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From zero to a hundred

A group of Swiss students have broken the world record for the fastest 0-100 km/h acceleration by an electric car. High-power suction is the key to their success.



DÖLF BARBEN

What a strange sight. Zip away, then brake. Like breathing in and out just once. Barely three seconds elapsed before the electric car and its driver Kate Maggetti came to a halt again. The vehicle needed just 0.956 seconds and a distance of a little over ten metres to reach a speed of 100 km/h.

On 12 September, students from ETH Zurich and Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts set a new world record at the Switzerland Innovation Park in Dübendorf. Never before had an electric car accelerated faster from zero to a hundred. A team from the University of Stuttgart had notched the old record of 1.461 seconds one year previously.

A very fast but extremely brief acceleration – Kate Maggetti driving electric car "Mythen" on the track at Dübendorf.

Photo: ETH Zurich,
Alessandro Della Bella

The Swiss car, now entered in the Guinness Book of Records, is called "Mythen" – named after the two iconic Mythen mountains in the canton of Schwyz. It only weighs around 180 kg, including driver, and has in excess of 300 hp. All of the vehicle's components – from printed circuit boards (PCBs), to four wheel hub motors and the chassis – were developed by the students themselves. "They spent every moment of their free time working on this project," says Matthias Rohrer of the Academic Motorsports Association of Zurich (AMZ).

Founded in 2006, AMZ gives students the opportunity to build a racing car from scratch with which to compete in events every year. The