



Well it is more bad news at Bonneville after the cancellation of Speedweek in August. None of this season's scheduled events have been run due to salt conditions. The latest casualty was September's World Finals due to even more rain.

The casino town of Wendover must be hurting from lost revenue. Lake Bonneville is only a 5 minute drive from Wendover. The event attracts hundreds of race teams and thousands of spectators from across the world, all spending money on food, accommodation and fuel. Wendover's Mayor says it's just Mother Nature causing the bad track but some racers are blaming the mining companies. These companies are extracting potassium from the salt. They pump waste salt back onto Lake Bonneville to try to minimize the damage but it doesn't seem to be helping much. I hope the Mayor is right and Mother Nature dries up for the 2016 season of land speed racing.

I thought I would share the latest from Southern California Timing Association

*"We regret to inform you that our World Finals event has been cancelled. The salt conditions have been deteriorating and Mother Nature is not helping us with all of the recent rain storms."*

*"Our Course Prep crews have made multiple trips to the salt to prepare the race courses and were not able to find even one good long course, unfortunately."*

*"It is our opinion that the current salt conditions could not possibly sustain the many hundreds of vehicles that would come across the surface of the Bonneville Salt Flats at our SCTA/BNI event"*

Salt racers can also race on the clay pan at El Mirage, but coming up to August 2015, it was also wet.

Evelyne Scholz from Western Australia took her motorbike to race at Bonneville Speedweek and was disappointed when she found out the event had been cancelled. It's hard to hold Evelyne down for long, from her facebook site she has taken advantage of the time in the USA by hiking through some of America's most spectacular sites. She then took the opportunity to enter herself and her bike in the Mojave Mile.

SCTA knew Evelyne Scholz and other international racers, with Bonneville absolutely wrecked and El Mirage damp, were all dressed up with nowhere to go. They did cancel SpeedWeek as early as possible to save unnecessary grief for these racers but many, actually most, already had their race cars on the sea. So SCTA and BNI sent their scouts out to find something that would appease the frustrations of these fellow racers.

Through forums and media outlets, the Mojave Air and Space Port was suggested. Also known as the Civilian Aerospace Test Centre, the Mojave Air and Space Port has an interesting story. Its prime objective is to give permission for private companies to try extraordinary things in air and space. It is where Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic takes off and lands. So a few salt lake racers on the air strip does not scare them, in fact it has long been used for standing mile events.

SCTA and BNI started negotiations. They needed a minimum of 130 race teams to make the idea fly, and they had no trouble getting the numbers.

The new SCTA event was run as a standing mile event, were competitors took off from a standing start, given one mile to reach top speed, then were timed with a 132 foot laser trap and given 1.3 miles to shut down.

You could image the different style racing this would offer the salt lake racers. The hard



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concrete would be less forgiving on the race car and make it easier to brake something. Salt Lake cars are generally highly geared for top end speed, not for a fast take off from a standing start. When you take off too hard on the salt it simply means a bit of a wheel spin, take off too too hard might mean losing it and a bit of embarrassment but not usually broken parts. There would have been a lot of learning curves in the Mojave Desert early August. Sounds like fun.

It is not the first time SCTA has run a race

meet on a hard surface. Back in the 50's and 60's they ran a drag race meet where drag racers and salt lake racers came together for a bit of fun. Amazing pair offs resulted were vastly different cars were raced off together – some with fast low speed acceleration while the salt cars had a slow start and amazing top end acceleration.

So, all set to go, August 8-9th, the weekend Bonneville would have started, was the chosen date at the Mojave Airport.

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Further good news is that El Mirage has dried up and is open for racing.

Meanwhile back in Australia preparations are taking place for our own DLRA Speedweek. Our event happens on the 29th of February 2016. It is time to pull the roadster out of the trailer and start work to go fast.

See you at the Salt,  
**Norm Hardinge.**



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