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Earlier this month Avanti West Coast and Network Rail missed out on the record for the quickest rail journey from London to Glasgow by just 21 seconds. It was however the fastest ever by a Pendolino between the two cities, breaking the previous record of 3 hours 55 minutes 27 seconds in 2006.

The nine-carriage Pendolino travelled at an average speed of 103 mph during the journey. The final time was clocked at 3 hours, 53 minutes and one second. Preston-based driver, Neil Barker, has written an article reflecting on the record attempt.

“It seems incredible on a journey of just over 400 miles it came down to a matter of seconds. I think in years to come ‘21 seconds’ will take on legendary status. Or at least until the record is finally broken!”

There was obviously disappointment on the day, but a week on that has been replaced by a sense of pride. The railway and its people really came together. A journey time of under four hours from London to Glasgow, at an average speed of 103.3mph, is not to be sniffed at. The run was a record of sorts – it was

the fastest journey time ever recorded by a Pendolino between London and Glasgow – beating the record set in 2006 by three minutes.

It was a real honour to be asked to drive and I'll admit to being slightly overwhelmed on the day. It was hard not to feed off the real sense of excitement and genuine desire for us to succeed. To see so many well wishes along the route is one of the abiding memories I've taken from the day. That and the weird sensation of seeing my picture in the papers!

The record attempt showcased the railway's role in connecting cities and countries, and the beautiful scenery that can be enjoyed along our West Coast route. As a driver I have one of the best office windows in the world – the view from the cab as we sped through the Lakes is one I'll never bore of.

Of course, I've ran through the journey in my head countless times. Could we have saved a few seconds here or there? What if we'd taken a different route at one of the junctions? It's all ifs, buts and maybes. What I do know is the record can be beaten, and I have no doubt it will be in the coming years.

I've seen so much change in my 42 years on the railway. The one consistent has been the people and last week was another great example of their desire to support each other and put the customer first.

I know the railway will go from strength to strength."

*Photo credit: Avanti West Coast*