

Coaches, Mentors, Team Members, Parents, Sponsors & Friends of FIRST:

February is.... **BOT in the BAG MONTH!**



- Excerpts from a February 2005 forum posting written by a veteran team engineering mentor to all rookies, rookie teams and veterans teams.

Rookies - We are very proud of you. Your robot may not be able to move, or maybe that's about all it does, but you followed the rules, you gave it your best, you learned a lot of stuff along the way. A lot of things may have gone wrong in the past 6 weeks, but you are about to find out how cool it is to be part of the FIRST family.

This is a 3 on 3 competition, and we will be paired with some great teams, some average teams and some BLT's throughout the qualifying matches. We will carry some teams, some teams will carry us. We will try our hardest to win every match, and we have a strategy for every type of robot. If your robot won't move, your job is to not move. If our robot stops moving, your job may be to push us back. There's a lot of luck involved. Sometimes you'll do more than asked, sometimes less. All I can say is, we want you on the field with us. We don't care if your robot is plywood shoebox or a powdercoat-painted, precision machined one.

Don't be embarrassed or feel like a failure if your designs didn't work out...join the club! We are all learning, and we will continue to get better every year. Remember you are a success! How many kids your age can say they were part of a team that actually designed and built a robot?

Rookies remember that when you get to the competition there are many teams that will gladly help you out, just ask. You will find someone will have a small lathe and mill in pit if you need a part made, software guys just itching to help you debug your code, lots of extra bolts, nuts and whatever's for you to use, and we'll probably have to stand in line behind all the other veteran teams who are already helping you.

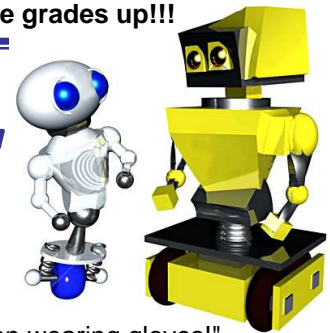
Rookies, remember that we are not better than you, we may have more resources than you, or more experience than you, but we expect to learn something from you and we hope you will learn something from us. We plan to have a blast at the competition, and we might even win it with you while we're at it.

Welcome to all Rookies, Rookie Teams and returning Veterans. You have joined a wonderful family of people who are excited about science and technology. We want you here, and we want you back. We all look forward to getting to know you better during the competitions!

Now, get some sleep, apply for scholarships, and keep those grades up!!!

Quotes Said During Build . . .

- "But if you put it away I won't be able to find it!"
- "A mind once stretched by a thought will never regain it's original dimensions."
- "You have to do a capital \$, because if you do a lowercase one it won't work."
- "OW! I stabbed myself in the eye with my safety glasses!"
- Student: "I pinched my finger in the safety glasses!" Safety Captain: "You should have been wearing gloves!"
- "And now, it's time to learn the three rules of robotics: One, be safe. Two, have fun. Three, don't touch the mentors' food!"
- I was vacuuming metal bits off of the robot. When I got to the electronics board, a mentor said, "Stop! You're sucking out all of the electrons!"
- "Engineering is a constant battle between what you want to do and how physics loves to massacre your design."
- One of the girls was looking for some way to attach boards. "Why don't we have any nuts?!" "This is an all girls team, dearie."
- "Well we could spend our sponsorship money on hiring a NBA player to just shoot from the ball from across the field..."
- "Is it a bad thing if our robot smells like waffles and syrup?"
- When referring to a threaded rod, "Can you hand me the spinnny on a stick?"
- "We should call this year's robot 'Shaqbot.'" "Why?" "Because it's overweight, slow, and can't shoot." "Let's hope that by the weekend it will be 'Rosebot' and ready to win a championship!"
- "Don't let reality get in the way. Prepare for the worst, but plan for the best."
- "We threw the ball!" "Yeah, and the belt, too."
- "We were having drive practice and had a problem with a moving part sticking. Since we had no lubricants with us, we turned to the remains of the KFC meals we had just eaten, wiped the part with a used chicken leg, and had no more problems!"
- "Funny, I came to robotics for the robot, but find I stay for the people."



Bodacious Build!



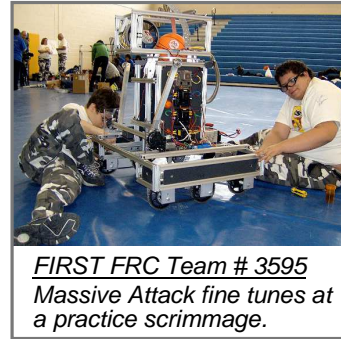
FIRST FRC Team #71
Getting a feel for B.E.A.S.T. Baskets.



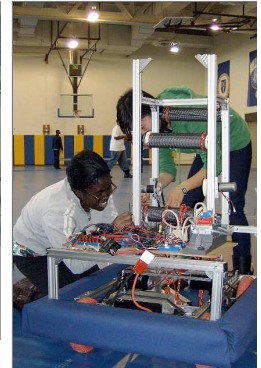
FIRST FRC Team # 1625
Brainstorming the game Winovation Style.



FIRST FRC Team # 3695
Foximus Prime Safety Glasses Queen.



FIRST FRC Team # 3595
Massive Attack fine tunes at a practice scrimmage.



FIRST FRC Team # 1749
Fixing those pesky loose wires.

Some Things Learned during Build Season . . .

Excerpts from Various Forums

"It sounds cliché, but the most important ingredient for a successful robot is devoted team members. Our team lost access the machine shop we had always used in years past, and all we were left with was a drill press, a band saw, and some hand tools. It took some serious stripping down of designs to work with these limitations. And yet, if anything, our robot came out better this year than in previous years because there was a small group of students and mentors who were willing to work hard and stay to all hours of the night to get the robot done."

"...what you say is actually true. If you have a great place with all the tools you need, but your team doesn't really function as a team, then things won't get done the way they should. A small team can accomplish big things as long as they are passionate about what they do and work hard towards the same goal. I honestly believe that the problems we face and the challenges we overcome together makes us stronger as a team... That's what FIRST is about...!"

- 1) You never know when the next great member will come walking through your door.
- 2) Even a Non-Engineering Mentor can have good ideas.
- 3) There is no way to avoid drama. The best thing you can do is to listen.
- 4) A good lead engineering mentor will by necessity watch every detail. Listen to them.
- 5) Pizza. Never. Changes. Taste."

"As a former FIRST student and new lead mentor for a rookie team... I learned that as much as I thought my mentors did for my team, they actually did 10x more. I never would have believed the amount of time and effort mentors have to spend doing things for the team beyond what the students even see."



FIRST FRC Team # 4081
Metal Masters of drill presses too.



FIRST FRC # 4324
HTA tightens bolts on the frame.



FIRST FRC Team # 4212
Teetering TechnoFerrets.



FIRST FRC Team # 2171
RoboDogs start the ball shooter.

Important Dates & Info

• **FIRST Future Innovator Award Deadline Extended!** - The deadline for this award presented by the Abbott Fund **has been extended to March 30th**. You could win transportation and hotel costs for two student inventors and one adult chaperone to attend the Championship Event (if your team is not already going) and to visit Silicon Valley to meet with a venture capitalist firm. Read about the award here: <http://www3.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/future-innovator-award>.

• **Advice from Bill's Blog**

• **Just because Build Season is Over - Don't Stop Reading the Team Updates!** - Lessons were learned at our first eight events and the GDC have a few things they want you to know. Read the 03/06/12 Team Update - "Week 1 Observations and Reactions": you can find it here, http://frc-manual.usfirst.org/TeamUpdates/0#term_149.

• **Please remember** to display gracious professionalism to guests and other teams. Dean wants members of the general public to attend and enjoy our events. Treat everyone in the stands in a way that will make your grandmother proud.

• **3/22 - 3/24 - Midwest Regional at UIC Pavilion, Chicago**

• **3/30 - Autodesk 3D Design and 3D Animation Awards Entries Deadline!**



Who? Where? When!



Illinois Teams FIRST Robotics Competitions

Week # 1 (3/1 - 3/3)

Greater Kansas City Regional

- # 1208 MeTool Brigade - O'Fallon
- # 2949 Pwnage - Batavia

Week # 2 (3/8 - 3/10)

Lake Superior Regional

- # 1625 Winnovation - Winnebago
- # 3061 Huskie Robotics - Naperville

Week # 3 (3/15 - 3/17)

Boilermaker Regional

- # 1756 Argos - Peoria
- # 2081 Icarus - Peoria
- # 2171 RoboDogs - Crown Point
- # 3147 Mustang Horsepower - Munster

Week # 4 (3/22 - 3/24)

Midwest Regional

- # 71 Team Hammond - Hammond
- # 101 Striker - Chicago
- # 111 WildStang - Schaumburg
- # 648 QC Elite - Quad Cities
- # 1625 Winnovation - Winnebago
- # 1739 Chicago Knights - Chicago
- # 1781 Electric Eagles - Chicago
- # 1850 Mechanicats - Chicago
- # 2022 Titan Robotics - Aurora
- # 2136 Impossible Mission Force - Chicago
- # 2151 Monty Pythons - Forest Park
- # 2338 Gear It Forward! - Oswego
- # 2358 Bearbotics - Lake Zurich
- # 2432 RoboSpartans - Chicago
- # 2462 Digi Bots - Chicagg
- # 2704 Order 2 Chaos - Batavia
- # 2709 Iron Wolves - Chicago
- # 2725 Ice Princesses - Chicago
- # 2769 Robots in Motion - Chicago
- # 2781 RoboPRIDE - Burbank
- # 2803 Firebirds - Chicago
- # 2949 Pwnage - Batavia
- # 3061 Huskie Robotics - Naperville
- # 3067 Robovikes - Geneva
- # 3110 SeaBots - Chicago
- # 3135 Robotic Colonels - Chicago
- # 3177 Fearless Falcons - Chicago
- # 3488 RoboEAGLES - Orland Park
- # 3595 Massive Attack - Chicago
- # 3695 Foximus Prime - Yorkville
- # 3734 Caxys - Lake Forest
- # 3936 WWW - Michigan City
- # 4081 Metal Masters - East Chicago
- # 4096 Ctrl-Z - Champaign-Urbana
- # 4129 GCE - Chicago
- # 4212 Techno-Ferrets - Galesburg
- # 4213 MetalCow - Bloomington
- # 4241 Joliet Cyborgs - Joliet
- # 4292 Porter Bots - Lockport
- # 4302 Robophins - Chicago
- # 4314 SUL - Springfield
- # 4324 HTA - Decatur

Week # 4 (3/22 - 3/24)

Wisconsin Regional

- # 81 MetalHeads - Freeport
- # 1736 Robot Casserole - Peoria
- # 2039 Rockford Robotics - Rockford
- # 2040 D.E.R.T. - Dunlap
- # 2115 Nightmares - Mundelein
- # 2481 Roboteers - Tremont
- # 3352 Flaming Monkeys - Belvidere
- # 4143 M/W ARS - Metamora
- # 4296 Blue Devil Builders - Gurnee

Week # 4 (3/22 - 3/24)

St. Louis Regional

- # 1208 MeTool Brigade - O'Fallon
- # 4156 Cyclones - Springfield
- # 4187 Roborams - Mt. Vernon
- # 4196 QVATC Devils - Quincy
- # 4232 AHS - Alton
- # 4246 Resurrected Robotics - Troy

Week # 5 (3/29 - 3/31)

Minnesota North Star

- # 111 WildStang - Schaumburg
- # 2709 Iron Wolves - Chicago

Week # 6 (4/5 - 4/7)

Queen City

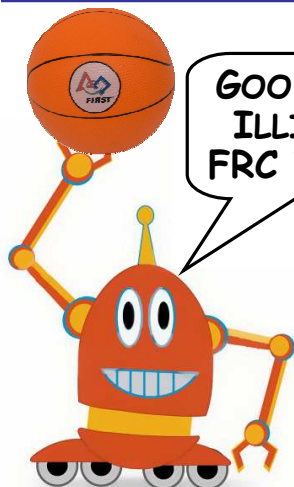
- # 71 Team Hammond - Hammond
- # 1739 Chicago Knights - Chicago
- # 1781 Electric Eagles - Chicago
- # 2022 Titan Robotics - Aurora
- # 2338 Gear it Forward - Oswego

Championship (4/26 - 4/28)

So far...

- # 111 WildStang - Schaumburg
- # 1208 MeTool Brigade - O'Fallon
- # 1736 Robot Casserole - Peoria
- # 2704 Order 2 Chaos - Batavia

Let's have lots, lots more!!



GOOD LUCK
ILLINOIS
FRC TEAMS!



Webcast Information

Be sure to check the Regional web sites for their webcast information.

Also the sites listed below are webcasting many of individual Regionals as well as aggregate webcasts:

<http://watchfirstnow.com/>

<http://www.theredalliance.com/>

http://robotics.arc.nasa.gov/events/2012_frcwebcasts.php

Cheer for our Teams!
Go Illinois FRC!

Illinois FRC Teams in the News!

FIRST FRC Team # 4324

Heartland students prepping for robot battles

DECATUR - Students from a variety of programs joined the team, while students who are not actively involved in the building of the robot are planning a pep rally to send them off in style.



"We're amped," said Tasha Ziemer, director of recruitment for the tech academy. To Read the Story and Watch the Video, Visit - <http://www.herald-review.com/news/local/56fb4b56-5c45-11e1-b389-0019bb2963f4.html>



FIRST FRC Team #111 WildStang robotics team gets White House honor

SCHAUMBURG - Representatives of the World Champ Team travel to Washington to attend and be recognized at the annual White House Science Fair!

To Read the Story, Visit - <http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20120203/news/702039652>

FIRST FRC Team # 4232

AHS Students build hoops-playing robot

ALTON - "It's pretty good for us not knowing what we were doing at the beginning," said Freddie Hornsey, a senior who programmed the software that came with much of the materials to build the robot. He said he plans to study physics and computer science next year at Southern Illinois Univ. Edwardsville.



"I am so pleased, as a rookie team, that we are functioning," said architecture and engineering teacher Pat Goetten. "What's nice is we have freshmen all the way to seniors working on this. It was such a good group effort."

To Read the Story, Visit - <http://www.thetelegraph.com/news/playing-66014-robot-ahs.html>

FIRST FRC Team # 4213

MetalCow robotics team's 'Bessie' ready to compete

BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL - A robot called Bessie the MetalCow is packed in plastic, awaiting a March 22 First Robotics Competition in Chicago in which Bessie will have to shoot basketballs into a hoop and climb a bridge. Both the national and Illinois 4-H councils support the program, said Carolyn Hanson, 4-H youth development coordinator for University of Illinois Extension. MetalCow is one of 84 clubs sponsored by JCPenney this year.



To Read the Story, Visit -

<http://www.pantagraph.com/news/local/education/7bd39a2e-65c2-11e1-98f1-0019bb2963f4.html>

FIRST FRC Team # 2481

Tremont team looking for "Slam Dunk"

TREMONT - This year, the Roboteers are hoping for a "slam dunk" performance. "We're playing basketball, so our robot has to shoot hoops at various heights," says Tremont senior Nolan Graves.

"It's kind of a sport of the mind, really," says the group's lead mentor, Matt Draear. "That allows the kids to really get excited and have a lot of fun competing while learning."

To Read the Story and Watch the Video, Visit -

http://centralillinoisproud.com/fulltext?nxd_id=229872



See the FIRST Team # 2481 Video shown on "Countdown with Keith Olberman!"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9yoSyUw0Yc&feature=youtu.be>

FIRST FRC Team # 4212

Techno-Ferrets-join-robot-basketball-competition



GALESBURG - Knox County 4-H has a newly formed high school team looking toward the future.

Approximately 40 high school students and adult mentors, collectively known as the Techno-Ferrets, started their first competitive robotics season with a kickoff at Bradley University on

January 7 for the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Competition. To Read the Story, Visit -

<http://www.galesburg.com/news/x962222055/Techno-Ferrets-join-robot-basketball-competition>

FIRST FRC Team # 4241

JTHS students' basketball robot is ready to rumble

JOLIET - This bot can bang boards.

"We had to teach ourselves, from the ground up, everything about the program we were using to code our robot," said Adam Graham, a Joliet Central student and a leader on the programming team. "The whole software — no one had experience with it at all."

Basketball Show

In a February presentation, the robot thrilled an audience at the old transportation building at Central. The audience included Joliet Mayor Tom Giarrante, School Board President Jeff Pierson, Superintendent Cheryl McCarthy and other officials. Whenever the robot made its

ascent, the suspense would build, and the crowd's cheering would reach a pitch. It was the little robot that could. To Read the Story, Visit - <http://heraldnews.suntimes.com/news/10853517-418/jths-students-basketball-robot-is-ready-to-rumble.html>



Congratulations Illinois FIRST Teams!



Moovin' on to World Championship!

Woodlawn Middle School Lego Team 'moves' to Victory

"The Moovers are a group of sixth-grade girls attending Woodlawn Middle School, and they will represent Illinois as one of nation's best LEGO robotics teams — in a field that is 85 percent boys..."

Read the Story Here -

<http://buffalogrove.suntimes.com/news/10538118-418/woodlawn-middle-school-lego-team-moves-to-victory.html>

Transistor Titans Win Inspire Award at Qualifier

Marion High School robotics team building a reputation

MARION - In only their second robotics tournament, the Transistor Titans from Marion High School took home the most coveted award among young robotics engineers. Mark Wallace, Marion High School science teacher and robotics coach, said the team of 11 students won the Inspire Award at a tournament in Cape Girardeau... Read the Story Here - <http://thesouthern.com/news/local/131838be-5145-11e1-8416-0019>



Missouri State Competition - Team # 5187 Wins Innovate Award

Class Act: Marion Robotics Team Wins Award

MARION - "Students at one Williamson County school are celebrating an award winning weekend. Marion High School's Robotics Team received special recognition for their first ever robot. The team received the Innovate Award at the state competition. This award is given to teams that have the most innovative and creative robot design". Read the Story and See the Video Here - <http://www.wsitv.com/news/local/Class-Act--Marion-High-School-Robotics-Team-Wins-Awards--140711543.html>



INDIANA STATE FTC CHAMPIONSHIP!

Crawfordsville, Indiana was the site of the very first ever Indiana FTC State Championship! What a truly outstanding event it was! Nineteen FIRST FTC teams from five states as far away as Arkansas and Iowa attended the event on March 10. The venue was great, the competition reached new heights and the Hoosier hospitality was incredible! Many thanks to Darrin Wilcox and his crew of volunteers whose hard work and dedication made this event successful and fun!

Illinois FTC Teams ROCK in Indiana!



Inspire Award Winner
Team # 5085
Newton's Lawyers
O'Fallon



Winning Alliance
Team # 3785 Beastie Bots - Highland Park
Team # 5085 Newton's Lawyers - O'Fallon

WOW!
Illinois has 3 FTC
Teams going to World
Championship!
The two pictured here
plus
Team # 5202
STAND/Try 2 from
Decatur!



Highland
Park Beastie
Bots
reaches new
heights!

COMING IN MARCH . . ILLINOIS FRC TROPHY CASE!

Send pictures of your team at your Regional competition, thoughts on the competition, reflections, news, funny stories, etc - anything you would like to share with your Illinois FIRST family to ilfrc4u@gmail.com as we showcase...

MARCH MADNESS - FIRST FRC Style!