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## Cal Poly Team Wins First International Alternative Vehicle Competition

SAN LUIS OBISPO – The Cal Poly Human Powered Vehicle team came home from Maracaibo, Venezuela with a trophy and new friends and colleagues from overseas.



The Sept. 4-6 event was the first American Society of Mechanical Engineers Human Powered Vehicle Challenge held outside the United States. Cal Poly went up against five other teams from Caracas and Maracaibo, Venezuela, and Santiago, Chile. Representatives from Ecuador and Peru participated as observers in the hopes that their students would compete in the future.

With a top speed of 40 miles per hour, "Matrix," Cal Poly's lightweight and streamlined HPV took first in all categories: design, sprints and endurance. Seventeen students built the bike, which took second place overall at the 2007 ASME HPV Competition held last May.

"The students designed and built a carbon fiber-over-foam frame for lightweight strength, and a carbon/Kevlar fairing or cover for rider protection and aerodynamics," said George Leone, a technician in the Mechanical Engineering Department who advised the team along with professors Andrew Kean and Kim Shollenberger.

Leone, who traveled with eight team members to Venezuela for the contest, reported it was a "great experience, not only for our Cal Poly students, but also for the South Americans, with whom we shared our ideas, technical expertise and information."

Andes Rondo, the Venezuelan student organizer of the event, emphasized the Cal Poly team represented the United States not only as competitors, but also as goodwill ambassadors.

"The HPV Team of Cal Poly is amazing," Rondo wrote in a thank-you email. "You gave an example of humanity and collaboration, receiving help from you was something that we weren't expecting. The first main idea of this event was to participate in a HPV competition. At the end of the day we realized that the main idea changed into an event where we built bridges between different communities and cultures. Now I feel more proud of what we did here."

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