

## Component will be a feat of engineering



Oliver Valves in Knutsford is designing a component for the Quicksilver craft

# Firm creates valve to break water speed record

By Andrew McCreddie

A KNUTSFORD company is creating a component for a world water speed record attempt.

Oliver Valves Ltd, based on the Parkgate Industrial Estate, said its technology could help Nigel Macknight's hi-tech vessel to break the 317mph barrier.

"It's going to be something quite fantastic," said spokesman Joel Sacca.

"We are an incredibly patriotic company and this is an opportunity to help bring the record home."

Mr Macknight is planning to break the water-speed record in Quicksilver, a craft that will be powered by a Rolls Royce jet engine.

Oliver Valves is sponsoring the project, which will aim to smash the record set by Australian Ken Warby in 1978.

But the Knutsford company has also spent months developing a new valve to shut off the craft's fuel.

The component will use air pressure to cut Quicksilver's supply in the fastest time possible to slow it down.

Bosses said staff had been working on the valve since April and the designs were now ready.

"We've been developing it from scratch," said Mr Sacca.

"We've never done one for a project like this before and we've had to go through a lot of complex calculations."



The thrust from Quicksilver's engine will be almost three times greater than Bluebird K7

Britain has a history of dare-devils who have attempted to break world speed records.

Racing driver Sir Malcolm Campbell set fastest times during the 1920s and 1930s in his Bluebird vehicles.

His son, Donald, went on to break records in the 1950s and 1960s.

However, in 1967 he died when his Bluebird K7 flipped and disintegrated at a speed of more than 300mph.

The Quicksilver team's new record attempt is scheduled to take place between January and March 2012 on Coniston Water.

Donald and Malcolm Campbell both set records at the same location in their legendary crafts.

Experts are having to create new components for Quicksilver's

jet engine because some parts were stripped away to make it lighter.

The thrust created will be almost three times greater than Donald Campbell's Bluebird K7.

"About 350mph is as quick as it's going to go," said Mr Sacca.

Quicksilver is being designed to be 39ft long and weigh 3.5 tonnes.

It would be the largest and heaviest boat ever to attempt the record.

Mr Macknight said the engineers had to spend thousands of hours testing the craft in wind tunnels and computer studies.

"Stability has to be a built in attribute if Quicksilver is to be both safe and successful," he said.

To follow the development of Quicksilver visit the blog at [valves.co.uk/blog](http://valves.co.uk/blog).