



Belgium recently took the lead among a set of top university teams vying for “zeroth place” in the [Formula Zero](#) European Championship of [hydrogen fuel cell cars](#). This carbon-free Grand Prix injects ingenuity and sustainability back into the races, starring get-up-and-go “karts” with a little H₂O in their tailpipes.





Hydrogen [fuel cells](#) power the racers' electric engines, which can go 0 to 60 (100 km/h) in 5 seconds and up to 75 mph (120 km/h). Of course, winning isn't everything ... the Dutch team [Greenchoice Forze](#) claims 70% renewable materials in their car's bodywork (such as natural flax fibers and bio-based resin) and offsets its carbon footprint with a green energy provider.

"There is no better way to educate the engineers of tomorrow than to give them an opportunity to get hands-on experience with these technologies and to prove their capabilities in a competition," says Eiso Vaandrager, one of the original organizers and enthusiasts of zero-emissions racing. "Students interested in starting their team for the next season should contact Formula Zero now."

The Dutch founders of [Formula Zero](#) — a play on the more famous [Formula One](#) — hope their super clean (and quiet) standards eventually become the racing norm. According to [The Independent](#) (UK), organizers of Formula One and the [FIA](#) in charge of motor racing worldwide already have begun moving toward more environmental policies. (Check out the FIA's "[greener motoring](#)" campaign.)

The end-of-summer hydro-cell series features four teams competing on different circuits in each of their host countries: the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium and Spain. With three down and one to go, [the Belgian team has won two](#) of those rounds, including the most recent on their home turf. The final race takes place this Thursday, Sept. 3 at the Motorland Aragon in Alcañiz, Spain.

[+ Formula Zero](#)

Photos by Richard van't Hof

