



FRANKY ZAPATA ZOOMS PAST FARTHEST HOVERBOARD FLIGHT RECORD

News / Personalities



A couple of weeks go we revealed the Flyboard Air, jet-ski champion Frank Zapata's latest attempt to launch himself skyward. The Air ditches the jet ski, the hose and the tether of the original Flyboard in favor of a jet-powered board that's reportedly capable of a potential top ground speed of 150 km/h (93 mph). And now it has carried Zapata into the record books for the farthest flight by hoverboard, knocking Alexandru Duru off his perch by some considerable margin.

Duru's record of 275.9 meters (905.2 ft) has stood since August 2014, unchallenged by any of the recent advances in Back to the Future-inspired flying board developments like the ARCA and the Hendo. That record has now gone. And then some.

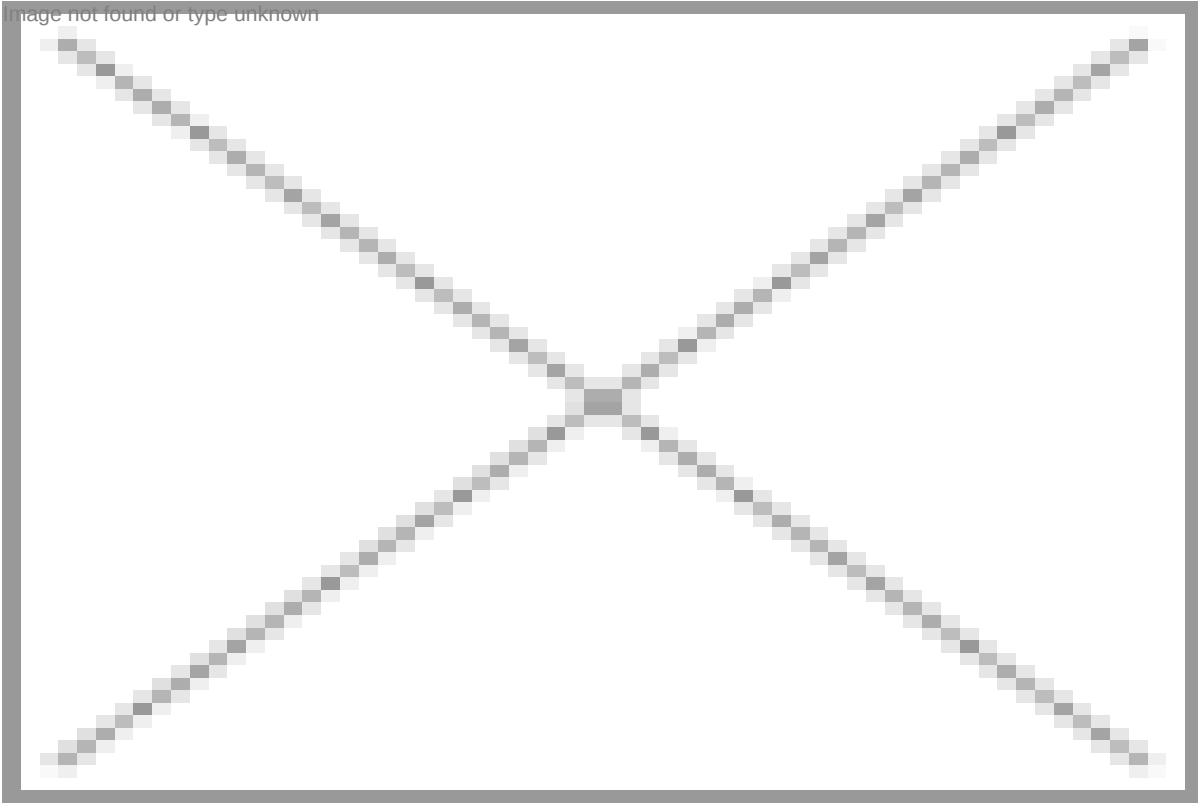
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During the first test run, that was featured in the now viral video earlier this month, 37 year-old Zapata managed a successful take-off, and rose in the air to zip along at up to 55 km/h (35 mph) for 3 minutes and 55 seconds.

Today, Gizmag hopped aboard the good ship Albatros and headed out into the Mediterranean near Marseille, France, to witness a world record attempt. The craft carrying members of the press and invited VIPs came to a stop just opposite a take-off platform at Carry-le-Rouet, and gently bobbed up and down in the choppy coastal waters as we waited for Zapata to get suited up and do his Green Goblin thing.

After a brief systems test, Zapata climbed into the boots attached to the Flyboard Air's carbon fiber platform and prepared for take-off. A scream from the jets and he was up and away. He skirted the coastline for about 6 or 7 minutes, flying roughly 30 meters (100 ft) above the water and reaching a top speed of around 70 km/h (44 mph), before heading into the port of Sausset-les-Pins to land safely.

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Then came an anxious wait while officials verified the distance traveled. Confirmation wasn't long in coming. Zapata had smashed the previous record by a huge margin, managing to stay in the air for a jaw-dropping 2,252.4 meters (7,389.76 ft). That's going to take some beating, and we're betting that it won't be too long before Zapata himself blows his new Guinness World Record out of the water.

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