UConn Formula SAE places in the top group in the International Competition

by Timothy Thomas, B.S., ME 2014, UConn SAE Team Leader

After an eighteen hour trek across the country and a days rest thereafter, the team began the four day Formula SAE Competition at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn, Michigan.

The Formula SAE® Series competitions challenge teams of university undergraduate and graduate students to conceive, design, fabricate and compete with a small, formula style, competition vehicle. To give teams the maximum design flexibility and the freedom to express their creativity and imagination there are very few restrictions on the overall vehicle design. Teams typically spend eight to twelve months designing, building, testing and preparing their vehicles before a competition. The international competitions themselves give teams the chance to demonstrate and prove both their creation and their engineering skills in comparison to teams from other universities around the world. The University of Connecticut has fielded a vehicle in the largest of these competitions, Formula SAE Michigan, located at the Michigan International Speedway since the team began just seven years ago. With over 120 colleges and universities registered, Formula SAE Michigan is the largest of its kind.
Over the course of four days, the cars are judged in a series of static and dynamic events including: technical inspection, cost, presentation, and engineering design, solo performance trials, and high performance track endurance. These events are scored to determine how well the car performs. Come close of competition the team executed an incredible performance placing **20th overall out of the 120 teams in attendance at one of the most competitive events of the year**. This milestone places UConn Formula SAE amongst the elite, solidifying that they are a force to be reckoned with. In the midst of teams with decades of experience, a sizable team base, and much larger budgets, UConn Formula SAE is still considered in its youth as building a successful vehicle involves extensive growth in both engineering and team dynamics. With the continuing support of sponsors and the department of mechanical engineering, UConn Formula SAE is working towards even greater success with the refined design and manufacture of the 2014-2015 vehicle already underway.