

Durham University solar car takes on World Solar Challenge

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Students will be setting off on a sun-powered adventure this autumn when the Durham University Solar Car (DUSC) takes part in the World Solar Challenge.

Using nothing but solar power, the DUSC team will travel 1,864 miles (3,000km) from Darwin in the north of Australia to Adelaide in the south.

The Durham car is due to be shipped from Southampton to Australia in mid-August after taking part in endurance testing in the UK. The race, which will involve solar powered cars from across the globe, is scheduled to take place between October 16 and 23.

The vehicle, which can reach speeds of up to 60mph, has been built from the ground up at Durham University, with key elements such as the in-wheel drive motor and flexible solar panels, developed as student research projects.

The latest DUSC team, which will be heading to Australia later this year, includes Steve Wilson, Ben Derrick, John Wilson, Andrew Thurman, academic advisor Dr David Sims-Williams and drivers Richard Flint and Alexandra Reevey.

Dr David Sims-Williams, academic advisor to the project from the School of Engineering and Computing Sciences, at Durham University, said: "The World Solar Challenge pushes teams to develop high-

efficiency vehicles, which is the real key to reducing the emissions of everyday vehicles. These cars have to be able to drive at highway speed all day with less power than an electric kettle.

"The students have led the project and it will be a tremendous experience for them to put what they have learned at Durham into practice against some of the best solar cars in development when they take part in the competition."

The car previously took part in the 2008 North American Solar Challenge when it was the only UK entrant in the 2,400 mile (3,862km) race from Dallas to Calgary. The team were named "Top Rookie Team", as the highest placed new team. DUSC alumnae are now working in a range of industries including aerospace, rail and Formula 1, as well as in the automotive sector.

Team Member John Wilson said: "In a world where the environment is at the forefront of global debate and vehicle emissions are paramount, DUSC is designing a vehicle with not just zero emissions, but an unlimited mileage range.

"We are looking forward to the challenge."

More information: www.dur.ac.uk/dusc/

Provided by Durham University

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