

SUNRAYCER NEWS

TEXAS A&M SOLAR MOTORSPORTS TEAM

One Year Down, One To GO!!!



Our team visited the Very Large Array (VLA) in Socorro, NM after completing the ASC 2003 race from Chicago to LA.

Howdy! It has been a year of change and I believe it has all been for the good of the team. My name is Josh Seifert and I am the current Team Manager.

I am proud to say we will have a car on the ground by the end of this summer! This speaks loudly for the quality and desire of the team

to have a well engineered vehicle. This is an amazing feat and will allow the team almost a full year of testing, tuning and perfecting.

I am very excited about this years team, car and sponsors. The College of Engineering and the Vice Presidents Office of Research are now two new key sponsors of the team.

Our shop space that we

moved into this past August is now just like home and it allows us a little more room to stretch. It also allows us quick access to miles of old runways at the Riverside Campus for the thousands of miles of testing we will be doing.

A question we must answer often is why support the team and program or what we really are about. Well, our two key points are to extend our knowledge in a real-life team environment and to promote engineering and science to students. Right behind those two is to display the use of alternative fuels to the mass public.

Look for us at this years West Fest in West, TX.

Special points of interest:

- **New car will be name 'Columbia'**
- **The race in July 2005 will take place from Austin, TX to Calgary, Canada—over 2400 miles!**
- **A&M will host the pre-race events for all the teams.**

Watt's in a Name?

Right after finishing the American Solar Challenge 2003, it became clear that many things needed to change. While we did cross the finish line, which 10 other teams did not, our team and sponsors need better.

The name 'Columbia', after the space shuttle, is designed to carry with it a driving force and meaning. For us, it is a constant reminder that 1) Driver safety and that of the team is paramount, 2) That we must learn and carry with us the lessons learned from

the 2003 'Lonestar', and 3) The astronauts of Columbia were driven by the stars and our team is driven by the sun, and together, we stand looking skyward, hoping to impact the world below.

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

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SUNRACYER



The 2003 Lone Star in front of the Academic Building.

Plans and Projects...

This year's car will boast many new features. Many take place in the electronics.



Bennett Ford reflects on the half completed chassis for Columbia.

The most notable difference will be the driver interface to the rest of the vehicle's systems. It will be a touch screen LCD that displays all vehicle information including speed, alerts, power statistics but also allows the driver to control

items like turn signals and run cruise control.

The setup, all team made, will allow for more powerful driver control and a cleaner cockpit.

To improve safety, the vehicle will include a anti-lock braking system to reduce stopping distance and prevent loss of driver control. These will mount to a brand new chassis and suspension of completely new design. The new design is a collimation of years of experience among the team. Not only does it provide a much large driver area for added comfort, but weight has been reduced dramatically from previous years.

And to power this year's car will be the teams first ever custom built motor controller. Designed to increase efficiency

and reliability. Designing our very own motor controller is ambitious but we have decided to take it to the next step. This coming fall, the team will take steps to design its very own motor. While we are sure we can accomplish this feat, it may not be ready and fully tested by the start of the NASC in July 2005.

Updates of these mentioned projects and others will follow in the next issue.