

Lords of the Air return – more speed from the atmosphere

12 May, 2012

Records broken at the fifth international contest for compressed air-powered cars



The inimitable mood of a spring festival surrounded the unforgettable fifth Rexroth Pneumobile Competition final at the Érsekkert park in Eger. Compressed air-powered cars lined up for the well-established competition in five categories, designed and built by forty-one teams from four countries. It was a closer-matched race than ever before, attesting to the event's rising international prestige and its competitors' skill and technical sophistication. The members of MK Laren, the team that built this year's Rexroth Best Pneumobile, as first among equals, will hold the trophy for the next year to remind them of their victory among the flowers of the park on Saturday.

The entrants to this year's fifth-anniversary Pneumobile competition once again produced a vision of the future, proving that – as well as being the stuff of life – air, with some ingenuity, is a potential source of power for cars. Teams from Hungarian colleges and universities, and from the Czech Republic, Poland and Romania, demonstrated in front of throngs of supporters how seriously they had taken their task as they set out to prove their pneumatic-powered cars are no botched-up DIY jobs, but the fruit of serious engineering design work.

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In his welcoming address, Javier González Pareja, Representative of the Bosch Group in Hungary, said that the Pneumobile competition is a unique test of young engineers' innovative abilities and inventiveness.

“The competition shows that engineering work is not an activity divorced from reality, but one that draws on the vital force of inventiveness, which is open to everybody. It brings together the bright spirit of enquiry with the supporting strength of expertise based on the latest knowledge. Today’s event again proves that we are on the right road, and the aspirations of the next generation of the technical intelligentsia are increasingly matched with the future-building efforts of the Bosch companies,” added González Pareja.

The 2012 winners

This year once again the teams measured up their skills and talents in five categories. In the Distance category, where the vehicles had to get as far as possible on one air compressed cylinder, the METALMOBIL team got furthest: their pneumobile kept going for 9163 metres. In the Capability contest, the pneumobiles and their drivers had to put in the best performance on a technically highly demanding track. This year, the Debreceni Széllövagók team’s car was first over the line there. In the Acceleration category, the winner out of a strong field was the MK Laren’s car, which made it along the test track section in 28 seconds. First place in the prestigious Most Original Construction category, for the car displaying the most sophisticated technical features and the highest level of innovation, was carried off by the team from Szent István University. And the crowning prize, the title of Rexroth Best Pneumobile 2012, by tradition selected by the jury from the winners of each competition category, will for the next year be borne by the MK Laren team.

Chief competition organiser Endre Tamás said that all of the teams making it to the final had vehicles of a similarly high technical standard. The spectators were treated to the excitement of something more like a professional car race, but at the same time we kept the traditional festival mood of the contest.

This year, for the first time, experienced veteran competitors had their own Senior category. This featured graduates who had competed in one of the previous Pneumobile contests and were allowed to use their cars – which had to meet the 2012 conditions – by their old university. The best in this category, further enhancing the reputation of their alma mater, University of Miskolc was the ÓSI EntRóPia team. Another innovation was the prize for the team which came up with the most creative crash helmet design. The designs

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were put to the vote on Facebook, and the deserving winners, members of the *Science's Kitchen* team, proudly wore their custom helmets in the final.

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Further information: www.pneumobil.hu

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