

HALL OF FAMER VALERIE THOMPSON INDUCTED INTO STURGIS

Among the ten days and some half million attendees during the 78th Annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in August, one morning and one individual stand out, as Valerie Thompson of Scottsdale—*The Queen of Speed* and *The World's Fastest Female Motorcycle Racer*—was inducted into the prestigious Hall of Fame at the Sturgis Motorcycle Museum during a ceremony on August 8, held at the Lodge at Deadwood in historic Deadwood, South Dakota, about 14 miles from Sturgis.

Fellow inductees in the Class of 2018 included Jeff Decker, Jack Hoel, Armondo "Mondo" Porras, Marilyn Stemp and Hamsters USA.

Valerie holds eight land speed records on a variety of bikes ranging from Harley-Davidson to BMW to streamliners and is a member of seven land speed racing 200 MPH Clubs and one 300 MPH Club. In 2016, she wowed the racing world at the Bonneville Motorcycle Speed Trials with a speed

of 304.263 mph, piloting Team 7 Racing's BUB Seven Streamliner—only her fifth run in a streamlined motorcycle—becoming the first female driver in a two-wheeled vehicle to top 300 mph. She set a new land speed record of 328.467 mph in DRLA Speed Week competition at Lake Gairdner, Australia this spring (see our May/June 2018 issue), where she also survived a horrific 343.7-mph airborne crash during World Speed Trials.

"It's impossible to put into words how much this honor means to me. Looking over the list of Sturgis Hall of Famers is like a family reunion invitation list. I see friends, mentors, fellow competitors and legends dedicated to racing and promoting the sport each of us loves so much," said Thompson. "I don't think I would be here today if were not for Jesse Jurrens, owner of Legend Suspensions. He lured me from drag racing to my first competition at Bonneville in 2005. So I blame him for my salt

addiction. I also set my first land speed record on fellow hall of famer Keith Ball's Bikernet.com Harley-Davidson," added an emotional Thompson.

"Valerie's many accomplishments both on and off the track have certainly earned her a rightful place in the Sturgis Motorcycle Hall of Fame," stated Myrick Robbins, executive director of the Sturgis Motorcycle Museum and Hall of Fame. "In addition to being one of the most accomplished female motorcycle racers in the world, she has always been an excellent ambassador for those of us who love life on two-wheels."

Team 7 Racing president, BUB Seven designer and AMA Hall of Fame member Denis Manning adds, "I'm tickled pink Valerie is receiving this level of recognition. She's paid her dues on every type of racing surface and has the records to prove it. She knows no fear, delivers on her promises and is a wonderful sponsor representative. I've worked with the best riders in the business from Cal Rayburn to Chris Carr. Valerie ranks right up there with the best of the best."

What's next? Valerie Thompson is the only female in history to compete for the world's fastest motorcycle title (male or female). She and Manning's Team 7 Racing plan to continue this quest in 2019 with the BUB Seven streamliner. ■

