



2003 World Solar Challenge

Darwin > Adelaide 19 - 28 October 2003

Report 9
Monday 20 October 2003

RACE UPDATES

Last night there was solid cloud over Elliott so we missed a charging session. The team all had a chance to shower at the local caravan park, and we were right next to MIT who had finished the day 2 mins behind us.

Unfortunately, the morning sun was also poor so the 3 leading teams missed a good charge session. We started 44km behind Nuna, or about 1/2 hour behind, and headed towards Tenant Creek. The wind was strong, a sort of side wind which suited our car better than Nuna and MIT. As a result by the time we reached Tenant Creek, we had caught up 8 mins, and we had a 7 min advantage over MIT. The times into Tenant Creek were:

Nuna	10:35am
Aurora 101	10:57am
MIT	11:04am

It's now clear skies and 502 km to Alice Springs, so maybe one car will make it to Alice tonight! (This has been done only once before at this stage of the race, by Honda). We also had other results for yesterday, which showed Southern Aurora to be in 11th place.

We're cruising mainly on solar energy, trying to get something back into the batteries. Our speed is about 90km/h. The official distance from Darwin so far is 986 km.

Alice Springs

502km beyond Tenant Creek

Once the clouds had cleared we had perfect conditions, except for the continuing side winds, and it's been a close battle between the top 3 place-getters. The first three have actually got as far as Alice Springs, and in the history of the World Solar Challenge, this had occurred only once before, and was achieved by Honda.

The times into Alice Springs are as follows:

Nuna	4:36pm
Aurora 101	5:04pm
MIT	5:05pm

We were concerned about the battery readings as the batteries were becoming empty, but our concerns weren't justified. Nuna have finished their 30 min stop, and are parked outside Hungry Jacks in Alice. The other two need to make their 30 min stop, and park at their checkpoint camping ground. Currently, we are getting ready for dinner after having changed all the tyres, and the car has been running extremely well so far. We look forward to the long run to Marlabor tomorrow morning, as it is the segment where Aurora holds the event record.

