

COURSE EN COURS: AN EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH INDUSTRY GETS SECONDARY STUDENTS PASSIONATE

This year's educational competition, supported by Dassault Systèmes, Renault and France's Ministry of Education, attracted record participation and impressive innovations

- **The national final of Course en Cours 2012, held on May 25 at Ecole Polytechnique in Paris, was won by the team called "Mach III Revolution" from Lycée Charles-Jully in Saint-Avold.**
- **This year's event attracted a record number of entries, involving more than 10,500 students from 350 secondary schools from all over France.**
- **Competitors have to invent, 3D design, build and race an electric-powered mini racing car.**

A total of 10,500 students from across France participated in the 2011-2012 round of Course en Cours, an annual competition for secondary students from first to final year, in which they race mini racing cars they have designed, tested and built themselves, using advanced technology.

The season culminated with the national final, held on May 25 at the prestigious Ecole Polytechnique in Paris, attended by 250 students, teachers and parents, where they raced their vehicles and presented and defended their designs. The students had to use all their ingenuity to make it to the final after winning in their regions.

On 25 May 2012, of the 3,000 participating teams, the Course en Cours panel of industry professionals selected the three winning entries for 2012:

- The Course en Cours Grand Prix: "Mach III Revolution" from Lycée Charles-Jully in Saint-Avold.
- Second Prize: "Jamais contents" from Lycée Saint Julien La Baronnerie à Saint-Sylvain-d'Anjou.
- Third Prize: "Innova'six" from Lycée Pierre et Marie Curie Saint-Lô.

Since 2006, Course en Cours has invited teams of secondary students to design and develop a mini racing car in real-life conditions over a school year. For the past two years, the program has included a major innovation: the vehicles are powered by an electric engine (in previous years, it was a compressed air cartridge). As a result, the competition has become much more technical: the students have to design ways to increase the engine's power and factor in grip on the track.

An exercise in multi-disciplinarity and initiative, which connects secondary schools with universities and industry, Course en Cours is the result of a rigorous educational design that integrates many of the subjects on the secondary curriculum: technology, math, physics, French, English, etc. The competition also fosters the values symbolized by motor sports: team spirit, concentration, precision, creativity and excellence. "The educational value of the program was approved by the French Ministry of Education in 2009 and further supported by a three-year agreement in 2010," explains Thierry Collet, President of Course en Cours and Vice-president of Global Academia and Education at Dassault Systèmes.

Course en Cours owes its success to its tripartite organization, which is a first: getting secondary schools, universities and business to work together. Each team is supervised by university student tutors and has access to tools and methods used by industry.

“As well as raising awareness of careers in engineering, the program seeks to promote equal opportunity, by supporting entries from socially and culturally disadvantaged schools, inspiring careers and encouraging students to go on to higher education in science and technology,” concludes Jean Agulhon, Vice-President of Course en Cours and Human Resources Director, France, of the Renault Group.

To participate in next year’s competition, register by mid-September 2012 on: <http://www.course-en-cours.com/>

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