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For Immediate Release

Team Essex Thunders to Its First Finish at the NASA 25 Hours of Thunderhill

Carmel, CA - Team Essex Racing proved to be *the little engine that could*, and successfully completed its first-ever 25 Hours of Thunderhill race, finishing 26th overall, and beating more than \$1,000,000 of other automobiles in the process.

Team Essex excelled in its very first rookie outing, with amazingly consistent lap times, zero accidents and precision pit stops. Even though its best lap time was six seconds slower than the next slowest car, Essex managed to come from the back to 26th overall, and 7th overall in class. Team Essex completed 555 laps, or 1,665 miles in the 25 Hour spectacle.

Team Essex's car, a 1972 BMW 2002, performed flawlessly for the entire 25 grueling hours, requiring nothing more than gas and two tire changes. Though easily the oldest car in the field, the BMW proved to be a pillar of reliability, complying with the twists, turns, elevation changes and sharp corners of the SCCA's premiere 15-turn racetrack, Thunderhill Raceway Park.

"Our goal was to finish the race, a feat in itself," said Shawn Essex, Team Captain and owner of the BMW. "We knew that we were underdog, but the team and the car proved to be up to the task. I'm really proud of the whole team and our accomplishment."

Due to upgraded brakes and mildly modified powerplant, the Team Essex BMW was placed in the fastest class of the field, competing against cars with at least four times the horsepower. This class produced the overall winner and eight of the top 10 finishers. Still, The Essex BMW managed to outpace eight of the cars in its class, including such factory efforts as the Car and Driver BMW team car.

Team Essex survived the harsh conditions by steady, smooth driving from its 5-man team. Team Captain Shawn Essex chose Tim Arnett, Chris Horn, Phil Mendelovitz and John Wilkins to pilot the BMW to its inaugural finish. Each driver kept the pace like a metronome. The team was ably assisted by crew members Shad Essex and Matt Merritt, who ensured the BMW always had ample fuel and rubber to meet the challenge.

Team Essex Racing, having enjoyed the champagne of its first outing, is already making plans for next year's event, and is committed to another strong showing for 2007.

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