Around Australia Challenge Update

- DAY 8: Thurs 3-Jan-2002 -

Pentland (QLD) to Cloncurry (QLD)	*560 KM*

The team faced overcast weather for the planned day's journey from Pentland to Mount Isa but decided to push on at lower speeds in order to try to maintain the schedule. They left Pentland at 9.55 AEST. The route was almost directly westwards away from the coast, the towns and the holiday traffic.

Instead there were many more sightings of wild life; dingoes, emus, pigs and cows.

The road surface was considerably rougher than anywhere on the trip so far. This proved to be much harder on the special Michelin low rolling resistance tyres used on the Aurora-RMIT 101 solar car and two flat tyres were experienced during the day. The Michelin tyres were specially developed for solar car use in order to reduce the friction energy consumed by the contact with the road. These tyres have a radial ply construction and no tyre tread. They are coated with a thin layer of special soft rubber and have excellent load capacity. Typically Aurora is changing the front wheelmotor tyre every day and the two rear tyres every two days.

In dry but cloudy conditions the team made stops at Hughenden and Julia Creek. There was insufficient sun to pick up speeds and as a result the convoy stopped in Cloncurry for the night at 6.55 AEST [5.55 Queensland time]. This was 118 KM short of Mount Isa the

Day 8, Stopped to change a blown tyre (click for a larger image)

Day 8, Dogged by Cyclone 'Bernie'
(click for a larger image)

Day 8 Road-train at Julia Creek.
(click for a larger image)

intended stop for the night.

Total running time for the day was approximately 8 hours for an average speed of 70 KPH. 560 KM was completed on Day 8. The prospects for travel on Day 9 are poor because of the cyclone and low pressure weather system in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Day 8 Approaching Hill-top service station. (click for a larger image)

Day 8 Rafael, Theresa, Damien, Sylvia, preparing lunches. (click for a larger image)