



High-speed car harnesses the power of the sun



Running repairs: Isaac Rudden tweaks the car's electronic system on site in Australia. Photo Owen Foo.



No fuel required: The solar-powered car designed by Isaac Rudden and his Durham University teammates sets out on the road in Adelaide. Photo Owen Foo

Engineering student Isaac Rudden is a driving force behind a futuristic project to design and build an energy-efficient car that runs entirely off the power of the sun.

Isaac, who previously studied at Christ's College Finchley, off East End Road, N2, was part of the Durham University Electric Motorsport team that travelled to the World Solar Challenge in Adelaide, Australia, late last year

to compete against teams from 23 other countries.

Their single-seat, carbon fibre car, called Ortus, was driven more than 2,800km across the Outback, reaching a top speed of 67mph, without the need for any fossil fuels. Isaac was responsible for the electrical system, including the motor. The vehicle weighed just 178 kg and cruised on the highway using less power than a hairdryer. Its shape made

it so aerodynamic that its total drag was comparable to just the wing mirrors on a regular car.

Daytime temperatures during the event exceeded 40C in the shade, with temperatures in the car hot enough to melt plastic components. Isaac and his team returned to the UK with hopes to enter the European Solar Challenge later this year, gain new sponsors, and improve Ortus even more.

How the teddy bear came into our lives

By Diana Cormack

Cuddly toys are a popular Valentine's Day present, particularly in the form of a teddy bear which, a national newspaper recently revealed, is the bedtime companion to one in three people. These bears first appeared early in the 20th century in Germany and the USA, which is where they got the name 'Teddy'.

My husband and I were reminded of this last year on our 2,000 mile road trip through the states of the Deep South. On Route 61 along the flooded Mississippi Delta we found ourselves bound for Onward, billed as 'home of the teddy bear'. This turned out to be a deserted house and store at an isolated junction on the Blues Highway. Deserted because we later discovered the storeowner had angered local farmers and residents with his views about installing pumps to deal with their local floods and they had retaliated by boycotting the business.

In the surrounding garden stood a face-in-the-hole board bearing the sun bleached painting of a hunting scene. This featured the beginning of the teddy bear tale.

Sportsmanship

The story goes that in 1902 US President Theodore Roosevelt, a keen big game hunter, had been unsuccessful whilst hunting in the area. Wish-

ing to please him, the accompanying party captured a bear and presented it to him tied to a tree. But the president declared this to be unsporting and refused to shoot the injured animal. Word of his 'kindness' spread to the capital (he had apparently given orders for the bear to be shot to end its misery).

Teddy-mania

It was the story of him refusing to kill the bear which later appeared along with cartoons that depicted a cuter creature than the original. Roosevelt gave his permission for the subsequent stuffed toys to be named Teddies after him and these were followed by stories and books. Then, in 1907, came the ever popular song *The Teddy Bears' Picnic*.

Had this event not happened, the world might have missed out on ursine favourites such as Winnie the Pooh, Paddington Bear and Rupert, not to mention the favourite furry friend at millions of people's bedsides.



Where it started: Diana in Onward. Photo Ian Cormack.

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