

IIT Bombay Racing



March 28, 2008. Narain Karthikeyan officially launched 'Vayu', the year-long effort of the Formula SAE Team from IIT Bombay – IIT Bombay Racing – at the Open Air Theatre. The team was going to participate in the Formula SAE – an international race-car design and manufacture competition.

May 13, 2008. After battling a mysterious bout of engine problems, and the resulting uncertainty of participation, the team finally entered the competition with a running car at the Michigan International Speedway, USA, amongst 120 teams from leading technical universities worldwide. IIT Bombay was the only team from the Indian subcontinent to do so.

During the next three days laden with toil and sweat, IIT Bombay cleared all technical inspections as well as the brake, noise and tilt tests. Cutting through various obstacles, the team managed to do what very few first-year teams had done in the past. The judges at the competition were especially impressed with the teams Marketing, Design and Cost Analysis Presentations. Although these static events earned IIT Bombay a hefty amount of points, the team could not compete in the dynamic events and races due to some last minute technical complications. For the overall effort one of the judges commented, "It's a great effort for a first-year car". The judge was no other than one of the authorities on race-car dynamics, Douglas L. Milliken. A European FSAE veteran, having participated for four years, said, "For you guys, where we come from, we say you have heart".

As a deserving result, the team was presented the SAE Perseverance Award – given to the top three rookie teams at the competition. SAE appreciates the difficulties faced by first-year teams and knows that they probably cannot compete with teams participating for the last couple of decades. Hence, they recognize outstanding rookie efforts through this award. The team went out there with the aim of winning the SAE Perseverance Award, and they did it.

The most important thing that the team learnt from the competition was the level of professionalism it takes to achieve at the international level. No doubt, they plan to incorporate everything they have learnt over the past year, and to put it to work to go one step ahead, with the ultimate aim to be a force to reckon with in international inter-collegiate racing competitions.