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# CFD CALCULATIONS OF FORMULA STUDENT CAR IN OPENFOAM

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Symulacje Komputerowe Procesow Spalania

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June 19, 2018

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## 1 Introduction

Formula Student is a student engineering competition in which participate over 800 teams from around the world. WUT Racing Team from Warsaw University of Technology has taken part in the competitions from six years. Two constructions has been built and now third construction is being designed. Conception of aerodynamic package is to generate as big down force as it is possible irrespective of drag forces. It makes sens because of low maximum speed during the competitions (it is max 90kmph). The down force increase friction between road and tires. Thanks for that the car rides faster in turns.

In this report will be presented OpenFoam's calculations of entire Formula Student car in comparison to Ansys Fluent's calculations on the same mesh.

## 2 Model

The model was created in Siemens NX. Each aerodynamic element has been optimized firstly in 2D, next in 3D.

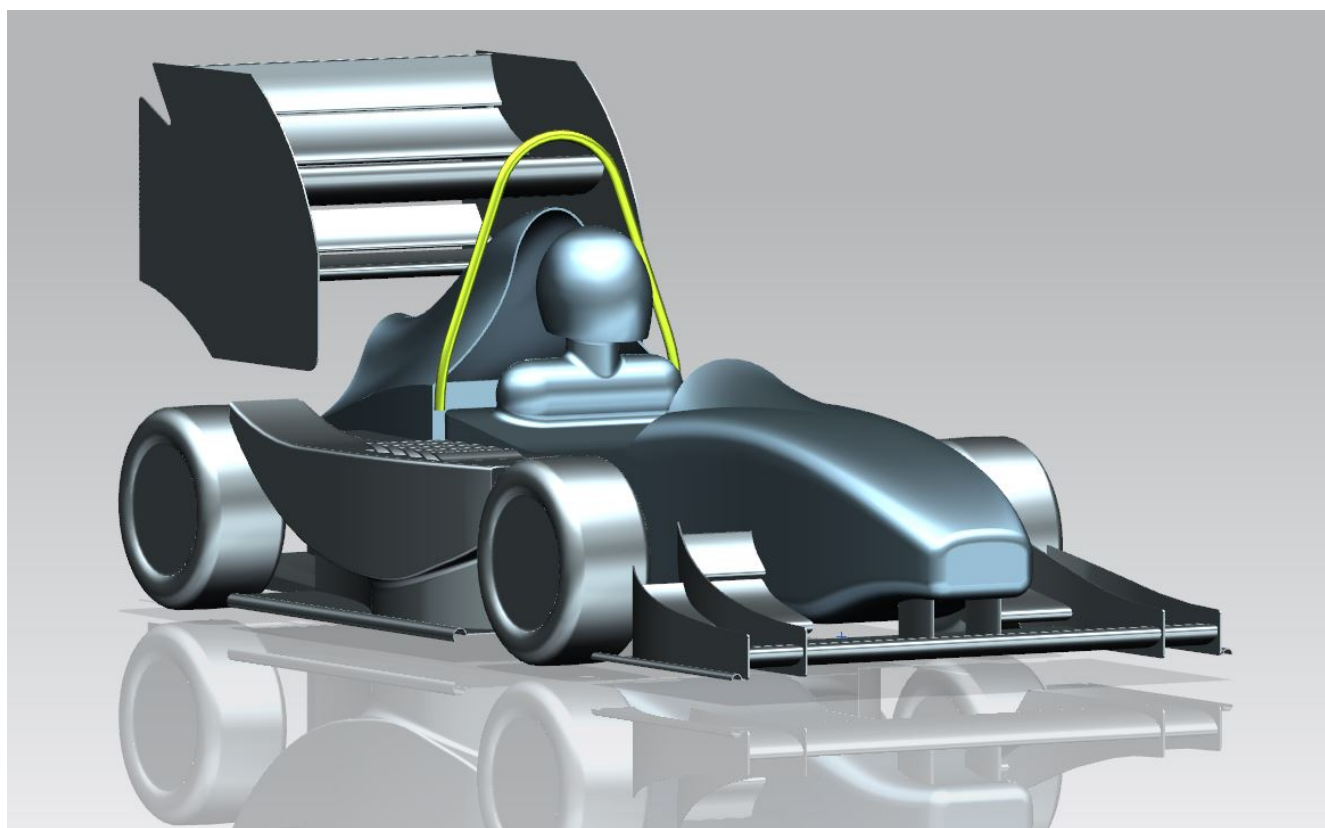


Figure 1: WUT3 aerodynamics model

## 3 Mesh

The mesh was created in Ansys Mesher. It was very difficult to generate good quality mesh, because of complex geometry. Minimum Orthogonal Quality of the mesh is about  $7e-02$ .

It is worth to mention that the mesh has to be export in ASCII format. OpenFoam is working on ASCII and it does not read the mesh wrote in binary.

Firstly, the mesh was created with boundary layer, which improve calculations precision near walls. Unfortunately, quality of the mesh getting worse with boundary layer and OpenFoam could not calculate

this. The residuals and forces reached large values. In this case Fluent was better than OpenFoam, because it made calculations and results was quite good.

In external flow calculations very good option is polyhedral mesh, which can be made in OpenFoam with command polyDualMesh.

## 4 Solver

For this calculation MotorBike tutorial was adopted. It use incompressible simpleFoam solver and k-omega SST turbulence model which is the best option for external flows around cars.

## 5 Step by step

### 5.1 Generate mesh

As mentioned, the mesh was export in ASCII Fluent Mesh format (.msh) and copied to case folder.

### 5.2 fluent3DMeshToFoam

This command converts Fulent mesh to OpenFoam's format and creates polyMesh folder in constant. There are all parameters of mesh, for example boundaries, which are import with mesh's named selection.

### 5.3 Boundary condition

This step is to adapt boundary conditions in time 0 to right case. In the case, inlet velocity magnitude is  $15 \frac{m}{s}$ . Of course on road is moving wall condition and on wheels are rotating wall condition. Additionally, there is one extra pressure outlet on inlet to radiator. Radiator is not calculated here but it is replaced by higher pressure (40Pa) on radiator's inlet.

### 5.4 Forces and Coefficients

Very important for car aerodynamics are forces and coefficients (Cx and Cl). OpenFoam can calculate they. It needs special file named forces in system folder. It looks like this:

```
forces_ns_rear_wing
{
    type            forces;

    libs ( "libforces.so" );

    writeControl    timeStep;
    timeInterval    1.2;

    log            yes;

    patches        ( ns_rear_wing );
    rho            rhoInf; // Indicates incompressible
    log            true;
    rhoInf        1.2; // Redundant for incompressible

    CofR          (0 0 0); // Rotation around centre line of propeller
    pitchAxis     (0 0 1);
}
```

Figure 2: A part of code of forces file

The forces are collected from all car's patches. In result OpenFoam create file with forces and moments in all directions.

## 5.5 Convert mesh to polyhedral

Instead of tetrahedral mesh will be used polyhedral mesh, which has less elements, and calculations are more stable. From 15mln elements it was made 3mln.

polyDualMesh is using to convert mesh to polyhedral. There is one argument - minimum angle between normals to cell's faces. In this calculation it is 30 degrees. Also it should be used options: -overwrite and -doNotPreserveFaceZones. First one (optional), overwrite new mesh in time 0, which is comfortable. Second delete old faces from mesh. It is necessarily to correct work.

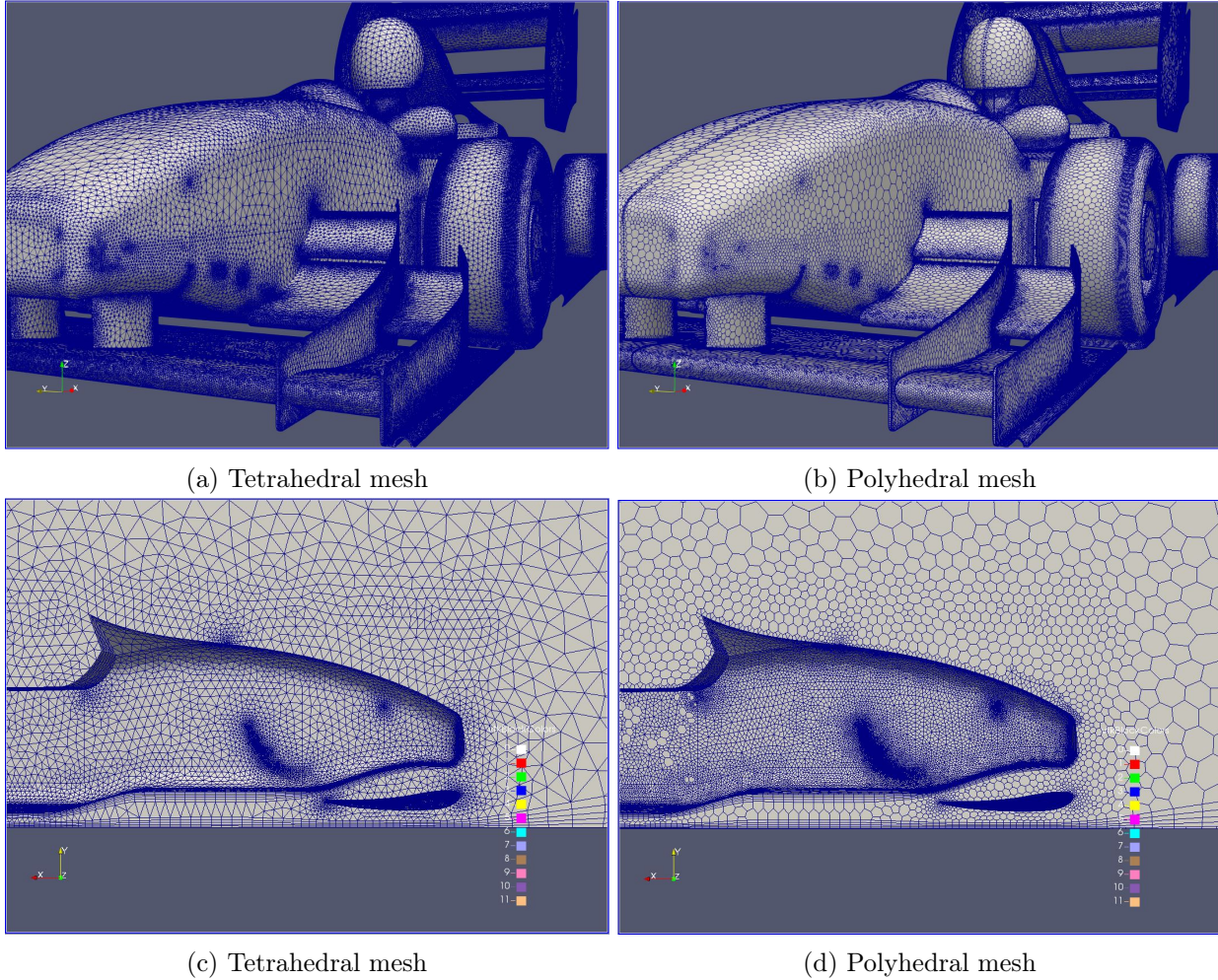


Figure 3: Comparison both tetrahedral and polyhedral meshes

## 5.6 Parallel calculations

Calculation was carried out on 8 cores. Scotch decompose method has been chosen.

## 5.7 Calculations

There was 360 time steps and it was enough to stabilize forces and getting good accuracy.



## 6 Results

### 6.1 Contours

Images show contours of pressure and velocity around the car. It is able to see high pressure on the top of aerodynamic elements and negative pressure - under the elements. This difference generate down force which is useful in turns.

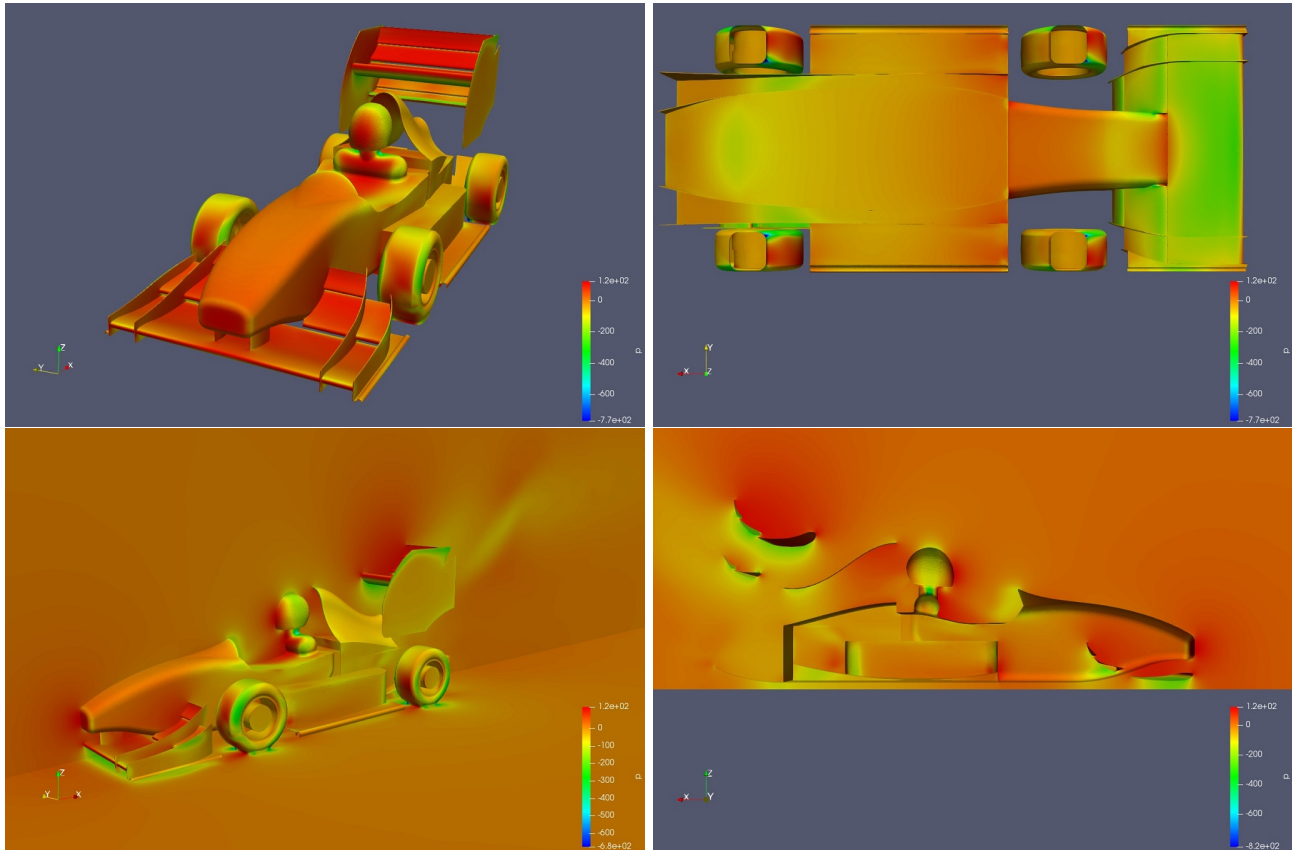


Figure 4: Contours of pressure

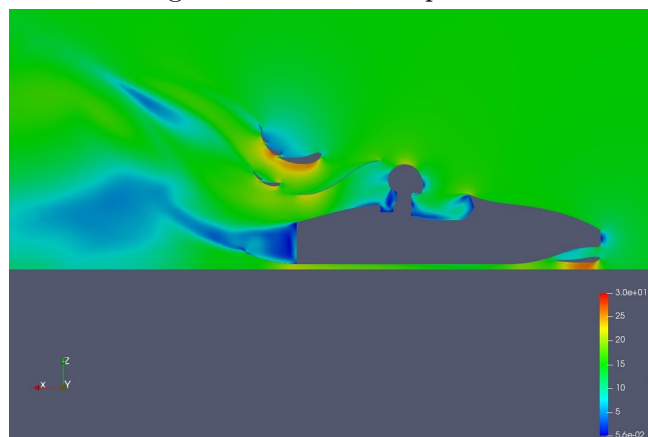


Figure 5: Contours of velocity

Good visualization of the flow are streamlines which show, how air flow over (and under) the car. They give many information and they help improving the construction.

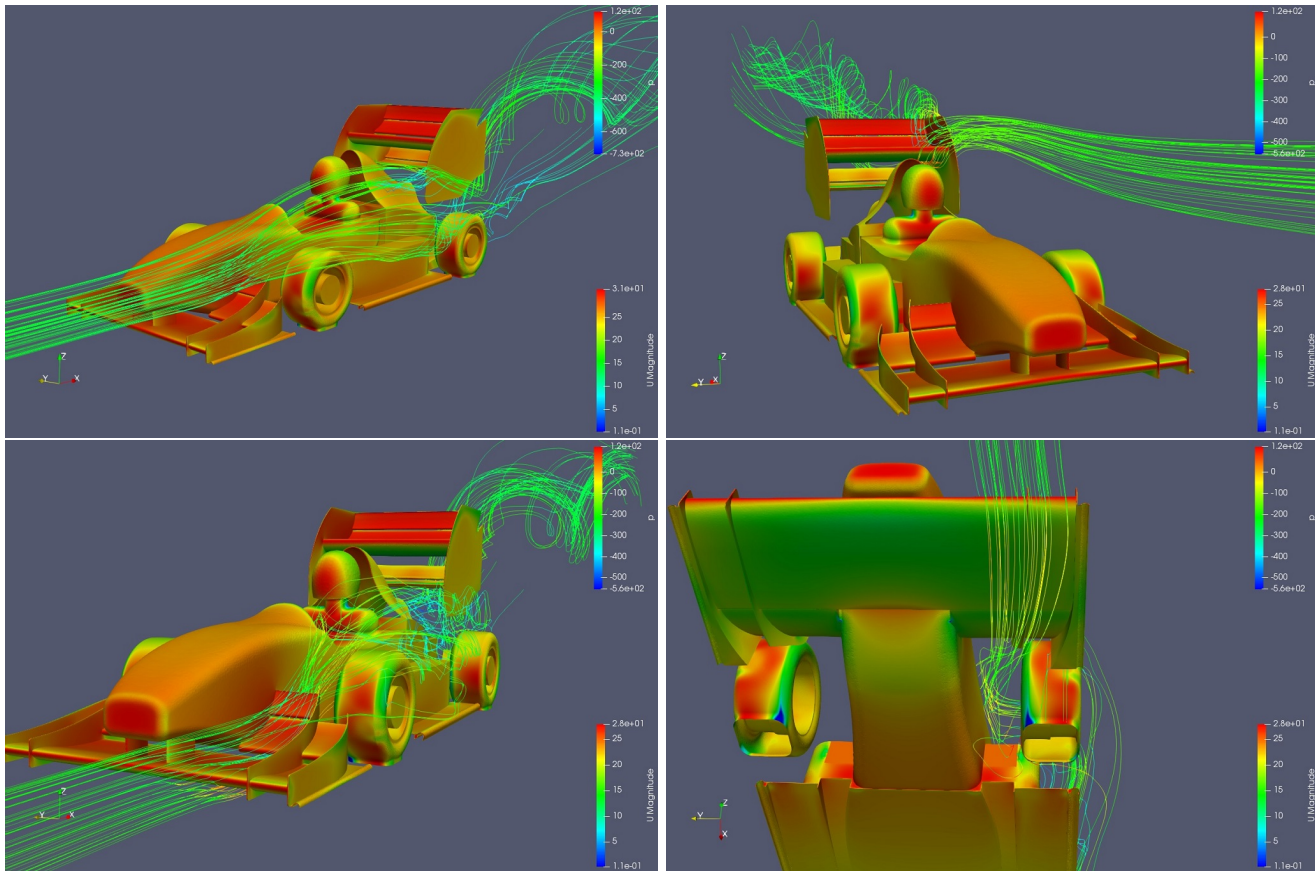


Figure 6: Streamlines

## 6.2 Comparison with Fluent

The same calculation has been carried out in Fluent, one of the best CFD software. Is OpenFoam, as open source, free software, as good as commercial software? The down forces and coefficients will be compared:

Patch	OpenFoam	Fluent	Difference
Rear Wing	-178N	-186N	4%
Front Wing	-132N	-156N	15%
Diffuser	-112N	-98N	-14%
Others	92N	102N	-10%
Sum	-330N	-338N	2%
Cl	-2,11	-1,9	-11%
Cx	0,87	0,95	-8%

Differences are about 10% between OpenFoam and Fluent. It is quite a lot. The reason may be in low mesh quality and not enough elements.

## 7 Working on AWS Amazon

The case has been create on PC and coarse mesh has been converted to OpenFoam format to check entire case. When the case was correct, it has been sent to S3 storage with fine mesh.

EC2 instances was launched as Spot Request Instance, because of the lower price (about 70% in compare to On Demand Instances). Then the files was download from S3 to EC2 instance by command "aws s3 cp s3://bucket-name/file ./". Next it has been working as in normal PC.

The results has been sent to S3 by command "aws s3 sync <folder> s3://bucket-name/folder" or it was download directly by FileZilla to PC.

## 8 Summarize

The OpenFoam is very good free software, but in more complex calculations it might fail. I think that in better mesh, difference between OpenFoam and Fluent could be smaller. However, Fluent's solver is more stable (calculate low quality meshes), but very expensive. In the near future, calculations will be validated in aerodynamic tunnel in our faculty.