Challenge Day 6: Finish day!

This was so exhilarating, what a fantastic feeling to see Stella Era and the whole team pass the finish line at Victoria Square in Adelaide! Words cannot really describe what a great feeling this was.

The video team captured it very well though, see it here!

We got up today thinking, today we finish, no matter what happens! It is only another 197km and compared to what we have driven, totally peanuts! Of course it was not as simple as that.. We started on time, the convoy was doing just fine when the CB radio started with stuff you just don’t want to hear after almost 3000km; the car was losing power and had to be restarted, several times and we all started sweating despite the cold weather (9 degrees last night, #ilovecampinglol).

After a while a BWSC safety happened to pass by and asked how we were doing and that is when the convoy heard all was OK again, what a RELIEF!

Overtaking another convoy earlier on

(Camper got a warning to use the indicator (oops, so worried about what was going on)).

That was not the end of the ordeal though, as traffic was getting really heavy and Adelaide is hilly.. We all remember Darwin when Stella Era could not make it up the hill from a standstill position and Adelaide has several hills with a traffic light at the bottom. It was therefore extremely important to keep Stella Era moving, even at a slow speed to make sure the lights were green when she passed. This was once again one of those moments that you could see what a great team this is, how Stella Era was sheltered and cared for, making sure she would take those hills and get to the finish line, especially now that we were so close!

Meanwhile the convoy had to go to the support vehicles parking lot where a shuttle bus took us to the finish line so we could join all parents, alumni and other supporters of our team. Without the alumni – their knowledge, dedication and help - and the support of family and friends we could not be as successful as we are and have made it to the finish.
We certainly have the best supporters! Photo by Bart van Overbeeke

We were all totally hyped, probably scared the bus driver with our singing and cheering and got to the finish line where Stella Era and all 4 passengers would arrive. And we waited and waited until it was announced she was in a traffic jam! Luckily we already passed the time control stop so no worries here.

As soon as the team spotted Stella Era the singing and cheering started again, climaxing by covering her in champagne as she was escorted to the final finish line. The excitement, relief, joy and happiness was truly heartwarming and an experience never to forget. For a moment it already felt as if we won, which of course is not the case, not yet anyway..

Because tomorrow, it is judgement day! The other 50% of the final score will depend on our presentation of the solar car and all of her features to the jury. It is only then that we also find out exactly what all other teams have to offer.

All we can do now is celebrate that we made it to the finish and hope all goes well tomorrow!
The traditional fountain celebration!  

Cheering on the team from Aachen for their dip in the fountain!  

Photo by Bart van Overbeeke