



Men in Black

Mike started all this way back in the 1980's and it takes a lot of support to get the Bullett to Bonneville and into the record books. No one could really help Mike or Byran all those years when they were fabricating the bike as that's a creative process that definitely does not want an audience.

That all changes when it's time to roll. Without support, both personal and material, it would be a tough road. Rolling Thunder and pushrods on the salt continues. Next up: 5th Gear and past 230 mph.



Mike Geokan

“To the sculptor form is everything and is nothing. It is nothing without the spirt - with the idea it is everything” Victor Hugo, May 13, 1885

Mike Geokan's Bonneville Bullett



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The Art and Science of Velocity



Mike Geokan

Human gestation is nine months then about 80 years later you drop dead. Go off to Viet Nam in 1966 (left above) and your life expectancy, especially if you were in combat, was much shorter. Fly at high speed through a picket fence on an out of control Panhead and be a patch holding member of Brother Speed for 40 years and all bets are off. Climb on a 200 mph Bonneville bike leaning over sideways on wet salt in a sudden crosswind and the the actuaries cross your name off the list. We're fragile but still dangerous animals.



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Growing up near Wendover, Utah, Mike Geokan was introduced to the Bonneville Salt Flats and land speed record attempts in the 1950's and 60's. Long before the jungles of Viet Nam and tank warfare. Long before embarking on an outlaw biker lifestyle, marriage, divorce, becoming a father, a grandfather, an author and a Bonneville Record Holder. Our future is born in our past.

Mike saw Donald Campbell and his famous Bluebird streamliner and spent time teaching the Bluebird crew to play baseball instead of cricket. Mickey Thompson passed through with his four Pontiac engined Challenger with pallets of spare engines. Mike took Craig Breedlove rabbit hunting and saw the underside of a 300SL Gullwing Mercedes on the only car lift in town. Seeds of obsession or destruction are planted early and you either scratch the itch or be eternally miserable.

College didn't work. No one was your backup, the perimeter was wide open, and firearms weren't allowed in the classroom. Two wheeled brotherhood came to the rescue and Mike became the the "go to" for everyone wanting to build a Knucklehead or Panhead Chopper. Mike wrote the book on it. No reality TV. The real deal.

The itch returned and in the 1980's and 90's Mike set Bonneville records on his famous #226 Blue Bike. In 1992 Mike retired #226 and embarked on a 17 year odyssey to build the Bullett.



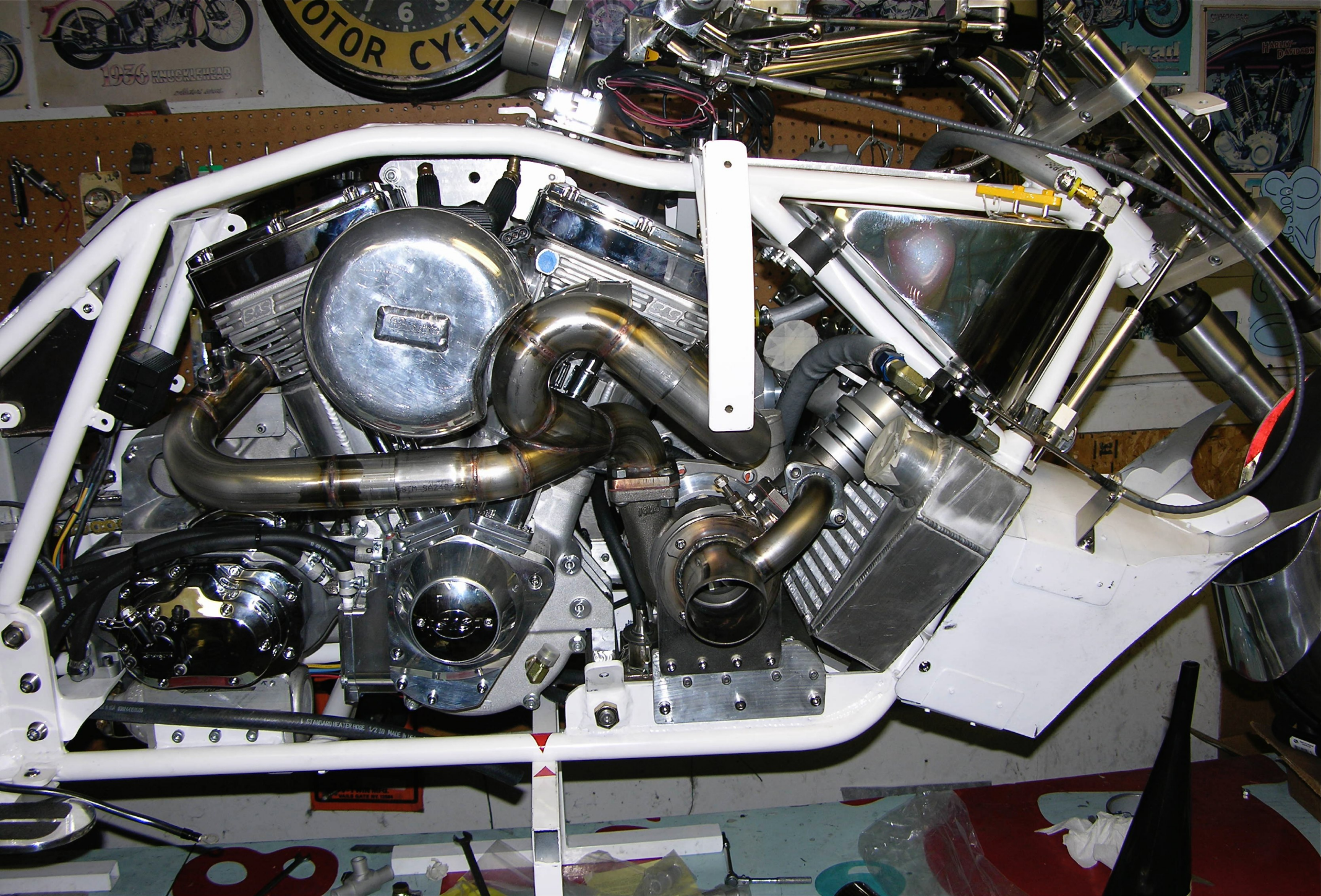
Retired #226 Blue Bike. Designed and built by Mike. Bonneville record holder for over a decade. Watercooled, turbocharged, intercooled, fuel and water injected 104" Evo engine. Angry, she watches the Bullet come to life.



1990's: Bonneville Salt Flats. Wet salt, 255 horsepower, 22 lbs of boost, 199 mph, and bouncing airborne out of a rut at the four mile marker. A cup of water from an official at the end of the run. Jennifer removing salt buildup and Bryan Stock laying on the salt working on the bike. Some things don't change...



Four photos and 17 years of work. Mike makes a new frame with a 99" wheelbase and 45 degrees of rake that has 75 separate brackets. New aluminum body hand-formed by Mike and Bryan Stock. A 425 hp 139" ORCA engine that is watercooled, turbocharged, and fuel injected. ORCA engine is named "CA2"...Great White Killer.



Beneath the Bullett's aluminum skin is a tightly integrated system to make the 425 hp necessary to push the bike past 250 mph. Radiator. 600 hp Turbo. Wastegate. Stainless steel turbo manifold. 5 speed transmission with dry clutch and wet chain primary. Large intercooler. Dual stage water injection. Stainless fuel tank. Busy.



2008 Bonneville technical inspection. The bike, Mike's safety gear, all pass with flying colors. SCTA rules require you have a CB radio in your chase vehicle, in this case Walt Henning's diesel truck...So the Bullet's crew went back to Wendover and bought a CB radio at the truck stop. Everyone loved the bike, especially the car guys.



Bonneville Speed Week 2008. Mike Geokan and his 17 year odyssey are about to leave the starting line. The engine has run a total of less than 10 minutes and the bike has never been ridden, much less turned a wheel, beyond rolling to the starting line. 1000 lbs, 45 degrees of rake, up to 425 hp, an untested clutch, and Mike.



Part way down the course Mike spun the tire hard and the bike went sideways and slammed Mike into the salt shattering his collar bone. After an ambulance ride to Salt Lake City, Mike returned to see his bike go down the course with another rider making two test runs under 100 mph, then it was back to Boise for medical attention.



Bub Speed Trials 2009. Rolling off the access road onto the Salt Flats. Bryan Stock in the lead headed out for his first ride on the Bullett, with Mike back in Boise cursing his six screw, titanium-plated collar bone. Not a SCTA-BNI event, no licenses, no Bonneville records, and wet salt conditions...but Bryan needed saddle time.



The Bub Meet inspection process went smoothly until one official decided the holes front wheel might not be “big enough”. Three levels of AMA Officials later the wheels were approved. The Bullett pit has shade, chairs, beer, Gatorade, and water. Lots of waiting. The sun, the heat, and the salt beats the living crap out of you.



While Bryan suits up the Utah Brother Speed crew unloads the Bullet. Buggy racks up bonus miles seated on the Bullet during loading and unloading flights, gaining valuable ramp time. High tech 4x4 block keeps old ramp from bending. Annie was there a long time ago when the Blue Bike was racing, when "Shadow" was alive.



After one low speed pass the bike was having trouble finding neutral so adjustments were made to the linkage and the electric shifter. The Bullett was wheeled outside the pits for an unauthorized test but something still seemed wrong, so a tent was put over the bike look again. The crew decided to wheel her back to the trailer.



Bryan pulled the primary, clutch, and transmission and Carl Pelletier had transmission tools and parts sent Next Day Air to the salt. Other parts were driven in from Salt Lake City. Bryan had to grind a bearing race off of the main shaft. Repaired, the bike ran 174 and 183 mph in the two mile. If you don't run, you don't sort it out.



No that's not snow!

On a bike he had never ridden. On course that was wet. Barely cracking the throttle on a 1000 lb 425 hp turbo bike with 45 degrees of rake, when he had never ridden a turbo anything, Bryan made it twice down the course at 174 and 183 mph.

What's the first thing you do? You grab the nearest cell phone and call Mike and tell him it was the nastiest piece of iron you'd ever sat on, that it was strange as hell, and that it made a 21 over rigid seem like a Cadillac.

And adding that, after 100 mph, it was the best ride on the Earth, straight as an arrow at at 183 mph and with two gears to go and running only 9 pounds of boost it needed a longer track. Bub only gave you two miles then a turn out at the three mile marker.

By the way, Bryan drove the Bullett back to the pits, something you can't do at a real SCTA-BNI Bonneville meet. 38 years of riding choppers has to pay off somewhere.

Then the guilt sets in. It wasn't supposed to be this way. It was Mike's ride. Mike called the shots and Bryan stepped up. Big time.



Back from the Bub Meet at the Brother Speed clubhouse in Boise. The Bullett, the race trailer, the trucks, cars and motorcycles all have to be washed and rustproofed. The Salt eats everything and you can never get it all off. No rider's lounge with shrimp cocktails for Bryan. Entry to the lounge requires a SCTA-BNI record like Mike has.



SCTA-BNI World Finals 2009

At the 2009 World Finals the weather delayed events one day and the team got set back another day when Bryan's \$1,000.00 leathers didn't pass tech due to some cloth panels in the sleeves. Blaine drove in leather and sewing materials from Salt Lake and Mark "Crash" Mackey drove in 340 miles from Boise on his Softail through freezing weather with Mike's white leathers for backup.

Bryan and Bugsy turned the hotel room into a combo bar and leather repair shop and sewed on leather panels. The next day Bryan got his first of three licenses.

To go to long course you first have to make runs close to but not faster than 150, 175 and 200 mph. Bryan reeled off 145, 163 and 191 mph runs watching his GPS Speedometer.

There was some drama with one dead battery and on his last pass Bryan felt something let go and coasted off the course after going 191 mph. An engine sprocket had loosened from repairs done at the Bub meet.

It didn't matter, the Bullett and Bryan are both certified for long course and 200+ mph.



Three days left and 135 people in the line. Waiting 8 hours, Bryan cranks out his first run on Friday hitting 145 mph on his 150 mph licensing pass and collects his timing slip. On Saturday Bryan hit his 175 mark at 163 mph and just missed his 175-200 license with speed at the two mile of 173 mph and 179 mph at the 3 mile.

\$200.00 Cash, Beer and Girls

Strange things happen at the Salt Flats. Bryan completes his second run on Saturday and along comes the director of a music video and offers Bryan \$100.00 to drive the Bullet through their set. Bryan tells him to take a walk and the offer goes up to \$200.00 and all the imported beer the crew can drink. Bryan checks out the girls, the beer, and the money, and gives his OK.

On wet salt, on a bike with 10 degrees of steering lock, Bryan makes two trips on the Bullett past the dancing girls and some dude lip-synching. Pocket the \$200.00, drink the beer, and take the crew to a Chinese dinner.





World Finals 2009 Sunday. Bryan going for his final 200 mph license. Bryan nails it with a 184 mph at the 2 mile and 191 mph at the three mile. Bryan was pissed because they wouldn't allow his 179 mph pass on Saturday to count, but rules are rules, and he got his long course license. Both bike and rider are cleared for 200+ mph.



Seventeen years later. Four trips to Bonneville and the Bullett is finally cleared for what it's supposed to do...be the fastest sit up bike in the world. Not store bought, but hand fabricated in the tradition of the Bonneville greats like Sir Malcolm Campbell's Bluebird, the Summers Brothers Goldenrod and Harley pioneers like Bob George.



One last thing to do. Call Mike and tell him you're bringing home the Bullett in one piece and that you've got her qualified for long course. The bike impressed everyone, showing that art and function can coexist. Loyalty.



2010: Brother Speed Bullett Benefit in Burley. Raising money and having a good time to speed Mike's Bonneville project along. You don't ride alone and you can't do projects like the Bullett alone. You might be born alone and die alone but the in-between is where flesh meets flesh and the rubber hits the road. Music, Food, and a chance for Mike to thank everyone who helped out from the various chapters. Rolling Thunder in Idaho.



Even if you couldn't make it to the Salt Flats you could get up close and personal with both the # 8228 Bullett and Mike's famous record holding #226 Blue Bike. Bryan started up the Bullett and his son Nick finally got to drive the Blue Bike nearly 20 years after his first trip to Bonneville. Fast bikes and beautiful women.



Dyan and Original Mike. Everyone knows Mike never smiles...So why is he smiling? Maybe its because passion sort of goes in twos. Two wheels and two people. We have actually seen Mike momentarily happy when he figured out some complex problem on his race bikes but there is no photographic record of it.



2010 World of Speed: Back on the starting line Bryan gets ready to head back down the course...but first a photo op. They weren't offering beer or money but the girl was cute.



Showtime. Just you and the damp, slippery, salt and a 1000 pound motorcycle with more horsepower than five Dressers. A few minutes later Bryan has gone 212 mph cruising along in 4th gear. That sent the Bullett to impound for a record run the next morning.



On the way to impound you stop to pick up your timing slip. The USFRA Officials are just as happy as you are that you are headed for impound with a 212 mph run. We made it to impound and made a run the next morning, but a stretched inlet valve limited the return run to 197 mph. It was back to Boise for repairs.



World Finals 2010. The Bullett has now been inspected by every Land Speed racing organization on the West Coast. SCTA, USFRA, and the AMA. Everyone sticks their nose in this gap and they want to know why the fender has a big hole in the middle of it. Mike just smiles.



On the way to the starting line you stop to get your racing gasoline and your fuel tank must be sealed. You cannot refill the gas tank unless it is witnessed by an official tech inspector and this can only be done from a container that also was previously filled and sealed. Mark is always working.



On our way to the starting line about three miles down the course from the pits. The salt on the access road is very wet which means the course is probably very wet too. Gale force winds came up and the course was shut down while we were on the starting line, so we covered up the bike to try again the next morning.



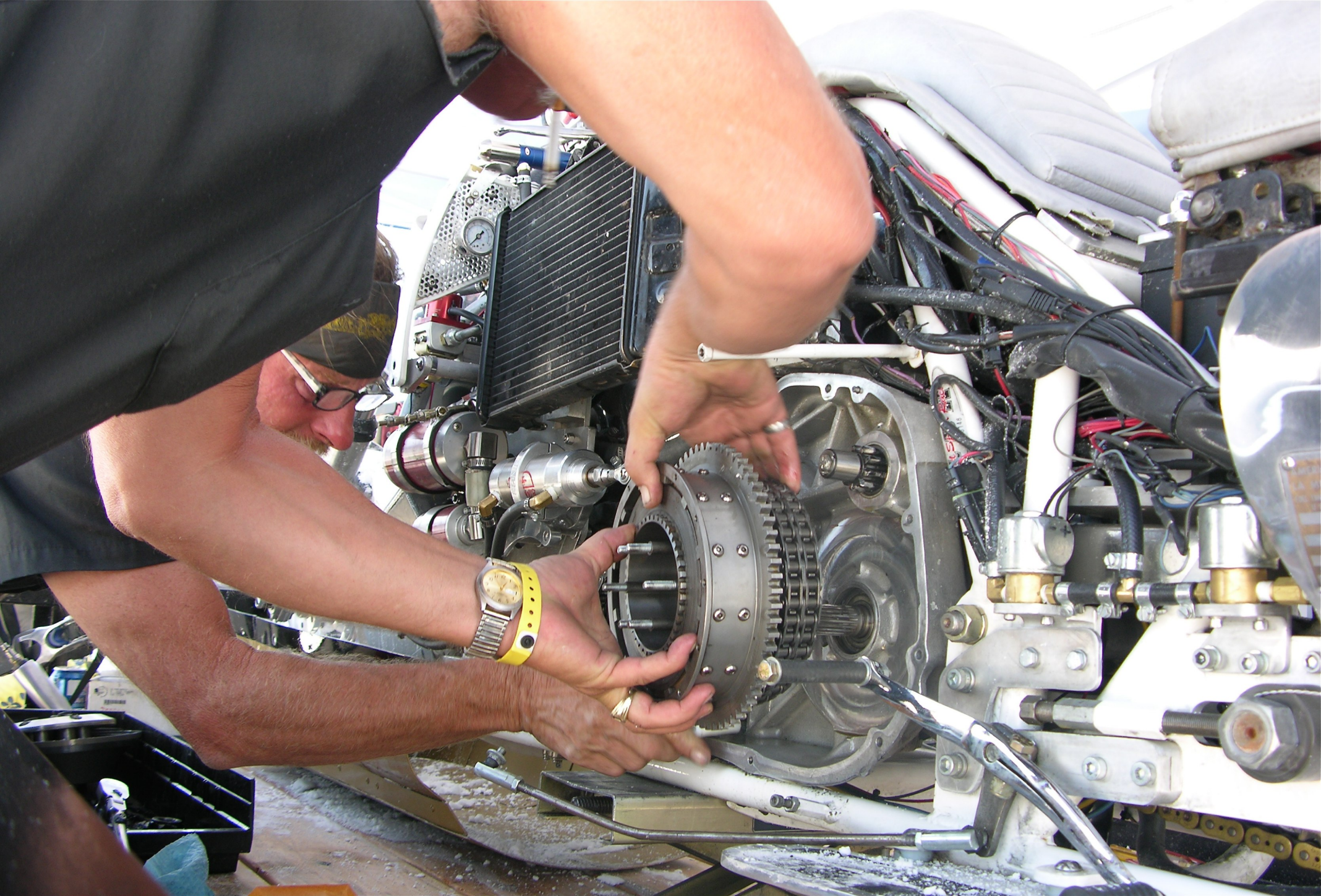
Warming the bike up before the start. Bryan getting ready to leave down a wet slippery course. During the run there was a fuel delivery problem and the engine lost power. Turns out it was a clogged filter from some metal shavings left a decade ago in the baffles of the custom made stainless fuel tank. The engine had to come apart.



Speed Week 2011: After the engine was repaired from the 2010 World Finals, Brother Speed was back at the Salt Flats. As usual, Flyin Bryan and the Bullett were the center of attention. Bad Boys and Bad Bikes. Blaine had some repairs after an encounter with a truck on his way to joining a Brother Speed run...he kept all his parts.



Bryan made an easy 199 mph pass down the course and went into impound qualifying for a record attempt. Black and Gold in the hot sun. No shade at Bonneville.



On his return run the next morning the primary chain snapped in two. Brother Speed Road Glided a new primary chain in from Salt Lake and Bryan and Mark did the repairs. After the repairs were made Bryan again qualified for a record with a 203 mph run down the course.



On the return run for record after the 203 mph pass the Bullett's turbo decided to swallow a big chunk of salt which destroyed the compressor, shaft and exhaust turbines. Back to Boise to replace the turbo's center section which was FedEx'ed in from California...and fabricate a stainless steel air cleaner out of a kitchen sieve.

2011 World of Speed Bonneville Salt Flats

Mike Geokan and his creation on the starting line, headed for back to back 200 mph runs into the record books 20+ years after he laid down the first frame tube.

Thousands of man hours. Endless days and nights while the world was spinning on it's axis and the less obsessed were pursuing pleasant activities and climbing their economic and social ladders.

Hand someone a blank sheet of paper and ask them to write a short story, a book, or design record setting Bonneville bikes...and the paper stays blank and the pencil never gets sharpened.

Mike took the time to write books, to create stories and history and paid the cost to do so. There is always a cost. Few want to pay.

In 2008 the Bullett turned its wheel for the first time and in 2011 in went into the record books cruising along at over 200 mph in 4th gear with 200 unused horsepower.

Here Mike is discussing Tank Warfare in Viet Nam with two Viet Nam Vets. Heavy Iron.





Back in impound after another record qualifying run. Check the spark plugs and get ready for a 5 AM return to the starting line. The course is rutted and Bryan intends to set the record at low boost in 4th gear. The bike has up to 550 hp and is geared for 294 mph but we're not going there yet.

Bryan Stock “Flyin Bryan” 200 MPH Record Run

The starter told Bryan to stay in the middle of the course until the two mile marker then head for the right side and, that after the four mile marker, the course was a bit rough.

Hey, those are the cards you’re dealt and this is time when you man up and head into the unknown. Snick it in fourth gear, hit your 200+ mph, and stay out of the ruts.

Bryan and Mike have been friends and in Brother Speed for over 40 years and Bryan took over the riding duties when health issues kept Mike off the bike and from even coming to Bonneville in 2009 and 2010. Taking someone’s old lady or their bike and getting in the saddle is not a light affair.

Bryan was constantly torn about piloting Mike’s dream while Mike had to stay in Boise.

Mike moved his “Original Mike” decal to the right side of the fairing and Bryan’s “Flyin Bryan” to the left side of the fairing, the side the starter in on.

Bryan delivered.





End of the run. Back to back 200 mph passes. Now it's off to impound and inspection to actually certify the record. You have to go directly there. If you go back to your pits no record.



Impound: Tom Evans Head Tech Inspector

Tom used an air gauge to verify the Bullett's 139 inch displacement. After struggling with the damn thing which gave readings above and below the 139 cubic inches, Tom declared "It was exactly 139 Cubic Inches".

Tom and Bryan had had a run-in before when the primary chain broke and Bryan stopped short in getting completely off the course, causing Tom to "Red Flag" Bryan and the bike. After some heated discussions that matter was resolved. Tom and Bryan got along fine after that.

Going to breakfast at the Red Garter Tom was always joking about Bryan's cut off sleeves saying he could not afford long sleeves. It was duly noted that Tom could not afford long sleeves when he certified the Bullett, Bryan, and Brother Speed into the record books.

Tom is a motorcyclist and was happy for Bryan as he himself had tried to go 200 on two wheels but hadn't done it yet.

Nothing's easy. There's a lot of stories on the journey however.