

2006 BMW X3 3.0i

BY KATHLEEN CARR

The BMW X3 enters its third year of production flush with success. In its first year, the X3 sold almost as well as the larger X5, doubling BMW's impact on the SUV market, and there's little sign of the trend toward smaller, more fuel-efficient SUVs cooling off any time soon.

BMW puts a 3.0-liter engine in X3 3.0i with 225 hp through a sporty ZF six-speed manual or five-speed Steptronic automatic shifter. X3's cabin is impressive in design and content with standard features in 2006 including an onboard computer.

The 2006 BMW X3 gets a few new exterior touches. Most noticeable are the body-color front and rear bumpers. There's the traditional twin-kidney grille, of course, its chrome vertical slats complemented by a chrome strip along the base of the side windows. The X3 looks like the X5 inside as well, though the cut line from the front

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Tested Vehicle Information: Price: \$43,470 (base 36,800); Engine: 3.0 liter DOHC 24-valve inline six-cylinder; Transmission: Six-speed manual.



wheel wells to the front doors was eliminated for a cleaner look. Driving the BMW X3 is not like driving other SUVs. It is one of the smoothness rides with precision engineering.

Acceleration is silky and linear, thanks in part to an advanced intake design that leaves the manifold free of buffeting butterfly valves.

The six-speed manual transmission, on the other hand, is everything people who know and like BMWs have come to expect and appreciate. Shifts are smooth and precise, clutch engagement predictable and gears properly spaced to keep the engine in the sweet spot of its power band.

The BMW X3 is quick and fast, considering its heft. The xDrive puts it at the head of the class when weather or road goes north. It's roomy, both for passengers and cargo. And just as important, it's replete with safety features, both active and passive.

SPORTS

Team USA Boosts Morale at Army Base

Visit comes days before world games

(AP) -- Coach Mike Krzyzewski knew the drill.

LeBron James and Dwyane Wade and the rest of the U.S. basketball team got into combat uniforms and took marching orders from former U.S. Army officer Krzyzewski on Monday during a visit in South Korea to Yongsan Garrison in central Seoul.

Krzyzewski was stationed in South Korea for a while during his five years in the Army from 1969-74. He's back in Seoul preparing his U.S. squad for the world championships starting in Japan later this week.

Wade and his teammates went through some practice maneuvers, thrilling the crowd with alley-oops, slams and precision shooting from the 3-point line.

"It felt great to come here and do something for the troops," Wade said. "It definitely helps us get motivated by realizing there are a lot of people behind us and we're representing our country."

The squad will travel to Japan and play its first game of the world championships against Puerto Rico on Saturday in Sapporo.

Coach Krzyzewski said the trip to Yongsan, home to 25,000 personnel, was well worth the effort of getting up early and practicing in the stifling heat of the base gymnasium.

"It added depth to our trip," said Krzyzewski. "To be able to meet the servicemen and women and thank them for their service was a great feeling."

Some 29,500 U.S. troops are stationed in South Korea as a legacy of the 1950-53 Korean



LeBron James of the USA Basketball team chats with fan Zach Buhner, 10, during a practice session Monday at Yongsan Army base in Seoul, South Korea. Team USA is in South Korea for exhibition games prior to this weekend's opening of the World Championships in Japan. (AP photo)

War, which ended in a cease-fire, not a peace treaty, leaving the two Koreas technically at war.

In Japan, the U.S. team will be bidding to snap a string of disappointing finishes at the world championships. The United States finished sixth at the worlds in 2002 and third in 1998. The last time the Americans won the tournament was 1994.

Under Krzyzewski and assistant coach Nate McMillan of the Portland Trail Blazers, the U.S. team has looked impressive, winning four straight tuneup matches, including Sunday's 111-88 win over Lithuania in Seoul.

Along with Puerto Rico, the U.S. team is grouped with China, Slovenia, Italy and Senegal in the preliminary round.

Teen Conquers Golf Championship

Youngest ever to win women's amateur

(AP) -- The youngest U.S. Women's Amateur champion had just played 36 tense holes under cloudless Oregon summer skies. So it's understandable how 14-year-old Kimberly Kim felt about finally hoisting the Cox Cup.

"I didn't know it was that heavy," she said, flashing a smile full of braces.

Kim beat former bank clerk Katharina Schallenberg of Germany 1-up in 36 holes of match play Sunday.

Schallenberg, 26, made a birdie putt from off the green on the par-5 36th hole. That placed the pressure on Kim to birdie for the victory at Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club in North Plains. Both players had birdied the 35th to add tension to the final hole.

Kim sunk the putt from



five feet out. "I was shaking so much," Kim said. "I don't even know where I aimed or anything. I just, like, hit it. It was like, 'Whatever, just hit the ball.'"

Schallenberg cried after failing to become the first German-born player to win a USGA event.

"I lost, but it was OK because we both played good golf," she said.

Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club was the site of the U.S. Women's Open in 1997 and 2003. Tiger Woods won the 1996 U.S. Amateur at the club.

Kimberly Kim, from Hilo, Hawaii, smiles as she holds her trophy after winning the 106th U.S. Women's Amateur golf tournament at Pumpkin Ridge in North Plains Sunday. (AP photo)

Junior Challenge at Heron Lakes

Free for kids of all skills

The Mutual of Omaha's Drive, Chip & Putt Junior Challenge, the world's largest junior golf program, will swing into Portland on Sunday, Aug. 20.

Boys and girls ages 7-14 are invited to hit the links of the Heron Lakes Golf Course, 3500 North Victory Blvd. at 1 p.m. The event is free and fun for kids of all skill levels. Competitors will be divided into four age groups and will compete in driving, chipping and putting competitions.

Multiple prizes will be awarded in each age group. Participants can pre-register at thegolfchannel.com or at the golf course. Portland is one of 105 stops throughout the United States and Canada for the Mutual of Omaha's Drive, Chip & Putt Junior Challenge, which is presented by The Golf Channel. Winners will have the opportunity to participate in a regional competition and possibly the national competition in Orlando in October.

"We're thrilled to bring Mutual of Omaha's Drive, Chip & Putt to Portland," said Scott Harrison, Mutual of Omaha general manager. "Everyone is a winner in this fun and rewarding program."

Little Leaguers Advance to World Series

First time since 1958

the first Oregon team to advance to the Little League World Series since Rose City of Portland in 1958.

Jace Fry and Derek Keller homered for Murrayhill and the go-ahead run scored on a bases-loaded walk. The seven innings on Sunday to become victory in San Bernardino, Calif., gave

Murrayhill the Northwest Regional championship.

The team now heads to Williamsport, Pa. for the next round of competition on Friday. The Little League championship series will be televised on ESPN2.

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