

Solar Cars from Sister Cities - Melbourne & Osaka - to clash at Suzuka Formula 1 Track

26-27 July 2003

Melbourne's internationally known Aurora 101 solar car has landed in Japan to compete in the Suzuka 'Dream Cup' on 26 and 27 July 2003.

This is Japan's most important solar car race and has attracted over 70 entrants, including the revamped Aurora 101 solar car which holds 10 solar car world records. It is an event sanctioned by the FIA whose representative organisation in Australia, CAMS, is backing the Aurora group.

The race favourites are two entrants from the city of Osaka: *TIGA* the winner in 2002 and *OSU* with a beautiful new lightweight race car. Osaka and Melbourne have been sister cities for 25 years but this won't diminish the competitive spirit between the Osaka solar cars and the Aurora 101.

Aurora 101 will be piloted by two new drivers. Kon Kotsonis from RMIT will be the lead driver backed by 16 year old Damien McArthur from Hamilton. Both have no experience at Suzuka but have many hours of familiarisation on Playstation.

The Aurora team is returning to Suzuka for the third time. Last year, Aurora driver and RMIT student Adrian Marziano set the fastest lap time at 4 min 58.9 sec but Aurora's batteries failed at the end of the first of two 4 hour heats and the team was unable to compete in the second leg of the race.

Nevertheless a close friendship has developed between the *TIGA* and Aurora teams with significant technical cooperation. *TIGA* has organised the supply of new high energy Kokam Lithium Polymer batteries for Aurora's 2003-04 'Beaming' program whilst Aurora has loaned *TIGA* 10 gallium arsenide Gochermann solar panels for use in the Suzuka event.

The Aurora team, backed by 36 sponsor companies, has made many improvements for this Suzuka 'Dream Cup' including more solar power with Gochermann built solar panels using triple junction gallium arsenide solar cells, the Kokam battery pack, a 30 kg weight reduction and more efficient electronic controls. A 4 minute qualifying lap is definitely possible this year.