



CHALLENGING FUTURE TECHNOLOGY

Minister Van der Hoeven unveils bold design of Dutch solar car made by Solar Team Twente

On Thursday, 18 June Solar Team Twente will present its solar car to the press in the Amsterdam Convention Factory. This is the car with which the team will appear at the start of the 10th World Solar Challenge in Australia. Maria van der Hoeven, the Dutch Minister of Economic Affairs, will unveil the innovative car, which is bright red and has no logos.

This year's innovation is the flexible, pivoting body, which connects the wing of the solar car to the frame. It is made of a thermoplastic elastomer (a special sort of rubber). Although several professional car manufacturers have already experimented with this material, they have not got any further than the preliminary stages. As a result of the use of this material, the team has been successful in improving the solar car's aerodynamic properties by as much as 25 percent compared to the previous solar car.

The strength of the solar car of Solar Team Twente lies in the large amount of energy that it produces. The solar car is fitted with a pivoting wing, which moves with the sun, so that sunrays fall directly onto the solar cells. This, together with the lens system that was patented in December, focuses solar energy onto the underlying solar cells, thus enabling the team to generate 7.5m² of sunlight from 6m² of solar cells. It works in fact like a magnifying glass. The team believes that this system can also easily be used on roofs.

Innovation

The innovative qualities of Solar Team Twente are evident for instance from the fact that this is the only team that holds a patent. The team has taken calculated risks in the design in order to be able to include the very latest developments in the solar car. The team has achieved its pre-set aims in relation to aerodynamics partly as a result of the innovations mentioned above. A frame of carbon fibre was constructed to achieve weight saving.

Solar Team Twente is also seeking innovation in another field. In appearance they stand out from the other competitors. In addition to the conspicuous pivoting wing, the wheel configuration (most of the cars have two wheels at the front, whereas Solar Team Twente has just a single wheel) and the lens system, the solar car will this year be entirely without logos and be bright red. On 25 October the solar car will set out on its journey from Darwin to Adelaide, through the Australian outback, covering a distance of 3010 km.

Team



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The 18 students in Solar Team Twente, who come from Saxion and University of Twente, have set aside their studies for eighteen months in order to concentrate entirely on the race. This group of students acts as an independent company, consisting of a marketing, a management and a technical department. The team has designed and built the solar car independently and will shortly test it themselves; it is collaborating with a least 96 different companies. Three different levels of education (university education, higher professional education and senior secondary vocational education) are involved in this project.

Press conference

On Thursday, 18 June 2009, Solar Team Twente presents its solar car to the press at a press conference to be held in the Amsterdam Convention Factory. Maria van der Hoeven, the Dutch Minister of Economic Affairs, will unveil the solar car and spur on the team. Tim Plattel (team leader) will explain the innovations incorporated in the solar car and provide information on the team's key objectives.

Presentation to the public

After the press conference on Thursday 18 June 2009 the team will present its solar car to the general public. This will take place on various dates, starting on Friday 19 June at 3.30 pm during a large presentation for partners, friends, family and other interested parties at the ROC in Hengelo, The Netherlands. The press is also very welcome to attend. Mayor Peter den Oudsten (also Chairman of the Region of Twente) will talk about the importance of the solar car for Twente. Other speakers will include Ed Brinksma (Rector of the University of Twente) and Wim Boomkamp (Chairman of the Executive Board of Saxion). In the weeks following the presentations, the team will take the solar car into the region.

Note for the editors (not for publication):

Solar Team Twente will present the solar car to the press in the Amsterdam Convention Factory (Czaar Peterstraat 213, Amsterdam) on Thursday, 18 June 2009. You are very welcome to attend. The presentation will begin at 12.45 pm and last until 1.30 pm. Coffee will be served from 12.30 onwards. A press information pack, which includes a facts sheet and a CD with visual material, will be available for you. For further information and registration, please contact Marit Lintsen, Solar Team Twente, E: m.lintsen@solarteam.nl, M: +31 (0)657328959, T: +31 (0)534895494.