

NEWS RELEASE

Formula 1 Legends Inspired By Formula Student

Europe's Biggest Student Motorsport Event gets off to a Flying Start

17 July 2009

Formula One Champion Damon Hill OBE, surprised nearly 3,000 students at Silverstone yesterday when he dropped in to wish them luck at the start of the annual Formula Student (FS) event and then jumped into the world's first ever single-seater fuel-cell racing car!

The racing legend dropped in to Silverstone, near Milton Keynes, and bumped into FS Patron and Brawn GP Team Principal Ross Brawn along with Renault F1 Engineering Director and FS Ambassador, Pat Symonds. FS is run by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMEchE) and is Europe's biggest student motorsport event. The fuel-cell car, designed and built by students at Imperial College joins five other alternative fuelled vehicles in the event which runs until Sunday 19 July at the world famous motor circuit. This 12th year is the biggest yet for FS with over 3,000 students, 115 teams, 21 countries, over 100 cars and five different classes.

Symonds said of the event: "I am utterly amazed at the engineering passion and innovation that these students have this year, and every year. As the Formula Student Ambassador I believe it is hugely important that people, like me and my peers, put something back into the grass roots community. We all need mentors.

"These students are at the start of what promises to be three days of pretty intense competition. We didn't have anything like Formula Student when I started out and it represents a microcosm of what engineering is about. It is not just applicable to the motorsport of Formula One – everything learned here can be a leader into almost any industry. I am very impressed with what I have seen so far,"

Ross Brawn, Team Principal Brawn GP and an Honorary Fellow of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers added: "I am delighted to be the Patron of Formula Student. I have seen real passion and determination in the teams I came across today and with motorsport being such a competitive environment, FS gives them a real edge. In my own team I have former FS

graduates including Jenson Button's race engineer, Andrew Shovlin. I also believe the educational and academic aspects that Formula Student offers, along with the determination and will to succeed by the students, make it unique. The enthusiasm that I saw today fills me with optimism for the future of science and engineering in our country."



Pic (left): Damon Hill OBE, tries out one of the cars at the launch of Formula Student this year.



Pic (right): Ross Brawn, Formula Student Patron, gives the event his backing.

Students have to design, build and compete in a single seater racing car from scratch – no mean feat! This year will be the biggest in the event's history with approximately 3,000 students from countries as far afield as Canada, India, Hungary, Finland and over 40 UK teams from London to Ireland and Scotland all being represented.

The real action will start tomorrow (Saturday) when all the cars will compete in a series of exciting dynamic events at Silverstone such as the Acceleration, Sprint, Skid-Pad and Endurance events. The students' knowledge, creativity, and imagination will also be tested in the equally important Design, Presentation

and Cost assessment elements of the competition where they must present their designs to a group of top judges drawn from industry and motorsport. The low carbon cars will take part in ALL the dynamics and be judged on the amount of carbon emissions produced.

Jon Hilton, FS Chief Judge, and Managing Partner of Flybrid Systems, said: "It will be up to this next generation of engineers to solve problems surrounding vehicle emissions and alternative energy, and Formula Student gives them the essential, practical skills they need to achieve this. Motorsport has got a huge contribution to make to new carbon technologies. The development of alternative fuels in a motorsport environment like Formula Student is extremely fast and everything learned can be directly transferred to road vehicles, and help reduce the damage we are doing to our planet" he added.

Formula Student Class 1 A Entries	
University	Fuel
Oxford Brookes	Hybrid – petrol/electric
Hertfordshire University	Electric
Imperial College London	Hydrogen Fuel-Cell
Central Lancashire	E-85 Bio-Ethanol
ETH Zurich, Switzerland	Electric
University of Madrid	Hybrid
State Technical University – MADI, Moscow	Hybrid

ENDS

Notes to Editors

- For more information on this release, a press pack, or to attend and film at Formula Student, please contact the IMechE Press Office on 0207 304 6877/ 07730 644134, email media@imeche.org Further details can be found at www.formulastudent.com. **Media must complete the Media Registration form to film at FS which is available along with the Press Pack at www.imeche.org**
- Class 1A was launched last year and fits in with the IMechE's key themes of Education, Environment, Energy and Transport. FS usually forms part of the students' academic studies, and culminates in a competition where teams from all over the world come together to race and compete against each other. The IMechE Formula Student event uses the same rules as the Formula SAE series (with some minor changes) and this means student teams can enter their cars in the Formula SAE events, including those in the US, Australia and Germany. The Institution would like to thank its Partners, Airbus, Autodesk, Cenex, E.ON, National Instruments, Aston Martin and Shell.