

Challenge for young engineers

Registration for Formula Student — Europe's biggest student motor-sport event, organised by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers — opened on 20 January and closed the same day, after teams from universities around the world filled all 88 places in just over 2hr. Over 20 teams from the UK entered, including Cambridge, Glasgow and Cardiff.

The challenge facing these teams is to design and build a single-seater racing car from scratch, and then race it at Silverstone (from 16 to 19 July). The aim is to help students develop academic, vocational and practical engineering skills. Last year, for the first time in the competition's history, Formula Student included a challenge for students to design and build cars that would run on alternative fuels. The category was won by Hertfordshire University last year, and five teams have registered for it this year.

John Wood, chairman of Formula Student and deputy president of the IMechE, said: "Everybody is aware that these are difficult times in the economic cycle, and developing excellent engineers has never been more important. Formula Student is unique in that it offers student the chance to hone their skills in an exciting and stimulating environment." For more information, visit the Web site (www.formulastudent.com).

