



Eurobot 2006 – where robots play golf

The annual European Robotics Competition (Eurobot) will tee off in Catania, Italy, on 1 June 2006, running until 3 June. This year's three-day event will see 60 robots from 26 countries perfecting their golf swing and aiming to score plenty of holes-in-one.

Held annually since 1998, Eurobot pits students from universities, engineering schools and school science clubs against each other. Every year, competitors receive a new brief to design an intelligent robot to carry out a specific task autonomously – human intervention is definitely not allowed.

At this year's ninth edition, over 4 000 budding young scientists from Europe and other parts of the world have been set the challenge of building a robot to play a game of Funny Golf on a specially designed course. Two robots at a time go head-to-head (assuming they have one) and the aim of the game is to putt more balls than your opponent. Sixty teams have made it to the final in Catania, all with the dream of having their robot crowned golfing champion of the silicon world.

In addition to its fun side, Eurobot acts as a challenging proving ground for Europe's engineers and innovators and as a forum for bringing the latest developments in science and technology to the public's attention. It also seeks to make science and technology more attractive to young people, particularly women, who are underrepresented in the scientific arena.

In addition to firing the enthusiasm of the next generation of scientists and researchers, Eurobot helps to raise the public profile of science and bridge the gap between the scientific community and society at large.

For the first time, this year's event also features Eurobot Junior, which is targeted at 8-to-18-year-olds. The final was held at the Parc d'aventures scientifiques in Belgium on 22 and 23 April.

There will also be parallel workshops and conferences running for the entire three days (programme available upon request).

Public interest in Eurobot is high. The event draws thousands of visitors each year and a television audience of millions of viewers. Eurobot 2006 is being organised by the University of Catania (IT), Planète Sciences (FR) and the Eurobot Association.



There will be facilities available for both the print and audiovisual media, including dedicated ENG crews, a professional photographer, audiovisual materials and press kits. The organisers will also cover the travel and accommodation expenses of a limited number of journalists.

Eurobot is backed by the Science and Society Programme of European Commission's Research Directorate-General and Dassault Systemes, a leading software company, which is offering free licences for its CATIA software.

For more information about Eurobot 06:

www.eurobot.org

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