

MOPAR®

MAY | JUNE 2010 > \$4.50

ROCK ETERNAL MOPAR® STYLE

MOPAR® HEADS OFF-ROAD AT MOAB JEEP® SAFARI

GENERAL FEATURE:
MOPAR-POWERED
STREAMLINER

ORIGINALS:
MOPAR MAINTENANCE
PARTS

TECH INSIDER:
CYLINDER HEAD DESIGN

AUTHENTIC PERFORMANCE





FOUR MOPAR® CYLINDERS = 400 MPH?

RON MAIN AND GEORGE POTEET'S *SPEED DEMON*

Ron Main

California businessman Ron Main has a million ideas racing around in his head—all have something to do with speed. Not the drug, but the MPH thing. “My main claim to fame is being a big show-off,” he says. His ambition is to have the world’s fastest car, and he’s constantly thinking about it. His obsession was evident during a recent conversation. “We (Main, 65, and his racing partner George Poteet, 60, of Tennessee, a well-known hot rodder) want to be the first to go over 400 mph with a four-cylinder car,” he said, while telling us other ideas such as having the world’s fastest naturally-aspirated car, the world’s fastest hydrogen-powered car and the world’s-fastest rubber-band powered car. The last idea, while whimsical, is no joke. He built the car a couple of years ago. It’s powered by 300 rubber bands that drive the car through a system of sprockets. “We ran the car outside our shop recently and found that we have a problem with one of the chains binding, so we’re going to put in an idler sprocket.” He expects the car to go around 35 mph, but for now he and Poteet have other things on their minds.

Their ultimate goal is to have the fastest wheel-driven car powered by an internal combustion engine. The FIA¹ record is 425.050 mph in the measured kilometer, set by Al Teague on August 21, 1991, at Bonneville.²

Main and Poteet have been setting records for several years at Bonneville. Their first goal was to have the world’s fastest Ford flathead-powered car. They accomplished this a few years ago by going just over 300 mph in a streamliner they called FlatFire, designed and built by aeronautical engineering companies. Later they replaced the flathead with a Chevrolet 4-cylinder engine and, with a lengthened rear body section, set FIA records topping out at 345 mph in 2006. “The Chevrolet motor wasn’t strong enough, being a passenger car engine,” said Main, “so we replaced it with a Mopar® midget engine, built and turbocharged by Californian Kenny Duttweiler to achieve 1,100 hp.”

Last year they got the Mopar-powered car up to 390 mph at an FIA-sanctioned meet at Bonneville, but an oil leak prevented the back-up run they needed for a record. This is the engine they will use this year to hopefully achieve their 400-mph goal. They will run at the Bonneville Speedweek in August (In honor of Boy Scout troop 106 of the Great Salt Lake Council—but that’s another story). Later they go for the world record at the Cook Motorsports FIA-FIM event September 20–26. At this FIA meet they will have to make a 2-way average speed exceeding their existing 345-mph record in order to set the new mark.

They call the Mopar midget four “Hellfire.” Poteet used the engine in his ‘69 Barracuda known as “Blowfish,” a beautiful piece of work created by Troy Trepanier’s Rad Rides by Troy in Illinois. The ‘Cuda went over 300 mph a few years back at Bonneville. Here’s what *Hot Rod Magazine* said about the engine in a story last year:

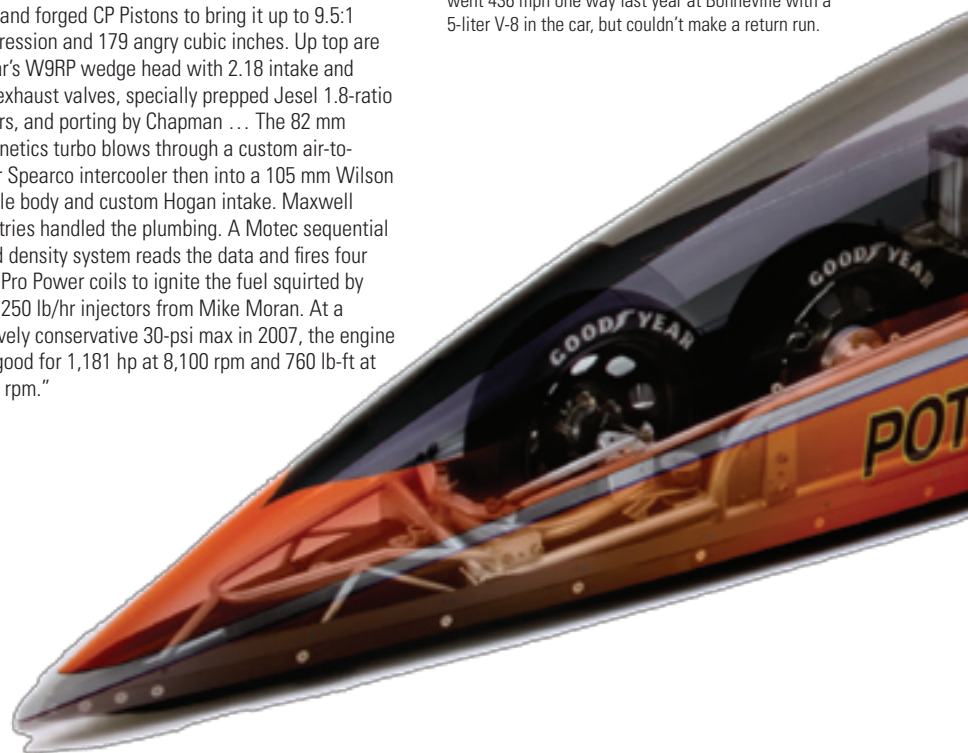
“The mighty 4-cylinder begins with an 8.40-inch-deck-height Mopar A4 aluminum Midget race block. From there, Kenny Duttweiler of Duttweiler Performance in Ventura, Calif., threw in a Scat billet crank, Oliver rods, and forged CP Pistons to bring it up to 9.5:1 compression and 179 angry cubic inches. Up top are Mopar’s W9RP wedge head with 2.18 intake and 1.60 exhaust valves, specially prepped Jesel 1.8-ratio rockers, and porting by Chapman ... The 82 mm Turbonetics turbo blows through a custom air-to-water Spearco intercooler then into a 105 mm Wilson throttle body and custom Hogan intake. Maxwell Industries handled the plumbing. A Motec sequential speed density system reads the data and fires four MSD Pro Power coils to ignite the fuel squirted by eight 250 lb/hr injectors from Mike Moran. At a relatively conservative 30-psi max in 2007, the engine was good for 1,181 hp at 8,100 rpm and 760 lb-ft at 7,100 rpm.”

Currently the engine makes just over 1,200 horsepower with a revised head and 40-psi boost. Will it be enough to put up big 400-plus numbers? They have the Mopar goods to do it. Now all they need is cooperation from the weather and the Salt. Those are very iffy propositions that have tripped up many a record seeker. That’s what keeps ‘em coming back year after year in the quest for speed and fame.

As for the ultimate goal of being the fastest wheel-driven car powered by an internal combustion engine? Poteet and Main have the goods to do it—with a 2500-horsepower V-8 engine they have been developing—to a 436-mph speed last year.

With the slipperiest aerodynamics on the salt the *Speed Demon* could take them to 400 mph with four Mopar cylinders and who-knows-how-fast with the V-8. ■

1. Federation Internationale d’Automobile, the world motor-sport governing body, based in France. www.fia.com.
2. The mile record is 415.896 mph set by Tom Burkland on September 26, 2008, at Bonneville with a streamliner powered by twin Chrysler HEMI® engines. Poteet and Main went 436 mph one way last year at Bonneville with a 5-liter V-8 in the car, but couldn’t make a return run.



400 MPH



George Poteet (L) and Ron Main.



The team has experimented with both "HEMI" and wedge cylinder heads (right photo).

The two front wheels are in line, to cut frontal area (far right photo).

