

Suzuka Dream Cup 2004



Suzuka, Japan

30th July - 1st August 2004

Report 4 - Friday 30th July

This was the first day of official activities for the 'Dream Cup' for 2004. Teams had arrived during the night, some sleeping beside their precious solar cars in their allocated pit position. Some of the truck drivers ran their diesel engines all night to keep cool with the air conditioning running.



By 8.00 AM almost all 78 teams had arrived and already there were lines of solar cars waiting for scrutineering to start at 9.00 AM.



You could pick who were the drivers. They were the ones looking like they needed to visit the toilet badly, bloated by litres of extra water in order to reduce the added weight they would need to carry if they checked in under 70 kg.

Aurora 101's two Hamilton drivers Damien and Derrick did well. We need only 1.4 kg of ballast. It will be stowed behind the seat.

The new head bubble was looking better after a good cleanup. A hole was cut in order to sit comfortably around the roll bar, the suspect latch was over-engineered and that huge distraction was put aside. The spare bubble arrived from Melbourne but will not be used.



Jack completed all the magnet replacement jobs so we are back to having 3 functional units. Tom built an additional power supply to stabilise the power used by auxiliary fans which have an important cooling job to do at this demanding track.

The main battery is fully charged, the spare battery pack is on the way and all phases of scrutineering passed. The event organizers had slightly changed the rules about how solar panel sizes are measured so this issue was also behind us. Our sponsors Minter Ellison, Australia's largest law firm would have been proud.



We had visits from Mr Tamura, eminent in Japanese motor racing and observer at Phaethon 2004, Dennis Negkas representing FIA and super director of the Greek event and Georg Brasseur also from FIA. Many Japanese teams also dropped in at the Aurora pit to look at this solar car.



By evening the winds started whipping up. The prospect of a promised typhoon tomorrow seems more real. There are even predictions of 150 mm of rain.

The official event party was so much fun that we were well distracted by good food, Japanese party games, friendly hospitality and plenty of well wishers. Jack won the gold watch. The handsome three from Hamilton reluctantly had their pictures taken with the Suzuka Track girls and we went back to work.





It's hard to believe that tomorrow is race day. We are hoping that the troubles of the last 3 days are gone. Bring on the rain.
