

SIUE finishes 11th at Michigan Tech's Blizzard Baja

by Megan Weiser
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Cougar Baja Team had one of its two cars make a successful run at Michigan Tech's annual Blizzard Baja Saturday Feb. 16 in Houghton, Mich.

Senior Joe Trautman, president of the SIUE Baja Team, combined with 11 teammates to see their No. 94 car finish 11th overall in a field of 36 cars.

"We had a full day of competition beginning Saturday morning at 6 with events until 5 in the evening," Trautman said. "This was a non-sanctioned event, which means that it was hosted privately rather than through the Society of Automotive Engineers. These events are great for getting new members involved and letting more people drive."

Trautman noted that they experienced some misfortune with their No. 82 car. "At some point, our lap counter fell off into the snow on the track," he said. "So, even though it raced the full four hours, we were not aware until the end that no laps were counted. That was pretty disappointing, but things like that unfortunately happen sometimes."

The Michigan Tech Blizzard Baja Enterprise is a student-led organization that designs, builds, and tests single-seat, off-road vehicles in a national competition. Students use modern engineering and manufacturing processes to enhance vehicle performance by focusing on reduction of vehicle mass, maximization of drive train efficiency, improvement of driver visibility and comfort, and optimization of off-road vehicle handling and maneuverability.

The SIUE School of Engineering offers one of the most comprehensive and affordable engineering programs in the St. Louis region with eight undergraduate degrees, five master's degrees and two cooperative doctoral programs, all housed in a state-of-the-art facility. Students learn from expert faculty, perform cutting-edge research, and participate in intercollegiate design competitions. Companies in the metropolitan St. Louis area provide students challenging internships and co-op opportunities, which often turn into permanent employment. All undergraduate programs are accredited by their respective accreditation agencies.