

# Cambridge University Eco Racing

Marc Stettler

Cambridge University Eco Racing (CUER) is a team developing a solar powered car to compete in the World Solar Challenge (WSC) 2009, a race across the Australian outback. The WSC is a biennial event that aims to showcase the latest technology developments in solar powered transport, commonly referred to as the “Formula One of the solar car world”. By taking an uncompromising approach to vehicle efficiency and performance, the team hope to produce a car capable of cruising at 60mph using the same amount of power as a hairdryer.

CUER’s current electric car called Affinity, which is a prototype for the WSC 2009 car, can be powered completely by solar-generated electricity as well as being mains-chargeable.



©Cambridge University Eco Racing

“ Students from all backgrounds can make a contribution ”

It is also a sleek and silent vehicle.

Founded in 2007, CUER began by building Affinity. This was the first solar powered car to drive legally on UK roads. Following Affinity’s launch in June 2008, the team drove successfully from Land’s End to John O’Groats, visiting schools *en route*. The team are currently concentrating on building their new car, Bethany, which will compete against the world’s top universities and companies across 1,900 miles of Australian outback.

The CUER team is headed by Anthony Law, the Team Manager, and Charlie Watts, the Technical Director, both of whom are final year engineering students. On the technical

side, the team is split into four specialist sub-teams: software and strategy, aerodynamics, electrical and mechanical teams. These are headed by fourth-year engineering students whose final-year project is the development of a part of the Bethany car, which contributes towards their degrees. Along with the fourth-years are a dedicated team of students, who complete smaller, bite-size projects—all playing a vital part in the design and construction process.

One of the defining features of CUER is its appeal to a wide range of students. The team is now represented by a variety of backgrounds spanning both arts and science subjects. The diversity of roles within the team means that students from all backgrounds can make a contribution; around one hundred students are co-operating in striving for success in Australia.

CUER is supported by many businesses, local and global alike. These companies have provided essential equipment, manufacturing, materials and funding without which there would be no project. In this way, CUER establishes strong links between the university and industrial partners.

Some of the technologies being developed by CUER and similar solar teams may well creep into our daily lives at some stage in the future; particularly for use in electric cars, solar power generation and composite materials. After 2009, there is the 2011 race to look forward to, where CUER is aiming for gold. ■

*Marc Stettler is currently at Fitzwilliam College studying for an MPhil in Engineering for Sustainable Development.*

*Anyone interested in joining or finding out more about CUER, please visit [www.cuer.co.uk](http://www.cuer.co.uk)*



©Cambridge University Eco Racing