Our Technical Team has been busy milling to manufacture the suspension mounts for our solar car. Milling involves cutting and shaping material using a rotating tool and is one of the most commonly used processes for machining custom parts to precise tolerances.

Some of our team members have set off on a trip to our sponsor Tindo Solar in Adelaide to encapsulate the solar cells. The encapsulation film covers a solar cell to provide optical and electrical transmissivity. Encapsulation is essential as it protects the solar cells and increases their performance, life span and reliability.

On the 25th of July, ten of our team members participated in the Inter-STEM Dodgeball game. Many STEM based societies at ANU played against each other and enjoyed a free BBQ lunch. The event was hosted by the ANU Engineering Students Association at the ANU Sports Hall.

Mengyuan Li, one of our Mechanical Team members, has been organising the 5th International Chinese Debating Elite Championship. This annual competition, running from August 2nd to August 4th, promotes the unique 1v1 Chinese debating model and the Chinese language to the world.
We have had a very active week at Sol Invictus, running several outreach events for Bush Week at the ANU. We served delicious solar car themed ‘Solar Car-amel slice’ for the Fire and Ice Markets last Tuesday. We also made an appearance at the CECS Welcome Party and competed in Thursday’s InterSTEM Dodgeball match.

But our biggest and most exciting part of the week was the joint-event hosted with our sponsor ANU Sport at Market Day last Wednesday.

We had a Human Power vs Solar Power contest, which was a huge success and had many people getting involved. The university’s finest rowers raced on rowing machines against the MTAA Super Charge to see if they could produce more power than our solar car. The event attracted quite a bit of attention, with almost 100 participants in the competition!

The MTAA Super Charge was initially in the lead and looking to win. However, the race heated up quickly, with the scores eventually levelling. By the end of the day, the humans had managed to scrape an 8-7 victory. Despite the narrow defeat, the race is an excellent demonstration of just how efficient our solar car is - despite competing against 6 people at a time rowing 500m sprints, we still managed to travel more than 10km further than the combined distance of the rowers in just 32 minutes of rowing time.

Congratulations to the top performing team, ANU Sport Staff, who managed to sustain 1765 watts over their 500m (98 seconds)! Other high performing teams managed to average 1518 watts in 107 seconds and 1473 watts in 109 seconds.

It has been an energetic week here at MTAA Super Sol Invictus. On Wednesday we had a visit from Chief Minister Andrew Barr who got to meet the team and explored our workshop. Also on Wednesday we had the best rowers at ANU competing to see if they could generate energy faster than our solar car can! Yesterday five key members of the team departed Canberra to go to Tindo Solar in Adelaide in a rather cramped car ride to assemble our solar array for the solar car, and we’re excited to see the results!

~ Avik Mason, Project Lead ~