

Spirit of America, 1963

Narrator: Craig Breedlove wants to build and drive the world's fastest car and break the world land speed record. Others are trying it. What makes him think he can do it?

Male Speaker: I would say experience 'cuz he was sharp when he came to work for me. He's worked with cars since probably 13, 14 years old.

Craig Breedlove: When my parents bought me a '34 Ford for my 13th birthday, you know I'd just tear it down and work on it

Male Speaker: Heck, he knew more than I ever knew and he has tried everything

Narrator: An exploded clutch prevented Craig from setting an all-time record in a belly tank after going 234 miles an hour one way of the required two-way run. But the trip to Bonneville gave him the opportunity to see Mickey Thompson make one of his assaults on the world land speed record in his remarkable four-engine car, the Challenger.

Craig Breedlove: I saw the problems Mickey had, run after run after run and not being able to get it. I decided I want to go out and I want to break the world land speed record, and rather than try to drive through the wheels that I'd use jet propulsion.

Male Speaker: The jet idea was strictly Craig's. We were thinking of some two or three engine car.

Craig Breedlove: Around 400 miles an hour is as good as you could go on that Bonneville course with a wheel-driven car.

Narrator: Craig contacted Walt Sheehan, an authority on turbine engines and ducting. Rod Shapel was the man to handle...