

DHS Fuel Cell Car Qualifies for Energy-Efficient Car Marathon in Detroit, Then Stops Short

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The Darien High School Fuel Cell Team put in a valiant effort recently at the 2017 Shell Eco Marathon held in Detroit.

Out of 100 teams, only half — including the DHS team — passed the rigorous technical and safety inspection process to get on the track. The fuel cell car then was able to complete three laps, a distance of about three miles.

However, due to technical issues, the team did not complete a valid run for placement. Overall, they ranked fourth in their division, beating out schools like Georgia Tech University and Queens University.

They also got a chance to help out Georgia Tech students to ensure their car passed inspection.

"The professionalism, technical competence, and ability to overcome was the heart of the DHS team, and they should be commended for their efforts," said DHS teacher Rich Reynolds.

Started in 1939, the Shell Eco-Marathon is a unique competition that challenges students around the world to design, build, and drive the most energy-efficient car. With three annual events in Asia, Americas and Europe, student teams take to the track to see who goes further on the least amount of fuel, according to the website.

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Teams make as many attempts as possible to travel the furthest on the equivalent of one liter of fuel. Cars drive a fixed number of laps around the circuit at a set speed. Organizers then calculate their energy efficiency, the website stated.

The team reported that the experience was one of the best practical learning opportunities in their high school career. They plan to return next year to compete, they said.

The Darien High School Fuel Cell Team included: David Kristof (Team Leader), Samuel Pfrommer, John Butcher, Thomas Tousignant, Maguire Shea, Alberto Calderon, Alexander Abbruzzese, Mac Mclaughlin, and Ben Sheed accompanied by Chaperone Rich Reynolds. The category in which they entered was the Hydrogen Prototype.

— Marc Marin is district director of instructional technology. This article is republished from the Darien Public Schools News of the Week newsletter.