



Photos courtesy of Kenny Lyon

Top photo: Torrance resident Melissa Johnson will try to set a landspeed record in the Goldwing 1500 in a few months.

Women: Start Your Engines

Local racing fanatic invites women to set land speed motorcycle records

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Kenny Lyon is a racing fanatic who has always enjoyed building and racing motorcycles. He is one of the top 10 fastest riders in the business having broken 232 mph in his own 24-foot-long Streamliner.

But after breaking records, he said he still did not receive much publicity and realized that the only drivers receiving notoriety these days are women.

To that end, Lyon said he is ready and willing to teach and train eager and determined riders, perhaps even someone from California State University Dominguez Hills.

"I always wanted to become the world's fastest motorcycle driver," said Lyon, who

maintains a motorcycle garage at the Compton airport. "Now in a male-dominated sport, very few women are beginning to compete, and they are literally being interviewed at the starting line. Women charge the excitement of the crowd and draw more attention."

Lyon said he realizes being a record breaker is not going to make him famous, so he is also actively looking for women between the ages of 18 and 25 who have street or dirt bike experience with some formal training.

Lyon said even followers thought women drivers would never materialize,

but two women, who have a strong desire to succeed, have broken records riding one of Lyon's motorcycles.

Sacramento area resident and racer Shelly Campbell, 23, set six motorcycle land speed records at Bonneville in two years. As recent motorcycle world coverage has attested, her need is for speed. Reporters have quoted her as saying she desires to surpass the 200 mph mark.

Torrance resident Melissa Johnson, 25, a recent transplant from Minnesota joined Lyon's women's team last July. So far, she has broken two records riding a 2001 Goldwing 1500 bike.

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As the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah comes alive each year with the din of roaring engines and flying dirt, desert photographers, writers, editors and timers anxiously await the women driver's race.
Compton resident and postal worker