



AURORA 101 in Greece

Phaethon 2004, 22-28 May 2004

Report 1 - Monday 17th May

The Hotel London is being reconstructed. Inside, rooms are being refurbished. Outside, a new entrance is under construction. Across the street the public park will be improved. The car wrecks will be removed. Nearby, the beach is being reconstructed. The new light rail system although under construction has brand new grass. The Olympic sailing headquarters is almost finished.

The arrival of the Aurora 101 solar car is delayed. Scheduled to arrive at Piraeus, the huge port serving Athens on the 11th May, the new arrival time is on the 19th May. That's still days ahead. Piraeus port has a truck driver's strike. They are seeking a \$200 surcharge for the fact that they have to wait 4-5 hours to pick up their load.

All of the Aurora team has arrived in Athens except for the Dutchman Bram. The bus trip in from the airport on E96 express captured the feeling of Athens in one trip. The express driver managed to deliver 2 cups of coffee 2km into the trip to the waiting taxi driver. Most of the dual-carriage way is still under construction. New shop fronts anticipating the boost of Olympic business were unfinished. Everywhere there is a white mantle of dust. The impression is that rain is badly needed and so it has rained over the last 2 evenings.

Still, our first day in Athens was full of activity.

Ford Greece delivered 2 splendid support vehicles. A 4WD Ranger pick-up complete with tow bar, and a new Galaxy MPV.



Chrysa Agroyianni met the team in the morning and rescheduled the planned dinner for tomorrow night as a result of the car's delay.

The planned reception at the home of the Australian ambassador was rescheduled to Thursday hoping that the solar car will have arrived by then.

The 1st event of Phaethon 2004 will be a track race at the old Hellinikon airport near the Hotel London. This is now a disused airport and the racetrack will be set out using the 2 major runways. We were shown around the planned track by a security guard driving an old Chevy Nova. One interesting aspect of this location is the collection of ex-Olympic Airways aircraft that will become the basis of an outdoor aerospace museum. It's not often that you get a chance to come close to such large aircraft, but as the photographs show we were able to do this whilst things were quiet.



Andreas Papageorgiou, principle organiser of Phaethon 2004 also visited and dropped off the maps and route notes for the rally part of the event in anticipation of our team driving on most of it on Wednesday. By evening we were visited by architect and environmental reporter Nicola who was interested in why it was that Aurora existed and pursued the activity of solar car development.



Farmer Jack got some good news today from team member Darren about purchasing the shell of a Ford GT40 replica. Chrysa overhearing this call told us of her own recent experience at Gingerman raceway near Chicago, where the media were introduced to the Ford motor company's own GT40 program. During her own her drive she was able to phone her son in Athens so that he could hear the exhaust sound.



We didn't mention the dogs. Dozens of abandoned dogs are roaming the streets awaiting the Olympic solution. It will be all part of getting ready for the biggest event on earth.

Aurora has it's own big event and increasing time pressures, so we hope the ship comes in on the 19th May.

