



Press releases

Low carbon racing cars make their debut at Silverstone

14 July 2008

Low carbon racing cars designed and built by student engineers have made their debut at the Formula Student competition at Silverstone, the UK's home of Formula 1 and venue for Lewis Hamilton's recent victory.

Students from Hertfordshire, Oxford Brookes and Coventry Universities have entered the new category for low carbon cars. The University of Hertfordshire unveiled a hydrogen racing car along with Oxford Brookes University's hybrid racing car and Coventry University's biofuel car.

Formula Student is supported by the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) and this is the very first time in the competition's 11 year history that there is a category for cars powered by low carbon fuel.

To mark the occasion, all three teams were presented with certificates of achievement by the IET.

John Saville, a Member of the IET and judge of this year's Formula Student competition, said: "I've been involved with Formula Student for a number of years and have been working hard to ensure the new category is part of the competition.

"Alternative fuels are crucial to the future of Formula 1 and Formula Student is leading the way with the future of engineering and highlighting the importance of developing greener technologies, such as hybrid and hydrogen, for transport and the environment."

Dr James Marco, a Member of the IET and Formula Student judge, presented the certificates along with John Saville. He said: "Formula Student is Europe's biggest student motorsport event and it inspires the next generation of engineers, develops their skills and provides invaluable practical experience.

"It is important that the next generation of engineers appreciate the importance of applying sustainable technology within the automotive sector. They will be responsible for developing the designing the green cars that many of us will be using in the future in the drive to combat carbon emissions."

With the development of new fuels and sources of energy, come new engineering challenges. And, Dr Marco, a lecturer in automotive engineering at Cranfield University, is working on a number research projects involving the design and verification of both hydrogen powered and hybrid electric vehicles.

James said: "The design of highly complex alternative powered vehicles is one the greatest challenges that the international automotive industry is currently facing and in many regards Formula Student is at the forefront of this challenge."

James Marco and Millbrook Proving Ground have been advising Formula Student on ways to accurately measure the energy efficiency of these new innovative vehicles.

James added: "With conventional powered cars once you've filled up at the garage your tank is full and the car's fuel gauge measures how much fuel is being used.

"However, with newer fuels, such as hydrogen and the stored electrical energy in batteries understanding the 'fuel' available is far more complex and appropriate measurement techniques do not yet exist, we are working with experts at Millbrook to devise tools and techniques that are required to introduce this technology to the automotive industry."

Formula Student takes place at Silverstone until Saturday 13 July.

Media enquiries to:

Mary Donovan
IET Media and PR Officer
T: +44 (0)1438 765587
M: +44 (0) 7970 036449
E: mdonovan@theiet.org

Robert Beahan
IET Press Officer
T: +44 (0)1438 767336
E: rbeahan@theiet.org

Notes to editors:

1. The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) is a world leading professional organisation working to develop science, engineering and technology.
2. The IET dates from 1871 and has more than 154,000 members in 127 countries with offices in Europe, North America and Asia-Pacific. It provides a global knowledge network to facilitate the exchange of information.
3. The IET registers more engineers than any other UK institution and approaching half the engineers on the Engineering Council register are IET members. More information, please see www.theiet.org.

