

Press Release

SCHIPHOL, 14 JUNE 2024

BREAKING NEW GROUND IN INNOVATION

Air France KLM Martinair Cargo partners with Dutch Brunel Solar Team for 2024 Sasol Solar Challenge in South Africa – united in sustainability and innovation

Air France KLM Martinair Cargo (AFKLMP) is thrilled to announce its renewed partnership with the Brunel Solar Team for the 2024 Sasol Solar Challenge in South Africa from 13 through 20 September 2024. As partners, we hope to help the team win this prestigious solar race for the fifth time!

Pursuing our commitment to innovation and sustainability in transportation, AFKLMP will be the Brunel Solar Team's logistics partner for the Sasol Solar Challenge. We will handle air transport and related logistics for the team's solar vehicle, the Nuna 12s. To minimise environmental impact, AFKLMP will offset the fuel required to transport the Nuna 12s from Amsterdam to Johannesburg with SAF (an alternative aviation fuel), significantly reducing the carbon footprint of this journey.

*"Air France KLM Martinair Cargo is inspired by and aligned with the mission of the Sasol Solar Challenge," said **GertJan Roelands, SVP Commercial at Air France KLM Martinair Cargo**. "The airfreight industry faces the challenge of reducing its carbon footprint. Our goal is to lead innovation in this area by spearheading initiatives that involve all industry stakeholders."*

Following the global oil crisis of 1973, there was growing awareness for the environmental harm caused by fossil fuels, sparking global efforts to develop alternative energy sources. In 1983, Danish inventor Hans Tholstrup built the first solar-powered car and drove it across Australia, demonstrating the potential of solar energy. This groundbreaking achievement led to the establishment of Australia's World Solar Challenge.

In 2001, the Solar Team from Delft University of Technology participated in the sixth World Solar Challenge in Australia, aiming to promote sustainability and innovation. Led by Dutch astronaut Wubbo Ockels, the team inspired many with their vision. As Ockels famously said, "There is only one earth. And there is no spare."

The Delft students made history by beating 43 other team to become the first rookies to win the race with their solar car, Nuna.

Today, solar racing continues to drive technological innovation and raise awareness for the environmental impact of fossil fuels. It challenges teams to develop and refine new technologies, contributing to advancements in sustainable technology that will eventually benefit commercial industries. By partnering with the Brunel Solar Team, AFKLMP reaffirms its commitment to sustainability and innovation, significantly advancing efforts to achieve more sustainable practices in aviation and beyond.

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A delegation from AFKLMP Cargo surrounded by the Brunel Solar Team in their pit box in Delft. From left to right: Eveline Plazier, Mart Kikkert, Valérie Klemann, Willen van Overbeeke, Sterre van der Wal, Cato Kral, Torben Aalbers, Daan Schramade, GertJan Roelands, Mark Tabaksblat, Tijs Lenssen, Gerard Roelfzema and Huub Kavelaars. Photo credit: Anglo Muzo - AFKLMP Cargo

About the Sasol Solar Challenge 2024

The Sasol Solar Challenge is South Africa's biennial competition for talented engineering teams from around the world, who challenge one another to cover as much distance as possible on public roads from Johannesburg to Cape Town in solar-powered cars. The eight-day event traditionally spans more than 2,500 km, with local and international teams putting newly developed technology to the test as they pass through South African towns.

The basics

This tough competition proves challenging for even the best international solar teams. Each day, solar cars and their support vehicles traverse a route of 250 - 300 km. There are three major stops on each stage: the start line, the control stop, and the finish line.

Start line

Solar teams set off in convoys, crossing the start line in the same order they finished the previous day's stage.

Control stops and loops

Each of the eight daily routes requires a 30-minute compulsory control stop at a set location between the start and finish lines. For lunch? Sort of! Control stops are an opportunity to refresh, swap drivers, do repairs, and strategize. They're also an opportunity for the host town to come out and support the teams.

Each control stop also has an optional loop of road – of varying distances each day – which crews can drive solar cars around as many times as they like, racking up those precious kilometres. Each loop requires an additional five-minute stop at the control stop – cars off, and drivers out. But careful! The cut-off time at the finish line looms, and that may still be hundreds of kilometres away.

Finish line

Each day-long stage of the eight-day challenge ends at 17:00 hrs, when all teams have to have their solar cars parked in the “parc fermé” paddock. Spectators look on with dread as top teams strategize and stretch their time, arriving just seconds before cut-off, having squeezed every kilometre possible out of the day. Late arrivals are penalised, which could change the start line the next day!

Read more on: <https://www.solarchallenge.org.za/>

About the Brunel Solar Team

The team consists of eleven highly motivated students from Delft University of Technology with various technical backgrounds, from aerospace engineering to robotics, all working to push the boundaries of sustainability. Their hope is that their solar car will inspire the world towards greater sustainability and more technical innovations. The team competes in the various solar races that take place every year in South Africa or Australia. So far, they have won seven out of ten races in Australia and four out of four in South Africa. This year, the Brunel Solar Team will be racing again in South Africa and will try to keep up the winning streak with the 5th win in a row!

Read more on: <https://brunelsolarteam.com/>

About Air France KLM Martinair Cargo

The Air France-KLM Group is a global airline group with a strong European base. Its main areas of business are passenger transport, cargo transport and aeronautical maintenance. Air France KLM Martinair Cargo is the Air France-KLM Group's dedicated air cargo business. Air France Cargo and KLM Cargo are members of SkyTeam Cargo (www.skyteamcargo.com) offering even larger network coverage.

Please click [here](#) to go to our press releases online or visit www.afklcargo.com for more information about Air France KLM Martinair Cargo

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