

# Competitions



*Student automotive engineers put off-road vehicles through their paces in the Mini-Baja West.*

## MINI-BAJA WEST

More than 5,600 participants and spectators descended on the University of Oklahoma campus during three days in April 1990 for the Mini-Baja West Competition. Among the 55 entrants were student engineering teams from universities in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

The competition, held at OU for the second straight year, is sanctioned and sponsored by the Society of Automotive Engineers to simulate real-world engineering design projects and their related problems. Each team designs and builds a four-wheel, single-seat, off-road recreational vehicle hypothetically intended for sale to the public. The event culminated in a four-hour endurance race near Lloyd Noble Center.



*The Spirit of Oklahoma, OU's entry in the World Solar Challenge, driven by Gigi Parker, receives a royal send-off from a Saturday football crowd prior to departure for the grueling Australian endurance race.*

## WORLD SOLAR CHALLENGE

At first glance, a grueling international road race across the Australian Outback seems far removed from the University's 100th birthday celebration. The determination of OU student engineers to participate in the World Solar Challenge, however, soon became a modern-day expression of the Centennial spirit.

The novice Sooners spent every spare hour for two years building a sun-driven 450-pound vehicle to compete with more experienced corporate and major university teams with vastly superior budgets. Private corporations and individual donors, impressed by the ingenuity and resolve of the students and their faculty sponsor, John Fagan, stepped in to supplement University funds.

While never conceding defeat, the team's real objective was to be up and running at the final gun. And finish they did, back in the pack but already planning for the next race in 1992.

## CAMPUS BEAUTIFICATION

With a campusful of company coming, the University community did what any good host would do—spruced up the surroundings. Inspired by the on-campus work of the University landscapers under the direction of Randy Lacewell, OU Regent Sarah Hogan spearheaded the 1988 formation of a special committee to encourage the sorority and fraternity houses to upgrade the plantings and care given to their lawns.

Enlisted to chair the Greek Beautification Project were alumni Betty Huckabay of Mustang and G. T. Blankenship of Oklahoma City. Oklahoma's first lady, Shirley Bellmon, was so impressed by the idea that she agreed to be the honorary chair, then urged use of the OU effort as a pilot project for a statewide beautification project for Oklahoma college campuses.

While each participating house received recognition at a Dad's Day luncheon, six houses were singled out for special awards. The David Ross Boyd Award for the most attractive landscaping went to Sigma Phi Epsilon and Pi Beta Phi; the President's Cup for the most improved landscaping was presented to Sigma Chi and Delta Gamma; the Oklahoma's First Lady Award for the best use of color in a permanent floral arrangement was won by Lambda Chi Alpha and Chi Omega.

## CENTENNIAL ENERGY DESIGN

A blue-ribbon panel of judges from industry and government heard student engineering teams from the University of Houston, the West Virginia Institute of Technology and OU address the "National Energy Scenario for the Year 2015" on November 17 at the Sarkeys Energy Center.

The competition finalists dealt with the amount and expected uses of energy in conventional energy sectors, such as household, industrial, commercial and transportation. Also part of their scenarios were short-term and long-term ecological impacts, the availability of supplies and suggested possible energy sources.