

Milton man set Guinness record on Lake Koshkonong

Ice wheelie king reclaims his crown — at 117.5 mph

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LAKE KOSHKONONG – The world record for the fastest motorcycle wheelie on ice is back where it belongs.

Ryan Suchanek, a motorcycle stunt rider from Milton, reclaimed the Guinness World Record in the category he invented by hitting 117.5 miles per hour on one wheel before an enthusiastic crowd of about 500 people lining the icy drag strip on the north side of Lake Koshkonong.

“It’s pretty crazy,” said Suchanek, 33. “It’ll get beat again. That’s what records are for.”

Suchanek, who owns the World Famous Bargain Barn motorcycle shop in Edgerton, came up with the idea of going for a record ice wheelie and got approval from Guinness World Records officials three years ago.

His first record was 95 mph. It seemed pretty extreme at the time, but has since become routine.

“When I did the first record at 95 mph, I didn’t think I could go any faster,” Suchanek said. “Now I hit 100 every run, just warming up. The speeds are getting pretty high.”

Suchanek broke his original record by going 108.5 mph in 2013. Last February he topped that by going 109.5.

That might have been the end of it had it not been for a guy in Sweden by the name of Robert Gull who went out last March and broke the record by going 114.5 mph on Lake Kakel in Arjeplog, Sweden.

“That was the first time it had been beaten by anybody else, so it means a lot to me to break it one more time,” Suchanek said.

He insists it will be his last time, even if Gull or anybody else can top 117.5.

“This is my last one,” he said. “Unless I pull a Brett Favre.”

Suchanek was hoping to hit 120 mph on his 190-horsepower Kawasaki motorcycle outfitted with metal studded tires for traction on the ice. He said conditions were perfect and the ice strip, which he had been plowing for the past month, was in great shape.



In his practice morning runs he went as fast as 112.5 mph – the speed is calculated from the average over the 100-meter timing area.

After a short break he hit 110.3 mph on his first and then went 115.8 mph on his second run but wasn't able to maintain the wheelie past the cones marking the 100 meters.

His third time was the charm as he went 117.5 and kept the front wheel in the air all the way through.

That was cause for a celebration and he stopped to receive congratulations from his crew and many spectators.

Not satisfied, he tried for another two hours to hit 120 mph, but was never able to get there.

Suchanek thinks it's just a matter of time before someone else does, although he questions the wisdom of going much faster.

"I definitely think it will go faster," he said. "But there's a speed with these tires that I think something bad will happen. That's why this is my last year."

But even if he eventually loses this record, he figures there are always other records that need to be set.

"I'm going to try some different stuff," Suchanek said. "I haven't figured out what yet."

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