mph we had prepared the car for, anyway all in all the trip was a success and I am sure Larry O'Toole will have photo's and a story on the event.

On behalf of Leigh, John and myself, I would like to thank Penrite Oils for supplying merchandise, Mary West for her help in getting the container there and back, all the D.L.R.A. members who travelled to Bonneville and helped out, the people who offered moral support, our pit crews and especially our wives. Look for the Bonneville results on the net, the address is: www.scta.bnl.org. Leigh Fielder racing under "Aussie Assalt", John Lynch under "Jet Hot Australia" and myself under "Castlemaine Rod Shop". The D.L.R.A. web page can be found at <http://www.vicnet.net.au/~dlra>

Minutes of DLRA Committee Meeting

Bordertown Hotel, October 25 1998,

Meeting started 12:45pm

Attendance: Mike Davidson, Rod Hadfield , Leigh Fielder , Wayne O' Grady, Peter Noy, John Lynch , Peter Andrew , Garth Butterworth .

General Business :

- I started the meeting with my concern about the safety issues at the last DLRA event, and as secretary I pursued the costs of authorised fire control officials, through the services of Women for Wheels who attended the '95 meet . A Mr Peter Schloithe was contacted and a quote of \$3000 was given for the hire of 4 officials, their hire vehicle and trailer and all required safety equipment, extinguishers, jaws of life, for 4 days.
- Wayne O'Grady second the motion putting forward his concerns towards safety and supplying a letter outlining his concerns and possible resignation as Chief Steward if professional safety and medical staff are not assigned at the next meeting.
- The motion was passed unanimously that Women for Wheels will be contracted as senior fire and rescue marshals for DLRA events .
- In regards to the medical concern, I informed the committee of my information of the Motor Sport Medical Panel officer, a Mr Paul Temme, who had yet to be contacted in regards to costs.
- Mike Davidson suggested that that should be done quickly, as he has had correspondence from a Mr Paul Dass , indicating possible sponsorship funding from Pennzoil and/or a Federal avenue.
- Peter Andrew put forward the motion that a local doctor. Dr Richard Jolly, who had previously attended at Lake Gairdner would be a more suitable Medical official.
- The motion was passed unanimously and I was to contact him ASAP in regards to his availability and monetary costs.
- My final statement was that I had contacted Mr Pearce Doeity, at Port Augusta Dept of Natural Resources, and confirmed that the next DLRA meeting will be held on the 14/03/99 to 21/03/99.
- Mike Davidson put forward the motion that, coarse preparation needed to be completed on the 13/03/99, and that a diesel vehicle was needed to drag the new 3 mile coarse .Rod Hadfield and John Lynch both offered the use of their vehicles. It was also mentioned that we needed a majority of members to be in attendance on the 13th, to assist in preparations.
- Wayne O'Grady informed all that the 3 mile coarse wiring will be ready for lay out on the 13th, then through discussion it was agreed the timers will be set up at the 1 mile , 2 mile , the kilometre inside the 3 mile, and a trap out the back door .
- Coarse alignment was discussed, John Lynch suggesting GPS to be used for this and an inquiry should be made into the hire of such a unit.
- Peter Andrew offered the use of his hand held unit , but pointed out that its accuracy is compromised at manufacture for military reasons, but would be useful for basic measurement . Final alignment could be easily obtained with the use of a high powered ride scope .
- It was agreed that as there was an abundance of environmental friendly black die in our possession it will be used to mark the coarse, leaving the witch hats to be used for boundaries.
- A question was put to Peter Andrew asking if a small amount of water could be sourced from the nearby bore, to be used for the wash off of salt from vehicles departing the lake surface. A limited amount was agreed too by Peter.
- Rod Hadfield introduced the subject of the lake side club huts, and his concerns about their removal. Peter Andrew informed all about the complaints they have received through Govt' channels about them, and including the canteen. The main problem was the non-disclosure by Rosco that the huts were only a temporary structure and were supposed to be removed by him, Mt Ive allowed the 25 members, that paid into the camp site, privileges to stay out on the property during the last meeting with written instructions that no other camping was to be at that site. Unfortunately insufficient control allowed unauthorised camping at the site and apologies were directed to Mt Ive.
- Rod Hadfield put forward the dilemma that if the huts were moved to the nearest bore, as suggested , it may cause more of a problem as it would be highly visible (a giant white elephant) and maybe generate a greater number of complaints plus their removal to another site again .
- Peter Andrew was asked if the canteen was to be removed, and his response was, that as the property was under their control they had received written permission to construct the building.
- Rod Hadfield motioned that the possibility of a similar document needs to be drawn up in relation to the new location of the huts at the bore, to avoid their continual movement and asked how could Mt Ive be satisfied, to allow the huts to remain at their present location temporarily, until suacient funding and documentation is available .
- It was motioned and agreed that members financially involved with the camp were responsible for its

removal . It was also noted that if its removal was to be this year, the financial burden would cancel the next meeting

- Leigh Fielder produced the clubs financial statement (included) indicating that 40 competitors are required to make the meeting viable, if sponsorship unavailable, the last two meets having under 30 entrants. Leigh also motioned that pre entry should be requested and advertised in the newsletter. Motion carried.
- Trophies from 98 meet had still not been sorted out, Leigh required the results of the fastest 8, 6, 4, bike, I would fax him this information.
- It was mentioned during general discussion the DLRA web site and if any memberships had arisen from it. Rod Hadfield replied there had been none so far. Leigh Fielder motioned that Greg Wapling should be honoured with a membership, as he had gone to considerable time and expense in organising the site. I

seconded the motion, as I believe the site is beneficial to the club. The address for the DLRA web site is **Error! Bookmark not defined..**

AGM date was set for Tuesday evening of the 16th March 1999, to be held at the Mt. Ive hall.

Meeting closure at 3:15 pm

Garth Butterworth



DLRA FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS AT 1/10/98

INCOME:

Balance carried forward	2758.07	
Life Membership fees	400.00	
Newsletter Subscriptions	130.00	
Camping Fees at Lake - G. Butterworth	100.00	
Sale of Speed Wheel	10.00	
Smooth Metallics - Royalties on sale of Belt Buckles & Hat Pins	82.50	3480.57

EXPENSES:

Government Fees	11.01	
Testing of Fire Extinguishers	51.00	
Postage of Newsletters	100.45	
Phoenix Screenprinting - T shirts & cloth badges	1462.00	1624.46
Balance as at Bank Statement		1856.11

Leigh & Tracy Fielder

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TRACKSIDE - TIME FOR SAFETY

Most members know that the Club intends to use our new timing equipment at the next meeting. The length of the course will be increased to 3 miles (5km's for the young'ens) to correspond with the SCTA short course rules. As this will increase our speeds (hopefully), it comes at a price, "your safety". The risks increase, speed and the dangers are raised once again, with members in the 200MPH club, higher numbers in the 175MPH and 150MPH classes doubling at each meet. We have no more short cuts to safety and speed. At the 1997 meeting, the track staff and myself had concerns regarding the lack of adequate emergency services. At the recent committee meeting in Bordertown SA, we tried to address the problem. The DLRA has approached the "Ladies for Wheels" who were the fire crews at the 1995 meeting

(they were also fire crews for the formula one events). They showed great interest in returning again, to supply a full fire crew for 1999. Hopefully we can come to some arrangement with them. Also the Andrew's family have informed us of a local Doctor / pilot and keen motorsport fan. That could be interested in overseeing the medical requirements of the meet. If this works out we will have the best emergency teams in 1999. Of course this isn't for free, but without the emergency services, it's a recipe for disaster.

May lady luck be on our side.

Regards

Wayne O'Grady

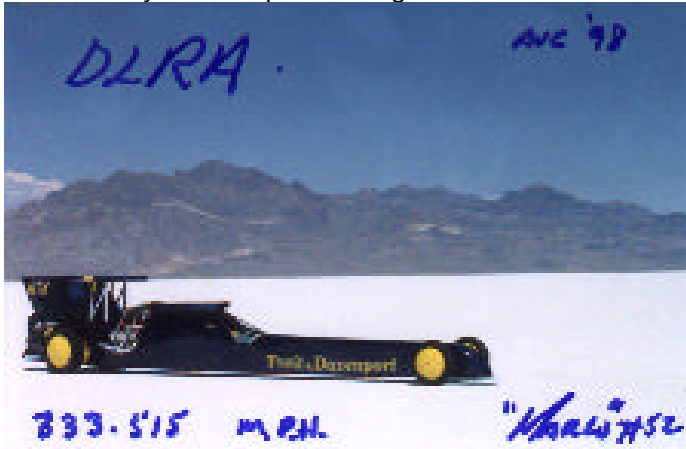
Chief Steward

PS Have a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Triet & Davenport

Dear friends from down under, I am truly sorry that I did not get down to your camp and visit when you were at Bonneville. It is not like me to do that but, our driver was only here for the first three days and we had full days of work and short nights. Not a time to be social. I apologise for the poor manners. I do intend to visit your meet in the spring of 2000. It will take me a winter to build a container that can get our stuff there and most of the year to save money for the trip. We had the best Speedweek of our lives. Records show the results.

This is the fastest car of this category in the world today. It holds records in 3 classes as well as the overall top speed for an open wheel car and the fastest ¼ mile entry speed in the history of land speed racing.



Race Car specs and facts

The car; Measuring over 30 feet long and a scant 2 feet wide, it weighs 3000lbs and is under 3 feet tall. Each and every part of this vehicle was built by hand, frame, body, wing, engine, all specific for this task. Frame is constructed from aircraft quality steel tubing. All held are welded and cross braced and stressed for maximum strength and safety for the driver.

Body is hand formed aluminium and fitted to ensure that the no matter what direction the car twists or moves the panels will stay securely fastened to the frame. (a body panel loss can cause severe directional stability loss). Wing design was done by Burt Rutan, the aviation guru, who has designed countless aircraft and did the Voyager that flew around the world non-stop. It was done for this car to produce downforce rather than lift, at specific rates of speed. Minimum drag was one of the design parameters that was spelled out.

Tires: They are manufactured by a tire company on the east coast that has done Land Speed tires for years. They have been tested to run over 500 mph. It is an unusual tire in that it has only a 1/16" of rubber over the cords. Any more than that, and the rubber will not stay laminated to the cords and when it leaves, the tire becomes very unbalanced and shakes the car apart. Since there is so little rubber, the number of runs that we can get depend on how much the tires spins or how much traction the car loses. Of course since we drive only the rear wheels the front tires last a long time as they don't spin. But they too are very thin skinned.

Wheels are machined out of steel and are held to as close to "0" tolerance as we can get. "Wheel out of balance" is an incident just getting ready to ruin our day. We pre balance the wheels and then install tires and re-balance the whole assembly. That way we know the true balance of each tire.

Transmission: this is an automatic style that is controlled by air. Compressed air shifts a planetary gearset by activating a clutchpac. Three forward speeds are used, 1st gear to 250mph, second to 300mph and third for when you need to go fast.

Rearend. This started life as a Halibrand Champ car quick change. Much like was used in Sprint or Indy cars in the past. We change the gear ratio and build special shafts and gearsets for it. Our overall gear ratio can be as low as 1.60 to 1. At present we use 1.8 to 1.9. Billet axles and

disc brakes make up the rest of the unit. It is bolted directly to the frame with NO suspension at all. Engines; We use several different- combinations of power plants. Our primary and fastest at this point are supercharged, fuel burning, Hemi style, race prepared, VS models that all the parts are manufactured by specialty shops, or ourselves, and assembled by our crew to our special specifications. Much time is spent just to make sure all parts fit properly and that the tolerances we need are met. The supercharged engines develop over 2000hp. The second engine class that we have used is a naturally aspirated model. That is fuel injected but with NO supercharger. This engine burns Nitro Methane for fuel. There is quite a difference in the way it is run compared to the supercharged motor. But it will make a tremendous amount of power even without the supercharger. We have run almost 300mph with this combination. 1600 to 1800 HP is available. Of course the supercharged model has given us 333.515MPH. Crew for this car is a group of 6

and each one has his own area to maintain and protect. The very smallest detail can be very important.

Driver is, Les Davenport, from Calgary Alberta Canada and he is a long time high speed driver of this car as well as thousands of runs at the drag races over the years. He is a Life Member of the 200 mph club and a Charter member of the 300 mph club. His experience in the field has brought a lot of good ideas into our camp. We had the opportunity to put another driver in the car this year, he is Korey Bligh, a long time crewmember. He made two runs with it and did his first ever run on the long course and qualified at 205 mph. He was then allowed to run 250+ and did that with a 256 mph run that gave him a driver license to run 300.

We are proud and happy for this opportunity to do that. Best of luck to all of you and will stay in touch.

Marlo Treit #52 DLRA and proud of it.

GET OFF YOUR ARSE AND GO

We have over 200 members in the DLRA, yet at every meeting we have the same numbers, 25 entrants. The hardcore racers, that come every year total about 20 and 5 new entries.

So why doesn't our entry level increase each year, we're getting the new entries?

Here are some of the standard answers

1. It's the economy, things aren't good.
2. I haven't got the time.
3. Why should I build a race car / motorbike for once a year.
4. It costs too much

(People can make reasons for not racing forever)

Now let's look at what's behind those answers.

1. OK! Times are harder, but I guess life is just like that now. We just have to make the most of it.
2. I haven't got the time. A max of 4 days racing and 2 days travelling. I haven't got any solutions for this, so maybe it's better to stay home (and think about it)
- 3&4. This is the main problem, over the last few years we have seen an increase in teams of 4,5-8 members sharing costs. This year two race teams had 4 or more drivers. OK! You mightn't like sharing the car. But everybody needs a crew and crew need a car, so you've both got the chance there. Sharing the costs with 5-10 people, you couldn't do it much cheaper, unless you won lotto.

So how can we increase your chances? Use the newsletter, advertise or build a cheap racer for fun. There are plenty of cheap unregistered cars for sale, to share the cost of racing in. All our problems, excuses etc don't mean shit to the lake or it's condition, that nature, the only fear is that this is our 8th year, as you wait to go. The years are passing by and the times could change.

PS Just trying to increase our numbers and get you salt racing.

Wayne O'Grady Member #68

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Mum Says.....

Bonneville Salt Flats was invaded by the Australians this year along with more than 350 other entries. Friendships were renewed and strengthened as the Chuck Salmen team was pitted next door. Fun on the salt and in town as we shared stories.

The next event was world of Speed scheduled for Sept. 23-26. Damp salt and then heavy rain left officials and competitors without records. We were never able to get the full mile. Don Vesco took top time of the meet at 282 mph and Sam Wheeler 232 with his motorcycle streamliner.

Don and Rick Vesco are trying funding to come to Gairdner in February. Rick comments, "after being Save the Salt chairman for all these years he is having to travel to Australia to accomplish their Land Speed Record." The International course has a scant 1/2" of salt on the far end and the mud sub-surface doesn't dry. The pumping project is to get under way again this fall but it will take a few years to realise any benefit.

Chuck Salmen was able to pull 1160 HP on the dyno with the new engine: He, along with 16 other vehicles, were unable to make runs during World of Speed because of course conditions and length.

FOR SALE

"STCA" Victorian numberplates ring Rod Hadfield for details.

WANTED

Help wanted urgently in locating any photos of the "Single Minded Racing" 500cc single Cyl motorcycle at Lake Gairdner in 1996. All expenses covered, copies, postage etc. Any help in locating photo's much appreciated.

Phil Arnold
PO Box 319
Ulverstone TAS 7315
Phone 03 6425 5414



The Sum Fun team will travel to El Mirage the weekend of Nov. 13-16 to run in the dirt. He wants to get some runs so that he has an idea of potential speed. His long-term plan is to return to Lake Gairdner in 2000. A special surprise 70th birthday party will be held for him at El Mirage.

The World of Speed was a financial disaster for USFRA. At this time the local members are deciding the future of the club. SCTA is very supportive and the 1999 schedule will probably include only 2 events. Speed Week will be scheduled in August and the World Finals to be moved up a couple of weeks to the first part of October. There are no firm plans right now but it appears that this is the way to go. USFRA will get out a newsletter in January to let the members know the decision.

DLRA members know all about struggling for money to put on events. The 3-day meet expenses exceeded \$42,000.00 with a little over \$23,000.00 income.

Best Holiday wishes to our friends of the DLRA. It is a joy to know you and we now have great memories from times spent together in both countries.

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