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Motorcycles Limited

Brough Superior breaks AMA/BUB Speed Record by 10 mph

2011 BUB SPEED TRIALS AT BONNEVILLE SALT FLATS, UTAH, USA

September 1st 2011. We are pleased to confirm that, today, our especially constructed 1100cc SS model Brough Superior completed two opposite-direction runs through the measured mile at Bonneville Salt Flats, at a mean average speed of 124.98 mph, breaking the AMA 1350-A-VG Speed Record established by a 1350cc Indian in 2005 at 114 mph!

Prepared over the last nine months by Brough's chief engineer and designer Alastair Gibson [in his Brackley, Northants, workshop] with key assistance from Peter Aldridge Renault F1 engine expert, the unstreamlined vintage Brough, running on pump gasoline, was ridden exclusively by 65-year old Eric Patterson, a former 120 mph record breaker at Bonneville on his own Norton-J.A.P. The new record was achieved over a 5-day period, with eight runs in total. Timed speeds rose from an initial 93 mph, followed by two runs at 103 and 117 mph, breaking the 120 mph barrier on Tuesday August 30th. Following minor problems with an ignition cut out, and the substitution of "drop" handlebars, Wednesday's first run produced an encouraging 125 mph but, unfortunately, with a low return of just 48 mph, due to a recalcitrant gear selector. With midday temperatures exceeding 90 degrees Alastair knew that for optimum speed it was essential the bike ran in early morning time, inasmuch Eric's ultimate two runs – at 127.07 and 122.90 mph – were undertaken on the final day at 8.19 and 9.09 am respectively. Alastair was assisted throughout on the mechanical side by F1 analyst Lawrence Wilkinson from New Zealand, enjoying a busman's holiday from the hectic world of Grand Prix.

The project was masterminded by Mark Upham, Brough Superior's CEO, who came from the firm's HQ at Pettenbach, Austria; also present were David Sharp, team manager, from Jersey, and technical specialist Sam Lovegrove from Cornwall. Further mechanical support was kindly provided by Alan and Stefan, of Revival, a renowned restoration business in Austin, Texas, which he closed for the week, travelling overland to Utah with a team of three mechanics. Several of the Brough's sponsors were present "on the salt", and able to observe a selection of runs, including Brian Bossier of Diamond B, Mark Wilmshire of Ace Café, Mike Fitzsimons of Fitzsimons Engineering, Matt Hind of Men's File magazine, Paul d'Orleans of The Vintagent, and Nick Smith from Bonhams. Although unable to attend, various other firms and individuals made an extremely valuable contribution. Brough Superior Motorcycles Ltd are therefore pleased to recognise the generous support provided by: British Only Austria, Barbour Jackets, Bradey Fabrications, IPL Engineering, First Place Finish Helm Handmade Boots, Robert Ianucci, Charlie Jones, Lewis Leathers, Nick Clements Photographer, Oakbridge Storage & Freight, Victor Olson, Andrew Paul, Ruby Helmets, Alan Sawyer of Luzzo Bespoke Limited, and Progresscoffeeroasting.

Crucial to the success of this major undertaking was the generous gesture by Jay Leno who, for three disruptive days, placed The Big Dog Garage's facilities at the team's disposal enabling them to de-crate, assemble, and test run the machine after its arrival in Los Angeles. Profound thanks are also extended to Double RL, Ralph Lauren's boho subsidiary, who hosted a brilliant *Bon Voyage to Bonneville* evening reception for 300 kindred spirits at 8150 Melrose Avenue on 24th August...an occasion perhaps when RRL's unique store was possibly even further enhanced...thanks to the presence of three new 1920s style highway model Brough Superiors...beside a Bonneville record-breaker-to-be.

So what follows? It is clearly too soon to confirm a return to Bonneville in 2012, but let us quote Alistair Gibson: *"Despite some teething problems, and the extremely high temperatures under which we operated, we've gained invaluable experience. With some modification this Brough'll go quicker yet!"*

ENDS

ILLUSTRATIONS:

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