



In Australia, preparations are well under way for the DLRA Speedweek 2016 at Lake Gairdner. The dates are February 29th to March 4th. After the cancellation of a season of Bonneville events, the Dry Lakes Racers Australia have offered assistance to American racers who would like to compete at our event. So far we have had interest shown by three teams - one is Target 550, a team owned by Marlo Treit.



We are all excited at the thought The Target 550 Steamliner racing on our salt. Target 550 has been built over a 10 year period and is one of the best built cars I have seen. The car and team are now ready to go for the world's landspeed record. As the name suggests, Marlo has a target of 550mph.

At DLRA Speedweek 2016 there will be many new vehicles making their first appearance. One such vehicle is Craig Rogers' Lakester. Craig Rodgers originally wanted his lakester to debut at DLRA's Speedweek 25 in 2015 but continual delays in the body work by his original body guy meant the task of completing the Lakester before the event was impossible. Craig mentioned his problem at a local car event and was recommended to try Bob Maslen Race Cars located in Taylors Lakes,

close to Calder Park. Bob had never worked on a salt lake racer and was keen to take on the task. Over the next forty days, Bob Maslen worked solidly on Craig's car until the job was completed. Bob started by marking out the high points of the chassis with a string line, then formed up the thirty four panels that make the body. The lower panels are steel to help with durability while the top panels are aluminium. The Lakester also has a wing formed on steel tube, filled with foam and covered in aluminium. Bob said the hardest part was the windscreen frame. He is very happy with the result and is looking forward to seeing the car painted. Thanks to Bob Maslen Craig will have the Lakester to Speedweek 2016.

Craig has always been a car nut, heavily involved in V8 Supercars with his mate Hayden Ivers. Craig and Hayden heard about salt lake racing and decided to take a look. First year, they offered themselves as volunteers to DLRA and ended up as helpers on the start line. Second year, they heard that Greg Butler needed a crew and offered themselves to help out.

Craig had seen enough, he thought, I can do this. He said the best thing he liked about salt lake racing was that he could build a machine to whatever his imagination came up with as long as he kept it within the guidelines of the rule book. He saw a photo of a black lakester

that raced at Bonneville and had to have one. That black lakester was GOT SALT, a very successful American 325 mph record holding race team.

Craig purchased an old rear engine rail that hadn't been raced for 25 years, thinking he could convert it into a slippery streamlined record breaking salt car. After cutting the old racer in half to accommodate a new power plant and to upgrade the safety systems, he found the wall thickness and pipe diameter of the rail would not comply with the DLRA rule book. So after a long discussion with the DLRA Chief Tech Inspector Bob Ellis, Craig decided the only way he could finish the build was to sideline the old rail and start from scratch.

After weeks of sleepless nights, plans for the new improved lakester started to take shape. Craig has designed and built the new car mostly by himself in his shed at home in very cold Ballan, Victoria. It is 30 ft long (9 metres) with a 21 foot wheelbase (6.5 metres). For the power plant, Craig is getting Spencer Race Engines to screw together a 6 cylinder BA Falcon block and head matched to a FG Typhoon manifold with a big arse turbo. Spencer Race Engines are expecting around 850 horsepower from the combo. Craig is using a Tremec 5 speed with a 9" full floating diff. Craig came across Spencer Race Engines



in his line of work and could not believe how fussy they were in their workshop. He thought if they were only half as fussy with his engine, he wouldn't have a problem in the world, so they got the job.

The Lakester rides only 12mm off the ground and has no suspension hence the need for steel lower body panels. The steering is a neat funny car rack and pinion made by Strange Engineering.

Craig's first ever drive on the salt will be when he debuts his 850 hp lakester is going to be one hell of a ride!

See you at the salt!
Norm Hardinge



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