



AURORA 101 in Greece

Phaethon 2004, 22-28 May 2004

Report 6 - Saturday 22nd May

After a very late night yesterday, the team struggled to appear at breakfast by 7.30am. The Hotel London had become homely, but this morning was checkout time as we were moving to another Glyfada hotel, the Fenix.



The action for the day was to be located at the Zappion building in the center of Athens. This was where the solar cars would go through scrutineering, as well as braking and cornering tests. The ELPA organization had 8 tilt tray trucks on hand to move the solar cars to the Zappion building including one for the Aurora 101 and our trusty 6x4 trailer. It was quite an impressive site to approach the Zappion with the flags of the 9 entrant countries flying and the entry pillars reminding us of the Parthenon, which itself was visible. The fifteen teams were lined up in pit formation in readiness for their call to join the scrutineering queue. This was a public event and many Athens people came down to see these extremely weird cars. Slowly each car was examined. The size of solar arrays measured, the weight of batteries checked, the drivers and cars weighed and so on. The scrutineering team was also new to these solar cars so it was a big learning experience.



As the day progressed, all the teams were using the clear sunshine to top up their batteries in readiness for the track race scheduled for Sunday. Driver's credentials and licenses were examined and the vehicle passports and technical data reviewed.



By the late afternoon, the most exciting activity was undertaken. This was the acceleration and braking tests, and the stability test through the S-bends. Most of the cars performed very well. One had very lazy brakes. Hans Go, the German entrant from Bochum University wasted a set of tyres in a long skid proving they had plenty of stopping power. The standout solar car in these tests was TIGA from Osaka. Its driver Kei Nomura flicked the low red solar car through the course with ease. They are going to be starting as favourites.



As Aurora 101 was waiting its turn it was visited by Alisa Camplin, champion aerial skier who wished the Aussie team every success.



It was back on the tilt truck and return to the Hellenikon airport where a one lap survey of the track indicated that certain improvements including sweeping had been accomplished. It was still a late night as we made final suspension settings and re-examined telemetry data to see where an extra edge could be found.



Tomorrow we race. Wish Kon good luck and the ability to stay on the track.