

Marshalls In Action



Supacat pulls Thrust to new speed records



Without the one on the left, the one on the right was going nowhere. Fast. Once lined up in the right position, Thrust SSC did go somewhere very fast - through the sound barrier and into the record books, breaking the World land Speed Record at an astonishing 763.035 mph.

However, the Supacat played an important role in contributing to Thrust's amazing success. Powered by the Volkswagen 1.9 turbocharged diesel engine, the Supacat ensured that the 10 tonne car was turned around, refueled, its systems kept cool and then towed to the start line - all within the 1 hour allowed by the rules for both timed runs, in opposite directions.

Involving distances of up to 13 miles and temperatures of over 40 degrees centigrade, the 78hp Volkswagen power unit had no problem in coping with its 110,000hp load, even though Thrust's narrow metal wheels would sometimes sink up to 2 inches into the desert surface.

"Given Supacat's often mission critical role, reliability is our most important requirement. This is where the Volkswagen engine and automatic transmission have really delivered."

Nick Jones. Director, Supacat Ltd.

First made in 1983, the Supacat has a long pedigree and unchallenged reputation as a very tough go-anywhere vehicle.

It has now completed its fifteenth year with the UK Armed Forces where it is used in a variety of roles. Parachuted from transport aircraft, underslung from helicopters, it is amphibious and played its part in the Gulf War. Later, Supacats supported humanitarian efforts in the region, providing help to Kurd refugees.

In civilian colours, the Volkswagen powered Supacat has been developed to do a number of specialised jobs and has operated in more than 40 countries worldwide. These include firefighting, rescue and recovery, service and support - often in locations that cannot be reached by any other vehicle. This is due to its startling performance - climbing gradients in excess of 40 degrees, traversing slopes of 30 degrees and covering ground that is too soft to walk on.

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Supacat Performance Facts

Engine: Volkswagen 1.9 turbocharged diesel developing 78hp/56kW@4,000 rpm - Meets Euro 1 emissions

Transmission: Electronic 4 speed Volkswagen automatic, coupled to 2 transfer gearboxes - Drive to all 6 wheels.

Steering Facts: Power assisted steering through handlebars to front 4 wheels - Inboard disc brakes used to skid steer.

"We are now talking to Marshall's about adopting the more powerful VW 1.9 TDI engine, which is electronically managed. This allows communication between engine and transmission - meaning improved driveability."

Nick Jones. Director, Supacat Ltd.

Marshall's supply Volkswagen engines and components for all sorts of industrial applications using petrol, diesel, LPG and RME.

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