

What an incredible experience competing at the National Finals of the F1 in Schools competition. Throughout 2 days of intense competition and jam packed action, Ginetta Racing Edu earned the 'Team Sponsorship and Marketing' award, as well as being nominated for the 'Pit Display' and 'Innovation' awards, and having the second fastest car!

The hours of hard work, to create portfolios, prepare the pit display and presentations and obviously the cars, were finely tooth picked by the judges, in order to determine the final outcome. Overall, we came 6th out of 25 teams, a truly incredible result for our first time competing.

The Monday morning accelerated off the startline with the design and engineering judging, where James and I outlined the past 8 months in just only 20 minutes, trying to squeeze in all the different engineering aspects. I was quizzed on our well-evolved manufacturing process while James justified our overall car design to the judges.

Next, we sped round the hairpin to the verbal presentation, where Harry Gration (well a video recording of him) asked us questions, to which we presented the answers to the judges. We aimed to show collaboration within our sponsorship programme and marketing strategy, and innovation throughout the learning process on the engineering side. Our teamwork was critically assessed here, but after spending many hours together and being questioned on our most disastrous moment with the hydrograph, the judges definitely got the impression that our team all came together to achieve our best.

The actual racing then commenced, with our fastest overall time being 1.330, and our fastest car only time was 1.149. Slightly disappointing to begin with, as it was slower than regionals. However, after noticing the same feeling was within many of the teams, we realised it was due to external factors such as the air pressure, humidity and the individual gas canisters.

Throughout the 2 days, the atmosphere was fantastic. We enjoyed discussing our car design with many younger teams competing in the Development class as well as some junior professional class teams. Team Adrenaline will surely be a team to look out for in the future, as well as the up and coming JJRC Racing (Yorkshire and the Humber Entry class winners) who watched and analysed our cars with us, as we put them into the Denford Air Trace Visualisation system.

For the team, it was a major chance to network with some very big names, such as Sahara Force India design engineers, Williams Randstad Academy students, Autodesk managers, and Airbus AR & VR experts, while discussing our team and our own future career plans.

The second day comprised of some tense knockout racing, an unexpected scrutineering call, and some relaxing time getting to know the other teams. Especially Hawk Racing (Good Luck at the Worlds!) and Team Vitesse, who also entertained us with a live rap concert (check it out on YouTube), making the whole experience an amazingly fun and sociable event.

We reached the semi-finals of the knockout racing, before narrowly losing out to Pursuit Racing, whose time was only 0.02s faster than ours! To finish off the event, there was a few informative and inspirational speeches from some McLaren graduates and Airbus representatives, before the big build up to the award ceremony. Our team celebrated everything we'd achieved, not just the nominations and awards, but also our own personal achievements, something that will stay with us for along time.

BUT, none of this could have been done though without the support from our sponsors, Ginetta Cars, Inchcape, SHAPA, Minster Engineering, and the Shepherd Group. We also owe our thanks to BBC Look North and Mrs Figgins, for ensuring we perfected our presentation, and to Brendan, our DT technician, for assisting us throughout the competition.

However, I don't think we can forget the undoubtedly passionate and committed support from our DT teacher, Mr Cooper, who without, the team wouldn't have got anywhere. The team can't thank him enough, for supervising us both early in the morning and late in the evenings in DT, as well as seeming to be believing in all the choices we made (however questionable those choices!), and teaching us many valuable lessons that we will never forget. Thank you to all involved, especially the rest of the team and Mr Cooper for the great experience.

Be sure to connect with me on Twitter or LinkedIn, as Georgina Edwards, I'd love to hear your comments about this.

Team Sponsorship & Marketing

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