

# Media Release



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## **Solar Boat Race Spawns and Tests Technology**

Three competitors in the Inaugural Townsville Solar Boat Race declared the race a success despite windy, overcast conditions and only one vessel completing the course.

The race from Strand Park Beach to Picnic Bay and back, began at 11am on Sunday 22 August, 2010.

The three entrants were Guy Lane from sustainability consulting firm, SEA O2, Frank Dallmeyer from Tropical Energy Solutions, and Ron Goodwin from TAFE.

Ron Goodwin won the race in trimaran powered by a 180 watt Kyocera solar panel and received a small trophy.

He completed the two legs of the journey in just under five hours.

“I was very pleased to have had the opportunity to participate in this event and help create the possibility of an annual race in Townsville,” said Mr. Goodwin.

Frank Dallmeyer’s vessel, powered by four 135 watt Kyocera panels was swamped by a rogue wave early in the race and this forced their withdrawal.

“This race was a valuable learning about making domestic solar power equipment suited to the marine environment,” said Mr. Dallmeyer.

Guy Lane from SEA O2 entered the race with an electric kayak towing a Smart Barge, a SEA O2 invention that sought to solve a common problem in solar powered boats.

This problem is that the size of the vessel determines the size of the solar array, and thus limits the power to weight ratio.

The Smart Barge solves this problem as the solar panels are not attached to the boat, but are towed behind.

"We demonstrated the concept of the Smart Barge and learned valuable engineering lessons for future designs of the vessel," said Mr. Lane.

Supporting the SEA O2 vessel was a Support Vessel captained by Justin Howie of Revere projects.

It is planned to make the Townsville Solar Boat Race an annual event.

"The vision is for Townsville to annually host an International Solar Boat Race to support Townsville as a sustainable city," said Mr. Lane.

An analogue to this vision is the World Solar Challenge solar car race from Darwin to Adelaide which first ran in 1987 and now sports solar cars worth millions of dollars.

For more information:

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Interviews are available with Guy Lane and Frank Dallmeyer.

**Vision opportunity:** the Smart Barge and the Tropical Energy Solutions vessel can both be visited.