

# Canada dominates European Rover Challenge 2015

September 8 2015, by Tomasz Nowakowski, Astrowatch

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University of Saskatchewan's rover picking up a rock for the sample task during the ERC competition. Credit: USST

Canadian teams have dominated the second edition of the biggest European competition for Mars rovers that took place on Sept. 5-6 at the Regional Science-Technology Centre in Podzamcze, Poland. The Space Design Team of the University of Saskatchewan scooped the first prize, while the McGill Robotics Team from the McGill University in

Montreal finished third. The Next Team of the Białystok University of Technology, representing the host country, secured the second spot on the podium.

The goal of the European Rover Challenge (ERC) 2015 was to build a rover that will successfully compete in four tasks simulating Mars exploration. There were 40 students teams in the challenge, striving to flawlessly complete engineering, transport, geology and service tasks. The competition was judged by a team of Polish and international specialists in remote sensing, satellite navigation and planetary geology. The winning team has managed to score 456.5 points, 36 ahead of the one that finished second.

"We are so happy with our outcome, and we can't wait to get some rest. We're looking forward to continuing work on the rover, and have seen a lot of cool design ideas this weekend," the Space Design Team wrote on its website.

The competition was accompanied by scientific and technological presentations and meetings with experts. For two days visitors were able to take part in a real science festival, watch experiments and participate in workshops.

The special guest of the event was Harrison Schmitt, a retired geologist, university professor, U.S. senator and a former NASA astronaut, who participated in the Apollo 17 mission - the last manned expedition to the moon. In 1972, he spent 3 days on the lunar surface. During a 22-hour walk, he managed to collect 110 kg of rock and soil samples.

The ERC also gave the participants a unique opportunity to talk with Andy Weir, the author of the best-selling book "The Martian". During a video call, his fans asked him about his work, plans for the future and how he managed to realize his childhood dreams and turn his interests

into an international success. The film, based on his best-selling book, starring Matt Damon and directed by Ridley Scott, will hit U.S. theaters on Oct. 2.

Source: [Astrowatch](#)

Citation: Canada dominates European Rover Challenge 2015 (2015, September 8) retrieved 16 July 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-09-canada-dominates-european-rover.html>

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