

HERF announces its initial specifications package for 'The Future of Racing'

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Innovative new racing series will boast the most technologically advanced racing machines in the world.

The Hydrogen Electric Racing Federation -- which unveiled "The Future of Racing" and the "Hydrogen 500" concept here to an impressive gathering of leading auto industry executives and motorsports dignitaries in early January -- has announced its initial specifications package.

Introduced as a compelling first step into the realm of on-track competition for hydrogen electric fuel cell-powered vehicles, the Hydrogen Electric Racing Federation will boast the most technologically advanced racing machines in the world when competition begins in May 2009 -- just two years from now -- with the "Hydrogen 500".

"We have developed a set of specifications for the HERF racers that will limit expenditures for the participating manufacturers within reason on certain essential systems," said Peter M. DeLorenzo, the President and CEO of the Hydrogen Electric Racing Federation. "But make no mistake -- our intent is not to strangle ingenuity, but to encourage it. Each manufacturer will be free to express their individual creativity and innovative ideas any way they see fit. As a matter of fact, we encourage it. We feel this element of 'blue sky' thinking will be a crucial component to the appeal of the HERF racing machines -- and The Future of Racing."

"The concept of racing hydrogen fuel cell-powered machines is unprecedented and historic, simply because for the first time in many, many years, racing will undertake a key role in the development of radical new technologies for production vehicles that are still on the horizon," DeLorenzo added.

The HERF racers will be closed-wheel machines with an on-track footprint similar in dimension to but not exceeding those currently used by sports car prototype racers. Key specifications include:

- Weight: 900 kg (minimum)
- Construction: Manufacturers' choice
- Aerodynamic Devices: Allowed (although they cannot be movable or touch the track surface)
- Suspension, Steering, Brakes, Controls: Manufacturers' choice
- Power: 300kw/400 hp (minimum)
- Battery Type: Manufacturers' choice
- On-Board Hydrogen (compressed gas at 10,000 psi): Limited to 8 kg
- Tires: One size package for oval tracks, one size package for road-racing circuits
- Fuel: One manufacturer, to specification (from renewable resources)

- Projected Lap Speed (at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway): 185mph

"I believe it is time to press the 'reset' button for racing," said DeLorenzo. "Not only to usher in a new era of creativity and innovation to the sport, but also to enable racing to take its rightful place again as the principal conduit for the transference of advanced technologies and innovations directly to our future production vehicles. The onset of the electrification of the automobile is presenting us with a rare, perhaps once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to accelerate the development schedule of the hydrogen electric fuel cell-powered vehicle, while at the same time allowing us to reinvent and reposition the sport of racing to be more relevant than it has been in decades."

The Hydrogen Electric Racing Federation plans on presenting on-track competition for electric vehicles powered by hydrogen fuel cells beginning in 2009, with additional races, including international events in 2010 and 2011.

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