STORMY WEATHER AHEAD AS TOP GUN RIVALS BATTLE FOR THE LEAD

As the sun sets on the second day of the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge and the temperature hovers at around 36 degrees Celsius, just minutes separate two past Challenger Class champions after travelling nearly 1300 kilometres on the power of the sun.

Nuon Solar Team from the Netherlands, in their solar car ‘Nuna 9’, is holding off Japanese rivals Team Tokai by the narrowest of margins - both are now setting up camp just north of Ti Tree in Australia’s outback. With two distinctly different hi-tech solar cars, it’s a battle of aerodynamics vs ‘space-grade’ solar cells between the torpedo shaped ‘Tokai Challenger’ and the high performance solar array of ‘Nuna 9’.

Team Twente’s ‘Red Shift’ is making up ground on Nuon, moving into 3rd position around 24 minutes behind, however they are being forced to cool their heels with a time penalty in Barrow Creek which could see their lead diminished over US solar Champions Team Michigan, currently in fourth place. Michigan, who have never won in Australia, have also radically changed its solar car design, going small in the hope of winning big. Just half an hour separates the four top teams. Moving into 5th position, Belgian team, Punch Powertrain in ‘Punch Two’ is in Barrow Creek. The Kogakuin team from Japan is also making its move, in the radically designed ‘Wing’, bumping Australia’s Western Sydney University into 7th place in ‘Unlimited Two’. With the race so close, and storms on the horizon, team strategists will be hard at work tonight looking for a way through.

Team Eindhoven, who are now camping just kilometres from the iconic Devils Marbles, continue to demonstrate why they have taken out the past two Cruiser Class Cups, having opened up a solid lead on the points table. By carrying up to five people, Eindhoven is also gaining a competitive advantage by maximising the number of people carried over the course of the Event.

Australia’s UNSW Sunswift Team in ‘Violet’ are second on the points table by a narrow margin from US team Prism in ‘Penumbra’ who have moved up the ladder into third position followed by University of Minnesota’s ‘Eos II’ in fourth. A total of 10 Cruisers are still in the field all aiming to travel at an average speed of around 70 kilometres an hour to make the Adelaide finish line within the specified time window of between 11am and 2pm on Friday 13.

Several teams today found out first-hand why this Event is called the world’s greatest solar challenge. For full results follow the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge live team tracker as they make their way towards Adelaide on www.worldsolarchallenge.org/dashboard/map

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FOR MEDIA IMAGES:
https://www.worldsolarchallenge.org/for_media/media--image-gallery-access
Bridgestone World Solar Challenge Media Background

Media background

2017 Bridgestone World Solar Challenge (8-15 October)

Celebrating 30 years this year, the world’s biggest solar challenge began in 1987 and is a 3,000-kilometre endurance adventure that occurs once every two years. The BWSC has become the world’s foremost innovation challenge with teams from around the world vying to become the first to deliver sustainable solar powered electric vehicles. Teams are striving to make the Darwin start line on Sunday 8 October, in their bid to deliver the world’s most efficient solar electric car. Three classes of vehicle, Challenger, Cruiser and Adventure, will take on the Aussie outback in a contest of endurance, strategy and innovation. The elite Challenger Class is conducted in a single stage from Darwin to Adelaide and 2017 will see the third running of the Cruiser Class (the race within the race), created to encourage the green to the mainstream by designing practical electric vehicles where success is judged on a range of design and performance measures. The stage is set for a total eclipse of past events and achievements. For event details go to: www.worldsolarchallenge.org