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Bugatti Veyron Takes Landspeed Record



On Saturday 3 July, at the VW Group proving grounds near Wolfsburg, the new Bugatti Veyron 16.4 Super Sport broke the world landspeed record for production cars, with an average top speed of 431km/h (268mph).

It was 2pm on a beautiful sunny day in Germany when **Bugatti's Pilote Officiel, Pierre Henri Raphanel**, put on his helmet and gloves, pulled the safety belts tight, and waited while the engineers checked the car for the last time.

Then the orange and black **Super Sport** crossed the light barrier, giving itself one hour to drive from south to north and then in the opposite direction. No one but the driver may touch the car during this hour, and tension was running high.



As the **Bugatti** engineering team describes it: "A few minutes later we can hear from the left side the sound of a starting jumbo jet coming closer towards us. First we perceive the headlights of the Veyron, then we can recognise the shape of the car, a loud whooosh.... and **Raphanel** dashes in top speed past us. The GPS-tachometer stops at **427.933km/h**. Now the same procedure from the opposite direction. This time the car reaches **434.211km/h**."

This gives an average top speed of **431.072km/h** – or 268mph – and even the team from **Bugatti** was surprised.



“We took it that we would reach an average value of 425km/h,” explains Bugatti’s chief engineer **Dr. Wolfgang Schreiber**, “but the conditions today were perfect and allowed even more.”

The **Super Sport** is a development of the **1001HP Bugatti Veyron 16.4**, launched in 2005. Now with **1200HP** and maximum torque of **1500Nm**, the top speed of the production car is limited to 415km/h to protect the tyres. It will appear in public for the first time at **Pebble Beach** in August.



The Super Sport will begin production this autumn at Molsheim along with the Veyron and the Grand Sport. The first five cars – known as the World Record Edition – are in a special black exposed carbon and orange finish and have already been sold.

Text: Charis Whitcombe

Photos: Bugatti

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