

GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS

Bugatti's run was sanctioned by Guinness, which requires that cars be clocked over a flying kilometer in opposite directions then takes an average of the two speeds. There simply isn't enough pavement at Kennedy to do that sort of thing, and NASA wasn't able to authorize a second run, anyway.

CAR & DRIVER

It Ain't Over, Bugatti: Hennessey Venom GT Does 270.49 mph, Claims World Record

John Hennessey's beef with Bugatti won't be over until someone dies trying. We hope it doesn't come to that, but the Texas tuner's latest stunt—a clocked 270.49 mph on the Kennedy Space Center runway—is taking production-car speed records to uncharted territory.

With the space shuttle grounded, Hennessey figured he'd use NASA's 3.2-mile-long strip in Cape Canaveral for his 1244-hp Venom GT. On Valentine's Day, the Venom GT reached a GPS-verified 270.49 mph in just 2.4 miles before racing driver Brian Smith had to squeeze the carbon-ceramic brakes. According to Hennessey's data, the car was still accelerating at 1 mph per second between 260 and 270 mph—and Smith said it would go faster still “if we could run on an eight-mile oval.” Oh, you mean something like Volkswagen's Ehra-Lessien oval with the two 5.6-mile straights, the only one of its kind in the world where Bugatti cemented its 267.86-mph record in 2010? Good luck with that.

The “little problem” about Hennessey's claimed world record is that it wasn't conducted in the same manner as Bugatti's certified Guinness run. Hennessey admitted to Jalopnik that NASA wouldn't let him run the car in opposite directions—Guinness requires an average of two runs to account for wind changes—but “the result would have been pretty much the same.” Last year, Guinness temporarily dethroned Bugatti after the organization discovered the 1200-hp Veyron Super Sport had its stock speed limiter removed, but later decided to reinstate the Veyron's title as the world's fastest production car.

The Lotus-based Venom GT, with its 7.0-liter twin-turbo V-8 and rear-wheel drive, somehow found enough traction to grab the Guinness record for 0–300 kph (186 mph) acceleration in January (13.63 seconds).

Oddly enough, while Guinness requires 30 cars to be built to qualify as “production,” Hennessey said he'll only build 29. So far, he's sold 11 for roughly \$1.2 million apiece.