



Harnessing American Ingenuity

News Release

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

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GRAND CHALLENGE 2005 SEMIFINALISTS ANNOUNCED

40 Teams Advance to Next Round in Quest for \$2 Million Prize

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) today announced the 40 teams selected to advance to the semifinals of the DARPA Grand Challenge 2005 autonomous ground vehicle competition. The teams come from 16 states and Canada and represent varied backgrounds including universities, individuals, corporations, and a high school.

The 40 teams will compete head-to-head in the National Qualification Event (NQE) at the California Speedway in Fontana, September 27 to October 5, 2005 where 20 of the 40 teams will be selected to compete for the \$2 million prize in the Grand Challenge event, scheduled for October 8, 2005.

DARPA selected the semifinalists from a field of 118 entrants, using results from on-site visits conducted by DARPA technical staff last month. During the site visits, DARPA thoroughly evaluated the capability of each team's vehicle to autonomously navigate a narrow 200-meter course that contained turns and randomly placed obstacles.

"The high quality of vehicle performance that we witnessed during the site visits is truly impressive," said DARPA Director Dr. Anthony Tether. "We are thrilled with the sheer excitement about developing autonomous ground vehicles that the Grand Challenge has sparked among people from all walks of life. It was difficult to winnow the field from the 118 great teams to only 40 – the competition was tough."

Robotics technology that could save lives

Grand Challenge Program Manager Ron Kurjanowicz praised all 118 entrants and their sponsors, and underscored that the 40 semifinalists were selected from a very strong field of competitors. "It is truly remarkable how much progress the Grand Challenge teams have made in a relatively short period of time," he said. "The NQE will be very exciting and we will see autonomous vehicle performance that was not possible a year ago. The teams' creative sparks are flying and they are making impressive progress toward DARPA's goal of developing technologies that will save the lives of our men and women in uniform on the battlefield."

(more)

DARPA Grand Challenge 2005 is a field test of robotic ground vehicles for the purpose of advancing autonomous vehicle technology. The vehicles must travel approximately 150 miles over rugged desert roads using only onboard sensors and navigation equipment to find and follow the route and avoid obstacles. DARPA will award \$2 million to the team whose autonomous vehicle successfully completes the 2005 route the fastest within a 10-hour time period. All vehicles are developed without Government funding.

The teams selected to participate in the Grand Challenge NQE are listed below.

A.I. Motorvators Autonomous Vehicle Systems Autonosys Axion Racing BJB Engineering Blue Team CIMAR CyberRider Desert Buckeyes The Golem Group / UCLA Gray Team Indiana Robotic Navigation Indy Robot Racing Team Insight Racing	Intelligent Vehicle Safety Technologies I The MITRE Meteorites Mojavaton MonsterMoto Oregon WAVE Palos Verdes High School Road Warriors Red Team Red Team Too SciAutonics/Auburn Engineering Stanford Racing Team Team AION Team Banzai	Team CajunBot Team Caltech Team Cornell Team DAD Team ENSCO Team Jefferson Team Juggernaut Team Overbot Team TerraMax Team Tormenta Team UCF Terra Engineering Virginia Tech Grand Challenge Team Virginia Tech Team Rocky
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For more information about the DARPA Grand Challenge, including details on selected teams, please visit the official website at www.darpa.mil/GrandChallenge.

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DARPA is the central research and development organization for the U.S. Department of Defense. The agency manages research and development projects for the DoD, and pursues research in technology areas where the risk can be very high but success provides dramatic capability advances for Department of Defense missions.