
SSC Ultimate Aero TT

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What's the world's fastest production car? The Bugatti Veyron? It costs the best part of a million sterling, it makes 987bhp and will do 253mph before its electronic speed limiter kicks in. That must be the fastest, surely.

Story by: *Tom Stewart*

Well maybe it is, and maybe it isn't...

SSC, a small manufacturer based in Washington, USA, is now turning out the Ultimate Aero TT, and its modified, twin-turbo V8 Corvette motor punches out a mind-boggling 1,183bhp. That's more power than any production road car, ever. It's been tested in the wind tunnel at over 270mph, but hasn't yet gone that fast on the road as the 12-mile stretch of Nevada desert highway SSC recently had set aside for testing was covered in snow on the day so they had to make do with a much shorter two-mile section. Even so, it still hit 230mph with plenty in reserve, and the company reckons it'll be

good for a max of 273mph.



I've just driven the only one in Europe and, although I didn't go anything like that fast (I was on UK public roads...) I wouldn't argue with SSC's figures.

Punching the car's starter button is like starting a war as the engine bursts into life with a thunderous, frightening roar. But despite the car's massive torque it's eager to either set off like a dragster, or stall. (I understand this particular car is to soon receive a replacement clutch, which may help.) However, as you may imagine, once moving the acceleration available is truly terrifying.

Although SSC's brochure claims the TT's rack and pinion steering is power assisted, I didn't detect the slightest hint of assistance. Manoeuvring at parking speeds required strong arms, but once rolling it's relatively undemanding to drive with a slick gearchange and easy controls.



The SSC grips tenaciously and its nose goes precisely where you point it. The steel-tube chassis feels suitably rigid but the brakes left much to be desired as on this particular car they felt lifeless and unacceptably weak. I noticed later that the four-piston front calipers fitted weren't the more powerful eight-piston units mentioned in the brochure. Braking aside, I can only guess how the car might behave when driven hard on a track. With so much power, rear-wheel drive and no electronic traction aides, considerable expertise, courage and prudence, would be de rigueur.

With strikingly rich paint, the SSC's all carbon composite bodywork looks like something from the mid 1990s, but with noticeable variances in some panel gaps. There are echoes of Pagani Zonda at the front and Lamborghini Diablo at the sides, while at the rear function has priority over form. This car won't attract custom for its low grade interior either as it falls way short, not just of other hypercars, but of almost all other cars currently on sale.



It could easily be said that \$550k (ex factory), or around £335k on the road in the UK, is a ludicrous sum of money for a left-hand-drive car which also boasts no heritage, zero luggage capacity and nothing to indicate that it won't depreciate faster than you could set light to it. But the SSC is less than half the price of a Veyron, more powerful, and possibly even faster. And that, for some, may be enough.



Specification -

Engine type: all-alloy, pushrod 16-valve V8 twin-turbo

Displacement: 6,348 cc (387.2 cu in)

Power: 1,183 bhp (1,199 PS) @ 6,950 rpm (7,200 rpm redline)

Torque: 1,094 lb/ft (1,484 Nm) @ 6,150 rpm

Transmission: 6-speed manual, rear wheel drive

0-60 mph: 2.78 secs

Standing 1/4 mile: 9.9 secs @ 144mph

60-0mph: 31.4 metres (103 ft)

Top speed: 273 mph (calculated, see text)

Chassis: steel tube space frame

Body: carbon fibre composite, flat undertray with venturi tunnels

Cd: 0.357

Brakes: 14 inch vented, cross-drilled discs, 8-piston* calipers (front), 6-piston* (rear), (*see text)

Suspension: double wishbone (front), upper rocker arm, lower wishbone (rear), remote reservoir, adjustable Penske dampers, coil-over springs, anti-roll bar

Wheels: forged, 3-piece alloy, 19 x 9.5" (front), 20 x 13" (rear)

Tyres: Michelin Pilot Sport PS2, 235/35 19 (front), 335/30 20 (rear)

Price: \$550,000 ex factory, approx £335,000 on the road in UK

For further information please visit www.sscautos.com

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