

4 CONTINENT SOLAR POWER PLAY AUSTRALIA'S SUPER SOLAR CAR AURORA 101 TO COMPETE IN 2005 PANASONIC WORLD SOLAR CHALLENGE

Darwin, Sunday 25 September 2005 will see the start of the epic 3010 kilometre 'world championship' for solar powered cars. The fastest will finish in Adelaide just 4 days later - if the weather permits. This will be the eighth World Solar Challenge which was first staged in 1987.

Melbourne's Aurora 101, featuring the best Australian technology and backed by 30 sponsor companies will lead the 5 Australian entrants against the world's best teams from 4 continents.

Favourite for the event will be the formidable Nuna team from the Netherlands attempting to score a hat-trick of success. The two top North American teams University of Michigan and MIT will be out to repeat their recent success in the North American Solar Challenge whilst Japan's most successful car from Ashiya University [from Melbourne's sister city Osaka] is confident that they can win. These competitors are all designed to the new ISF 5000 class rules which allows an advantage in solar panel size compared to Aurora 101 which was designed initially under the traditional WSC rules.

A record average speed of 100 kph for the 3,010 km journey is a possibility although the September start to this year's event will reduce the sun power available compared to previous events.

Aurora has entered every World Solar Challenge since 1987 and has the enviable record of one win, three seconds, a fifth, and a sixth place. It returns from a record breaking second place in the 2003 WSC with more solar power, an improved battery system and 20 kg less weight. It gained a podium finish in the prestigious Suzuka 'Dream Cup' held 6-7 August. In fact the Aurora 101 solar car had just nine days back in Melbourne before being despatched for Darwin Altogether 23 teams from 10 countries will be flagged away at 8.00 AM on 25 September from the Northern Territory's Parliament House.

The Aurora team has a new blend of international members and budding young environmentalists.

Andris Samsons ex University of Michigan driver in 1993 and 2001 will be one of the Aurora 101 pilots sharing the drive with Kon Kotsonis. Safety officer is Evan Wineland from Indiana and participant in the 1999 WSC with the Solar Stealth high school entry. Chief of the campsite stopovers is Rebecca Trump from England. She is joined by compatriot David Sims-Williams leader of the Durham solar car team in the U.K.

Thirteen year old Todd Palmer is the youngest team member and has successfully led a model solar car team from Syndal South Primary School. He named his car Aurora. Sixteen year old Daniel Mills is a member of the successful Berwick High School HPV Team. The balance of the 13 person team includes Tom Baker, Jack McArthur, Darren Trafford, Eli Thurrowgood, team manager David Fewchuk and possibly Peter Pudney.