



Around the world in 65 days with zero carbon footprint

Kelly Robinson

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A NORTHERN beaches resident is trying to break an around-the-world speed record in a jet boat powered entirely by animal fat and vegetable oil.

Justin Beeton, of Queenscliff, is part of a team trying to break the circumnavigation of the globe speed record for a powerboat that can also run on human body fat.

The 24 m speed machine Earthrace started from Spain on April 27 and will try to travel around the Earth in about 65 days.

The team is about half-way in the attempt, currently between Hawaii and Singapore, and is trying to beat the record of 74 days, 23 hours and 53 minutes, set in 1998 with a zero carbon footprint.

Mr Beeton, who will travel the final leg of the trip from Suez Canal to the finish line in Valencia, Spain, said he hoped the record would be smashed by almost 10 days.

"The boat is fuelled on 100 per cent vegetable oil and animal fat," he said.

"It can actually run on human body fat. When the boat was in London before the trip started, a few of the boys were talking about what it could run on and, after a few beers, had some liposuction and the boat ran quite well.

"Part of my training has included eating fast food in case we run out of fuel.

"I'm driving the boat during the final leg, which should be the best leg to be on. The one with the glory."

Mr Beeton said the aim of the record attempt was to raise awareness of the long-term consequences of climate change.

"Earthrace is the world's most advanced power boat when it comes to sustainable energy, and is an example of what opportunities and exciting technology will emerge as the global rush into renewable energy sources heats up ahead of Kyoto's 2012 deadline," he said.

"As the only crew member representing Australia I feel privileged to represent our country in showing the world that Australia is committed to tackling the alarming issue of global warming."

Mr Beeton's company, JB Global Investment Services, a renewable energy investment manager, is bringing Earthrace to Manly in December.

It will be part of a renewable energy awareness program where northern beaches residents can see the boat and learn about tackling global warming.

To follow the record attempt, see www.earthrace.net.