

DECCAN HERALD

TEAM 'JATAYU'

Yet another feather in their cap

A group of students from Jain University recently proved their mettle on an international platform, showcasing their design prowess at the annual SAE (Society of Automotive Engineering) Aero Design Competition in Van Nuys, California. The team — aptly named Team *Jatayu* — comprised of six students, namely Sanjay S R, Shiva Prasad S Jali, Sandesh Shetty, Tharun Raj, Harshavardhan and Vivek C S. The students, who came from different engineering backgrounds, have been working together on an array

of designs since their first year in college; this time, they came together to build an unmanned airplane, balancing a high payload-carrying ability with the lowest empty weight possible.

"We've won many competitions in India," says Sanjay, one of the members of Team *Jatayu*. "The SAE Aero Design Competition is one of the most reputed on an international level and so, we decided to take part in it as well."

However, the team had a lot of obstacles to overcome.

Since their intention was to keep the empty weight of the model as low as possible, they started from scratch and collaborated to come up with a design which weighed only 340 grams with all the components in place.

The process, explains Sanjay, was an interactive one. "We came together as a team three years ago and we're used to working together. We divided the work among us equally — while one person handled the wing, another took charge of the electronic

components and so on," he says. "This model is the outcome of teamwork."

The team entered the competition with high hopes, which didn't go entirely unfulfilled. They were pitted against 28 teams from 11 countries and while they didn't manage to secure the first overall position — a rival team showcased a model with a lower empty weight — they did manage to snag first place in 'design oral presentation', 'design report' and 'highest payload lifting'. They also achieved the fifth position overall. "We did expect to win," admits Sanjay. "But unfortunately, another team presented a model which was lighter. On the other hand, our model lifted the maximum payload — 1400 grams — and we were also lauded for our design."

The best part of the event, he adds, wasn't just the trophies. The team also got a wealth of exposure.

"We got to meet other students there and check out their designs. There was a lot of interaction. Many of the other teams liked our model and on the whole, it was a learning experience," he concludes.

DHNS



ACHIEVERS The team with their model.