Porsche Taycan Turbo S establishes first EV lap record at The Bend

09/06/2021 The Porsche Taycan Turbo S has established an EV lap record at The Bend Motorsport Park in Tailem Bend, South Australia.

The Taycan has set the first electric production car benchmark at the 7.7 kilometre GT Circuit layout at The Bend, the second-longest permanent racing circuit in the world behind the Nürburgring Nordschleife.

Porsche Track Experience Chief Driving Instructor and former Bathurst 1000 winner Luke Youlden was the driver behind the wheel for the lap time, setting a benchmark of 3:30.344.

“The lap time of the Taycan just absolutely blew me away,” said Youlden.

“You drive it in a similar way to any other Porsche sportscar. The turn-in, handling and acceleration were outstanding. The power out of the corners is definitely where it makes up a lot of time.“

For comparison, Youlden also set a time of 3:22.066 in the new 911 Turbo around the 35 corner circuit on the same day, a time that set a new production car lap record for the GT Circuit.

An electrifying new lap record

The Bend Motorsport Park, Australia’s newest racing circuit, does not sit naturally in its landscape.

That’s not a criticism: the circuit itself superbly follows the natural contours of the land on the limestone plains an hour to Adelaide’s South East, rising and falling gently across the rolling hills.

But the size and modernity of the facility stands out in contrast to the arid surrounds of the plains of the Coorong district.

The same could be said for Porsche’s Taycan Turbo S.

Porsche was never going to do things by halves when it came to introducing its first full EV. But the standard to which it immediately jumped was so impressive that in many ways it presents just like The Bend; a vast leap into the future.

It seemed sensible, then, to join the pair in a bid to demonstrate just how good a four-door, battery powered sports sedan can be around such a challenging circuit.

And so it came to be; a Taycan Turbo S ready to attack what is the second-longest permanent racing circuit anywhere in the world, The Bend's 7.77km GT layout, with the sole objective of seeing how fast it could go against the stop watch.

The challenge? Set a new EV lap record on what is arguably the mini-Nürburgring of the south – albeit with more run-off and less trees.

Performance Porsches have priors on The Bend's long track. In 2018, MOTOR Magazine brought a standard 911 GT2 RS and a decidedly non-standard racing driver in the form of Supercars and GT ace Warren Luff to set the first ever outright record for a production car at the venue.

Their result was a lap completed in a shade over 3 minutes and 24 seconds.

Now comparing a Taycan to a 911 GT2 RS, the most extreme road-going Porsche available in recent times, might be like comparing Apples to a Coffee Mug, but actually the raw performance specifications aren't that different.

So, while it's not a direct comparison, there would be plenty of interest in what kind of time the Taycan would produce, relative to it's only real known competition.

To help the process, Porsche's Chief Driving Instructor Luke Youlden was placed behind the wheel; no one better to demonstrate the surprising performance of the Taycan Turbo S.

"To drive the Taycan is not too dissimilar to a petrol driven car: It's unbelievably dynamic," said Youlden.

"Even though it (the Taycan) is a little bit heavier, the batteries are very, very low so the centre of gravity is extremely low, which obviously makes the handling and the braking exceptionally good."

The former Bathurst champion's assessment of the car's strengths would become apparent the moment he launched towards Turn 1.

Conditions were perfect for such an exercise: blue skies and mid-20s temperatures close to perfect for producing ultra-quick lap times at a circuit where the weather conditions can play a substantial role in changing the ultimate lap time.

For a car as substantial in size and weight as the Taycan, at least relative to the lighter and nimbler 911, the way the car devoured the 35 corners The Bend has to offer was nothing short of remarkable.

Immense torque on instant demand made it particularly strong when firing out of the many tight and twisty sections on the back part of the circuit. A credit to the chassis, suspension and electronics is that it has the grip to make use of all that torque.

The centre of gravity sitting low in the car saw The Bend's fast sweepers and rapid direction changes

handled with aplomb, while the 260km/h top speed was more than enough to deal with situations where the steering wheel was straight.

The outcome? Impressive. Staggering, even.

A lap time of just over 3 minutes and 30 seconds – or just eight seconds slower than the new 911 Turbo achieved on the same day.

“To be that close to the old GT2 RS lap record around here? Unbelievable. It's extremely fast. We did repeated 2.5 seconds 0-100 km/h runs in this car and that sort of feel off the corner was also where the Taycan makes up most of it's lap time. It's unbelievable," Youlden beamed afterwards.

More impressive was the fact that the lap record came in the same week as an intense series of driving duties for the Taycan, as it was placed in the hands of some of Australia's top automotive media for an on-track demonstration of its prowess.

Despite repeated high-performance launches to demonstrate the remarkable launching ability of the car, as well as hot laps driven only the way journalists can when they're looking to analyse every aspect of a car's behavior, the Taycan copped the abuse. And then went and set a lap record that others will almost certainly find exceedingly difficult to beat.

Footnote: Lap time

You may notice that the video of Luke's lap displays a time of 3:30.320, while the press release states a time of 3:30.344. A timing device in the car, linked and synched to the GoPro recording the in-car vision, did indeed record a time of 3:30.320 - thus why this time appears in the video. But a separate recording device in the car for the lap, the one agreed prior to the lap time attempt to be the 'official' lap timer, recorded a 3:30.344, so this is the time agreed with The Bend as the first EV lap record for the GT Circuit.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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Consumption data

Taycan 4S with Performance Battery (Predecessor model)

*Further information on the official fuel consumption and the official specific CO_2 emissions of new passenger cars can be found in the "Leitfaden über den Kraftstoffverbrauch, die CO_2-Emissionen und den Stromverbrauch neuer Personenkraftwagen" (Fuel Consumption, CO_2Emissions and Electricity Consumption Guide for New Passenger Cars), which is available free of charge at all sales outlets and from DAT (Deutsche Automobil Treuhand GmbH, Helmuth-Hirth-Str. 1, 73760 Ostfildern-Scharnhausen, www.dat.de).

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