



Speed Hookie – One In A Million Floor Job

When I first saw the Subaru station wagon in the World of Speed short course staging lanes last September I thought it was just a couple of spectators who got mixed up and didn't know where to park. The car was at the end of the line so I figured the USFRA staging personnel would soon sort it out.



A couple hours later I was back on the short course and there was that darn Subaru again..., but now the light green car was plastered in 2-inch blinding bright blue painter's tape where the owners had taped up the gaps on not only all the body panels but all light, grille, windows – even the driver's door was taped up which meant the driver was going to be crawling through the open window.

"Give me a break," I said aloud as I burst out laughing, "What do they hope to prove?" Then it hit me: The 130MPH Club of course and because this all-wheel-drive pony was the turbocharged version it might just turn out to be the little wagon that could. I walked over and introduced myself.

Not some naughty teenager who swiped the family car, but the responsible parties were mom and dad Jodi and John Griffin in line with the "race car" officially registered as T35 by the USFRA officials. The 2006 Subaru Outback 2.5 XT was just shy of 30,000 miles and had not been modified in any way.

Well, sort of... you see, the Griffin's had removed all their personal belongings and got rid of all the kid's stuff when they dropped off nine-year old 4th grader

John Christian (JC) and six-year old 1st grader Jamie at school back in Salt Lake before they drove out to the Bonneville Salt Flats so daddy could play racecar driver for the day.

"I did all of the driving," explained Griffin, 42, when I asked why he didn't let his wife drive, "My wife Jodi doesn't usually drive the Subaru so she did not feel comfortable with shifting, it's a manual transmission, but she would have been 50 pounds lighter!"

Griffin didn't get to make his first run down the speedway until noon. "I could have done better if it had been cooler," he explained afterwards, "at least that was what I was told, but my last run was my best, a little after 2PM, so I can't blame it entirely on the heat. It was fun and I will definitely be back.

The big question is whether or not to make any modifications now that the warranty is up." OK, just what modifications would he make?

"I saw a guy who changed out his Outback components with STI components," he observed, "I'd be open to suggestions. My dream would be to get a big enough garage to get a "hot rod" to race because my wife would like this better than using the family car."

Daddy Griffin's Speeds:

- Run 1 128.46645mph
- Run 2 127.39128mph
- Run 3 128.16111mph
- Run 4 128.86679mph
- Run 5 129.29049mph

And just like Cinderella, Jodi and John had a "witching hour" to be mindful of..., they had to be done by a certain time to pick up the kids at school back in Salt Lake later that day.

One in a million

If ever I needed a sign that I'm in the right business, it came to me late on a Friday night in a most unlikely place – an Amsterdam photography museum in the Netherlands. FOAM (The Future of Photography Museum) was concluding a yearlong public inquiry about the future of the art.

FOAM asked photographers, critics, writers, academics, researchers, curators and media specialists to formulate their own inspirational visions of the future of photography, based on their specific knowledge. Being a shooter my entire

adult life and the fact the place was open late put hubby Mick and I on a path for its front door opening onto one of the city's storied canals.

Inside, we wandered about alternating between being thoroughly bored and utterly intrigued, before coming upon an installation entitled, "Photography in Abundance" where the creative director of a communications agency got the idea to see how many photographs he could download from the internet and print in one random 24-hour period.

It's a bit misleading and bit unclear on who did what because the fancy art director dude wouldn't respond to calls or email, but the museum staff said a print making company printed the hundreds of thousands of snapshots that were downloaded at random from cyberspace and gave them "life" in the real world.

That "life" didn't amount to much individually, but collectively it certainly was an entertaining. It took a full weekend for the entire staff, working in shifts of three hours each, to create a beautiful, wavy landscape in three rooms you see here. Everybody helped except the guy who came up with the idea in the first place.

The staff had cleverly made the entrance only wide enough for one person at a time to enter; you had to walk through a short hall painted all black with black curtains hanging at both ends to withhold from view what was waiting on the other side.

Mick had gone on ahead and since it was late, no one was behind me and I paused at the threshold thinking "What a mess. What a waste of materials" before the businesswoman in me tried to calculate the cost in terms of ink and paper required to make the mountains of photos spread out before me.

I surveyed the room, noting the pile of snapshots scattered all over the floor flowed as an unbroken stream into another

room with mounds climbing the walls more than eight feet high in some places. Good grief.

It was when I looked down and at last focused on one image that my heart skipped a beat. There on the floor, right between my feet was a single 4x6 print of



a belly tank lakester in the staging lanes at Bonneville. Stunned, I yelled at Mick to come back. No one was going to believe this if I didn't have a witness.

Well, I got three. My voice must have sounded desperate because Mick not only whirled around, but it attracted two more people who came up behind me. All three must have thought I was nutzoid looney tunes as I refused to move and demanded: "Look at my feet, no look between my feet!"

Only Mick understood and picked up the snapshot – I wouldn't move for another few seconds still reeling from the shock and still trying to calculate the odds of seeing a land speed racing photo out of the damn near million lying on the floor.

Finding the curator on duty, I explained what I did for a living and where I was from, we three had nice chat, a great laugh and before parting she handed the print to me as a souvenir.

Fuel For Thought

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Back home in the states I found that the #221 tank was tribute to the Liberty Garage in Northern California and belonged to Steve Nelson out of Petaluma who ran in the vintage four-cylinder class the same as Roy Creel, Irene and Shug Hanchard and Mike Stewart.

When I telephoned Nelson to give him the 411 on his car, he had the same response I did after ruminating about it all the way across the Atlantic, "Amazing!"

Note: Photojournalist Louise Ann Noeth is the authoress of the award-winning book, "Bonneville: The Fastest Place on Earth," a complete historical review of the first 50 years of land speed racing. After 11 years in print, less than 6 of the author's special autographed edition remain. For more details and to order, go to: www.landspeedproductions.biz. 

Bangin' The Gears

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other what to say in case we got pulled over...we just got lucky.

We drove on into Anaheim and to Disneyland...and had a great time. At least, that's the way I remember it.

Roger

Now available – the fifth book in the series: *Faded Thunder*, stories of Denver hot rodding, cruising, car shows, drag racing and general chaos on the weekends. Don't forget to check out my recently "overhauled" website: www.RAJetter.com to order the fifth book personally autographed. 

Good News

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The very best gifts God offers to us are not things. The very best He has to offer are opportunities, and we all have them lying right before us when our alignment is straight on the road of life. And each one of those doors of opportunities is marked with big red letters marked 'PUSH'!

Are you interested in either sending your son/grandson, age 16-19 to a CRA Hot Rod Camp in 2013? Perhaps you would consider sponsoring a young guy? Or do you have interest in a Men's 'Mini' Camp this year at CRA Branson. Call or write CRA for more info: CRA, PO Box 2029, Branson West, MO 65737; 417-338-8537; cra@integrity.com. 