



The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

NEWS RELEASE

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TEAMS FROM RIVERSIDE AND MIRA COSTA HIGH SCHOOLS TAKE TOP SPOTS
AT METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT'S 2017 SOLAR CUP™

**More than 700 students from 43 Southland high schools
competed in the nation's largest solar-powered boat competition**

LAKE SKINNER, Calif.— Metropolitan Water District's 15th annual Solar Cup™ concluded today with boats built and raced by students from Riverside Poly and Mira Costa high schools claiming the top awards at the competition, the largest student-based solar-powered boat race in the nation.

The schools were among 43 teams competing from Metropolitan's six-county, 5,200 square-mile service area, which includes Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura counties. Solar Cup is a year-long program in which students build, equip and race 16-foot, single-seat boats powered only by the sun.

The Solar Cup program allows students to apply their skills in math, physics, engineering and communications, while learning about Southern California's water resources, resource management, conservation and alternative energy development.

Riverside Poly High School, in Riverside, won first place in the veteran's division, followed by Oxford Academy and Calabasas High School in second and third place overall. Mira Costa High School, in Manhattan Beach, took the top prize in the rookie division at the three-day competition at Metropolitan's Lake Skinner in the Temecula Valley of southwestern Riverside County.

"Solar Cup gives students a chance to really put to use skills they've learned in the classroom in a fun competition. And as much preparation as they put into engineering their boats leading up to this weekend's races, most teams still face a challenge or two here, so they have to think on their feet, problem-solving as they go – just like in real life. Those are skills that will be immensely valuable to them as they move beyond the classroom and enter professional careers," said Metropolitan Assistant General Manager Dee Zinke.

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On Friday, teams completed a qualifying event to ensure boats met rules and were safe and seaworthy. Saturday, the teams attached solar-collection panels to the boats for two, 90- minute, 1.6-kilometer endurance races.

Today, the solar-collection panels were removed and boats used solar energy stored in batteries to speed down a 200-meter stretch.

The 2017 Solar Cup program began last fall when Metropolitan's member agencies announced their school sponsorships. Teams are sponsored by their local water agencies and other organizations to equip the crafts with solar panels, batteries, steering and related systems.

Metropolitan provided teams with identical kits of marine-grade plywood to build the hull and an advisory team from Occidental College provided technical support for the boats' engineering and mechanics. While all teams must build a new boat and equip it, returning teams were allowed to use equipment from previous boats.

"Solar Cup isn't just about building and racing boats, we also give students the big picture about the value of alternative energy development, water resources and sustainability," said Solar Cup coordinator Julie Kalbacher, a state-certified teacher with Metropolitan's education programs.

Following are the trophies and awards presented today. Complete Solar Cup scores will be posted on Metropolitan's website, mwdh2o.com. You can also follow [@mwdh2o](https://twitter.com/mwdh2o) on Twitter or become a [fan](#) on Facebook to see the results from this weekend's races and stay abreast of other agency and industry news. Photos and video of this year's event are available upon request and will be posted on the website in the coming days.

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Veteran Teams, Cities, sponsoring member/local agency:

First Place – Riverside Poly High School, Riverside, Western Municipal Water District and Riverside Public Utilities

Hottest-looking Boat – NuView Bridge Early College High School, Eastern Municipal Water District, Rancho California Water District

Rookie Division—Teams and sponsoring member/local agency:

First Place – Mira Costa High School, West Basin Municipal Water District

Hottest-Looking Boat – Mira Costa High School, West Basin Municipal Water District

Bart Bezyack Memorial Spirit of Solar Cup Trophy Sportsmanship Award:

Norte Vista High School in Riverside (Western Municipal Water District, Riverside Public Utilities) for helping another team with equipment

Teamwork Award:

Los Osos High School in Rancho Cucamonga (Inland Empire Utilities Agency, Cucamonga Valley Water) for helping another team with equipment and advice

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The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a state-established cooperative of 26 cities and water agencies serving nearly 19 million people in six counties. The district imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California to supplement local supplies, and helps its members to develop increased water conservation, recycling, storage and other resource-management programs.