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## **Rob Bunker Makes Most Of Rookie Season Formula BMW USA Championship Season Summary**

BRIDGEWATER, N.J. (September 30, 2005) Rob Bunker made the most of his rookie season in the Formula BMW USA Championship. The Bridgewater, N.J., teen finished the 2005 season eighth in the driver championship and seventh in rookie points, but the results don't tell the whole story.



Bunker started the year with 17 days of track testing and an intense physical and mental training session at Space Camp in Huntsville, Ala. He then methodically improved his performance on track, posting eight top-10 results in 14 races in the No. 18 AIM Autosport Formula BMW FB2. He capped the season by leading the first practice of the final race weekend and finishing fourth in the final race.

From season-opener to finale, Bunker developed his trademark charge. Although his qualifying results weren't as high as he'd hoped, he quickly made up the difference on track. Race after race, he sliced through the field, gaining as many as nine positions in a 12-lap sprint. He was lightning-fast on the Formula One-style standing starts, a skill he honed watching drag-racing on television.

"This was a strong year for the team and for me personally," he said. "There were a few ups and downs both on and off the track, but I had the opportunity to show my team what I could do, and I definitely came out of this season happy with myself. Every race had a strong beginning, middle and end; we just needed to work on qualifying. By the end of the season, though, we were in a great position to dig deep and go for the win."

Bunker progressed off-track, too. His Speed Secrets coaches, Ross Bentley and Bob Perona, said he has an uncanny ability to grab a concept and speed it to reality. Bunker, his coaches and AIM Autosport mapped and graphed every minute change that could affect his performance, then Bunker made it happen on track.

"Looking back on the season, of course there are some places that we could have worked on a little more thoroughly, but Speed Secrets has taught me to always find more. It's what I'm trained to do. This has helped me all season long, because at no point during any event were we ever content with what we had. There was always something to fine-tune. We did our best to outperform the competition in every way," Bunker noted.

"I was pleased to find that all year long, I was watching my competition try to learn things I had already mastered, such as mental preparation. We stayed one step ahead mentally all year long and that helped us leave our mark in Formula BMW. I worked more on fitness this year than ever before, as well."

Bunker also started to refine his future aspirations. The Formula BMW series shared two race weekends with the American Le Mans Series, which features high-performance sports cars in endurance races. Bunker was immediately at home.

"Every time we raced alongside ALMS, I had a feeling that was where I had to be, driving prototypes. I didn't know where BMW would take me, but now that I've seen what ALMS is all about, I know that's where my career is going to take me," he said. "My number one goal is to cross the American borders and race in the 24 Hours of Le Mans [France]. Endurance racing is definitely where I want to be."

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EVENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Bunker and AIM Autosport plan to step up to the Star Mazda Championship next year. Nine of the 12 races will be held in conjunction with the ALMS, placing Bunker firmly in sight of his next goal.

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