



August 8, 2018

Volkswagen aims to break the land speed record on the United States salt flats with its new Jetta

- The record-breaking car is based on the new Jetta GLI and is expected to reach a speed of more than 335 km/h
- After the success of the I.D. R Pikes Peak, the Jetta is set to tackle the third record in three months

Wolfsburg (D) / Herndon (USA) – Volkswagen is still on the hunt for new records: only a few weeks after the success of the electric I.D. R Pikes Peak in the “Race To The Clouds” held in the Rocky Mountains and in the UK’s Goodwood Hill Climb and it’s already time for the next sporting highlight. Between 11 and 17 August, Volkswagen of America will be aiming to break the land speed record in the BGC/G class of the Southern California Timing Association on Lake Bonneville – the salt flats in the US state of Utah – with its specially prepared but near-production version of the new-generation Jetta ¹.



The new US Jetta: record-breaker

This Volkswagen is powered by a four-cylinder turbo engine (TSI) from the EA888 engine family with a power output of significantly more than 500 PS. A similar engine with a slightly more demure power rating will also be used in the new Jetta GLI, which will soon be taking off in the US. Engines in this high-torque series

are used to power vehicles including the Golf GTI Performance² (169 kW / 230 PS) and the Golf R³ (228 kW / 310 PS). On Lake Bonneville, the TSI engine must accelerate the modified Jetta to more than 208.572 mph (335.5 km/h) to equal the existing record for a car in this class. To get an idea of the speed: racing cars on the legendary Hunaudières track battle it out at speeds of 340 km/h in the “24 Hours of Le Mans”. Hinrich J. Woebcken, President and CEO of Volkswagen of America: “With this attempt at the record we want to underline the sporting potential of the new Jetta and inspire our customers with the more powerful Jetta GLI.”

The record-breaking car can reach a speed of more than 335 km/h as it is very light (the interior comprises only the controls for driving, a bucket

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seat with racing belts and a roll cage) and has excellent aerodynamics (C_d value: 0.27) As in the case of the I.D. R Pikes Peak – with which Volkswagen set the new record for the Pikes Peak International Hill Climb (Race To The Clouds) in the US on 24 June and then left the record for electric vehicles in the dust in the Goodwood Hill Climb at the Goodwood Festival of Speed in the UK on 9 July – the aerodynamics also ensure a very high downward thrust. This factor is essential in making sure the Jetta stays safe on the salt flat track, even at extreme speeds.

The Jetta, developed by Volkswagen of America in cooperation with the Bonneville specialists at THR Manufacturing in Ventura, California, has further technical refinements on board: in addition to a very low chassis, these include special salt flats wheels and tyres, a limited slip differential for optimum grip and two brake parachutes in the rear end. The specially developed Bonneville graphics on the body were contributed by Volkswagen's Southern California Design Center. "We wanted to emphasise the technical charisma of the Jetta and give the car designer graphics that set it apart from the extraterrestrial-looking environment of the Bonneville Salt Flats," says Reto Brun, Director of the Design Center.

If the attempt succeeds, this Jetta will be the fastest near-production Volkswagen ever to be put on wheels. This record is currently held by a 399 kW / 543 PS Beetle LSR, which – also powered by an EA888 engine – reached a speed of 205.122 mph (330.11 km/h) on Lake Bonneville.

¹⁾ This vehicle is not available for sale in Germany.

²⁾ Golf GTI Performance – fuel consumption in l/100 km: urban 8.7 – 8.2 / extra-urban 5.4 – 5.2 / combined 6.6 – 6.3; combined CO₂ emissions in g/km: 150 – 144; efficiency classes: D, C

³⁾ Golf R – fuel consumption in l/100 km: urban 8.9 – 8.6 / extra-urban 6.2 – 5.9 / combined 7.2 – 6.9; combined CO₂ emissions in g/km: 165 – 157; efficiency classes: D

About the Volkswagen brand: "We make the future real"

The Volkswagen Passenger Cars brand is present in more than 150 markets throughout the world and produces vehicles at over 50 locations in 14 countries. In 2017, Volkswagen delivered 6.23 million vehicles including bestselling models such as the Golf, Tiguan, Jetta or Passat. Currently, 198,000 people work for Volkswagen across the globe. The brand also has 7,700 dealerships with 74,000 employees. Volkswagen is forging ahead consistently with the further development of automobile production. E-mobility, smart mobility and the digital transformation of the brand are the key strategic topics for the future.
