

Classic Motorcycle Association

Contact: Bob Hutchinson

9746 Tappenbeck Dr.

Houston, TX 77055

classicmotorcycleassociation.org

cma@paq.net

713 467-6602

Additional information

Dan Holmes Goes for Second Bonneville Speed Record Attempt with Classic Royal Enfield Motorcycle

"I grew up with classic motorcycles," says Dan, the owner of DRS Cycles, a Royal Enfield dealership based in Goshen. "My grandfather started a motorcycle business here selling Indian motorcycles. By the time I was born, my father was running it and sold BSAs. However, by the time I was old enough to be interested in bikes, the British and American industries had collapsed and the business sold Hondas."

"All that changed in 1998," he recalls. Out of nostalgia, Dan and his father attended a massive motorcycle show in Chicago. "Towards the end of the day, we spotted a stand in a far hall which had these new but classic-looking motorcycles on them. We went to have a closer look. They were Royal Enfields from India. I became smitten and within months had converted my appliance repair workshop into a Bullet dealership."

In 2001 Dan achieved one of his first goals - DRS Cycles became US dealer of the year, with Dan's sales outstripping all others in the country. "It was a great feeling," he says, "and we only just missed out in 2002. We hope to be back on top this year."

Which brings us to Dan's other aim - to successfully race a Bullet. "We started in August 2000 by racing an almost stock 500cc Bullet in Ohio. We finished in sixth place, wholly due to the excellent skills of our rider, former four times WERA and two times AMA champ, Johnny Szoldrak. We even won the Masters Of The Mid-West Classic 60s Class series on it."

Dan goes on: "Bonneville posed a whole new set of problems and we had to experiment. We produced maximum horsepower on the dyno at 6200 rpm - lower than we expected. Our choice was: do we want to labor at 6000, 6200, and 6500 rpm for three miles or do we want to turn a little faster? None of us knew the answer. Our first big question was how fast are we turning to start with? We turned 120mph on the dyno with our standard race gearing and the engine had earlier turned 7,500rpm on our third test run at Gerencers Harley Davidson in Elkhart, Indiana. Having said that, while the inertia wheel was going around at 120mph, the horsepower curve had fallen off to 28hp. Our peak horsepower was 36 at 6200."

After two long waits in a long line, the team made two runs. The Bullet recorded 102mph on the first and 103mph on the second run: "We were geared too low on the first run and too high on the second," Dan confides.

He continues: "It took us 12 hours to prepare the bike, including dyno time, to search for the fire-proof fuel line, tether the kill switch, jet and convert to pump gas, only to discover that Southern California Timing Association has its own definition of pump gas called 116K, 120 octane. Then we ended up in a fuel class that allowed nitro methane, nitrous oxide, and any other concoction that one can dream of. It felt like we were going round and round in circles in order to travel in a straight line!"