



Arizona's Valerie Thompson sets new world record

Eight-time land speed record holder sets new record of 328.467 mph and survives 343.7 mph airborne crash at Australia's Lake Gairdner

Photos: Louis Fischer, Valerie Thompson Racing and Federation Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM)

Valerie Thompson of Scottsdale—America's "Queen of Speed"—achieved a new speed record on the salt flats of Australia, continuing to defend her title as "The World's Fastest Female Motorcycle Racer" while also pursuing the world's fastest title, any gender qualifier aside.

The 28th Annual Speed Week competition, hosted March 12-16 by Dry Lakes Racers Australia (DLRA) at Lake Gairdner, South Australia, was open overall to cars, motorcycles and trucks. The World Speed Trials, a first-time event that week for motorcycles only, was held March 17-19.

Thompson set a new streamliner record of 328.467 mph (528.616 km/h) during Speed Week competition on March 15, earning her membership in the DLRA 200 and 300 MPH Clubs. She is only the second competitor to gain membership in the DLRA 300 MPH Club and was honored with the "Fast Lady on the Lake" award.

The event also proved the superiority of leading edge streamliner design by team engineers Denis Manning and John Jans—the hard way. Thompson survived a horrific crash in the Team "7" Racing Streamliner while attempting to break the (gender-neutral) world's overall fastest motorcycle record of 376.36 mph (605.69 km/h) on the last day of the World Speed Trials.

According to Federation Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM) reports and team video, Thompson

had just passed the four-mile marker on a twelve-mile course when the rear of her streamliner rose off the racing surface, sending the vehicle airborne at 343.7 mph. Parachutes slowed the vehicle as it flipped and rolled multiple times, scattering wreckage for more than a mile across the Lake Gairdner salt flats. Thompson walked away with only minor bruises and lacerations.

A video of the crash by team member Lou Fischer can be found on YouTube.

"We had a singular goal of running 377+ mph to capture the record during the World Speed Trials," said Thompson. "We used Speed Week to test and tune the bike, and I'm happy we set a new record and received the 'Fast Lady on the Lake Award.' The wreck during the World Speed Trials was unfortunate, but we are not giving up on our quest for the new record," said Thompson. "Most importantly, we proved the superiority of the monocoque carbon fiber design and safety features utilized by Denis Manning and John Jans. Without their dedication to high speed safety engineering, I would not be talking with you now. Nobody has ever walked away from a 340+ mph crash on a motorcycle. I'd also like to thank the DLRA and all their race course workers who helped ensure my safety," added a grateful Thompson.

The team is working hard to identify what caused the problem. "We'll know more once we



analyze the onboard data collection systems and review films in more detail," said bike designer and AMA Hall of Fame member Denis Manning. "Valerie did an incredible riding job, doing everything she was supposed to and more. All of us at Team '7' Racing are relieved Valerie did not sustain any life threatening injuries."

About Valerie Thompson

Valerie Thompson is an eight-time land speed record holder on a variety of bikes from Harley-Davidsons to BMWs and streamliners; a member of seven land speed racing 200 MPH Clubs and one 300 MPH Club, the first female to exceed 300 mph in Australia; and the first female on the Bonneville 200 MPH Club Board of Directors. Her racing career spans a decade, driven by a desire to go faster and break even more records.

Off the track, Valerie works as a vehicle presenter at Barrett-Jackson and Metro Auto Auctions in Arizona. Between her work, racing commitments and many special appearances each year, Valerie donates time to charitable organizations and inspiring children overcoming personal challenges. She was awarded the "American Women Riders Community Hero Award" in 2011.

Valerie Thompson will be inducted to the Sturgis Motorcycle Museum Hall of Fame in August (see below).

Her current quest to become the world's fastest motorcycle racer is the subject of P-51 Pictures' and MN8 Films' upcoming feature documentary, *Rockets and Titans*.

The BUB Seven Streamliner

Team "7" Racing's BUB Seven Streamliner is an American purpose-built land speed bike designed by American Motorcycle Association (AMA) Hall of Fame member and multiple world speed record holder Denis Manning.

The vehicle has held the world motorcycle speed records of 350.884 mph from 2006 to 2008 and 367.382 mph from 2009 to 2010.

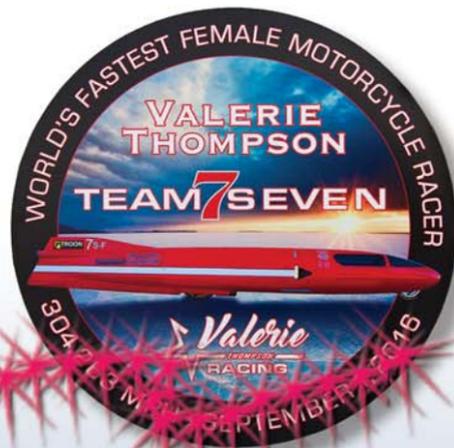
Team "7" Racing owners John Jans (machinist/build-er) and Joe Harralson (engineer/engine designer), with Manning as team leader, have the goal of reclaiming the world's fastest motorcycle title for the third time.

Less than 10 mph separates the Bub Seven Streamliner's top speed from the current record holder, creating a dramatic synthesis between driver talent and engineering ingenuity.

Sturgis Museum Hall of Fame

The Sturgis Motorcycle Museum Hall of Fame in Sturgis, South Dakota recognizes truly legendary individuals who have made a long-term positive impact on the entire motorcycle community.

During the 78th Sturgis Rally (August 3-12, 2018), the Hall Of Fame Induction Ceremony will be held on Wednesday, August 8, at the Lodge at Deadwood in Deadwood, South Dakota, where Valerie Thompson will be inducted into the Class of 2018. For individual tickets or tables of eight, visit sturgismuseum.com or call the Museum at 605-347-2001. ■



**328.467 MPH
MARCH 15, 2018**

