

Teen Technology

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Team Overdrive wins Inspire Award at NJ State Championship, Headed to World Championship

Team Overdrive competed at the NJ State Championship tournament in March. The team started the day with solid performances, winning their first three matches. There was a communications issue with the robot in the fourth match and Team Overdrive had their first loss. The fifth match gave Team Overdrive its fourth win and a final record of 4 wins and 1 loss. This record was good enough for the team to be ranked 2nd in their division. The team became a captain of an alliance, then used its scouting data to choose two other teams to form their alliance. The Team Overdrive alliance went on to play the 3rd ranked alliance. In this match, hard defense was played on Team Overdrive the entire match. This became a problem for our alliance and the first game was lost. The next game, the same strategy was used and the Team



Overdrive alliance was defeated. This was the end of the robotics section of the competition for Team Overdrive. The competition continued until a winner was determined. After the competition the awards were announced. First the Promote Award winner was announced. This award is given to the team that is "most successful in creating a compelling video message for the public designed to change our culture (Continued on page 4)

Teen Technology Bridge Building Team Defends Title, takes first place for fourth year in a row!!!

All of the teams competing in the Union County College Bridge Building Competition use the same components to build their bridges: wooden tongue depressors, 3/16" diameter dowel sticks, and Elmer's school glue. Since all of the teams have the same building materials, you have to use good engineering, a good design and good workmanship to win. At the competition teams suspend their bridges between two tables that are 6 feet apart for the Advanced division and 5 feet apart for the Novice division. Then two students from each team system-

atically hang 2 1/2 pound weights from their bridges until they break. It's hard to take the bridge you spent so much time on and then try to break it! Teen Tech entered one bridge in the Novice division (for the first time in Teen Tech history) and two in the Advanced division (the division we've won the past 4 years). Teen Tech's Novice bridge weighed 681.1 grams (1 1/2 lbs) and was designed and engineered very well. Their bridge would not break. When all the other Novice division bridges had already collapsed, Teen Tech's bridge was still going strong, and showing no signs of weakness. Eventually the officials decided to set up and start the Advanced competi-



Teen Technology Bridge Building Teams 2013

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Team Overdrive visits Evonik and gives presentation on last year's robotics season, success, and lessons learned

Team Overdrive recently visited Evonik, the team's longest running sponsor. The team developed a PowerPoint presentation to give. Matt Thompson presented last year's season, including the difficult times that allowed for great learning, that allowed the team to have great successes. The highlight of last year's season was, of course, winning the NY State Championship and earning an invitation to the World Championship. Since there are more than 2000 FTC teams and only 110 are invited to the World Championship each year, an invitation is very rare and sought after. Cara Scalzo then presented the tools that the team used, which include a want-how analysis to help determine the most important aspects of the robot design and prioritize the "wants" of the

team. Another tool the team used is the Engineering Notebook. Documenting their work allows the team to develop life skills they will use in the real world. The use of a GANNT chart helped the team manage their time and stay on track. Cara then explained the scouting system of collecting data, analyzing that data, and presenting the data using graph and charts. Jacob Ultzhoffer then presented the team's community service. The team provided a start up FLL team with a competition kit. Jacob is also now mentoring that team, as he was on an FLL team before he graduated to Team Overdrive. The team also visited the Midland school for special needs children and demonstrated the robot there, as well as volunteered at many educational and



robotics events. Katie Shoty then completed the presentation by outlining the team's plans for this year. She explained this year's competition called "Ring it Up" and the design concepts the team planned to use. The team's current robot was brought to Evonik and was demonstrated to all in attendance. The visit provided the students the experience of giving a presentation in a corporate setting. Team Overdrive wants to thank Evonik for their support and the great opportunity to present at their corporation and enjoy the day!

Team Overdrive volunteers at meet; sea of Yellow!!

Team Overdrive believes in giving back, so this year at a qualifier tournament, we had many volunteers helping out with the event. One of our mentors, Kenny, served as a field technical advisor

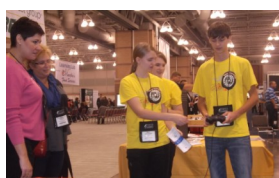


(FTA), helping with technical issues on the field and assuring that all of the electronics were functioning properly, etc. Three other team members volunteered to run the queuing of

robots on the field. With Team Overdrive's help, the event went smoothly and finished on time. Coach Scalzo even got in on the fun and MCD half of the meet!

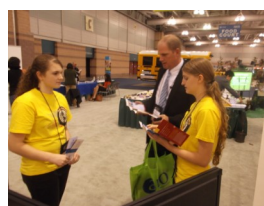


Team Overdrive Promotes FIRST at NJ School Board Conference

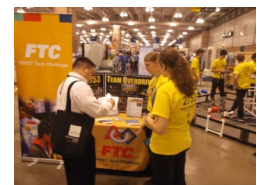


Team Overdrive was again asked to attend the NJ School Board convention, held at the Atlantic City convention Center. There were thousands of School Board officials in attendance.

Team Overdrive created a poster board that outlines what a FTC team is all about, and the students used it to explain all the positive benefits and aspects of FIRST and FTC.



Many school board administrators were impressed and are now pursuing starting FIRST robotics team in their schools. Great job Overdrive on a great event!



Team Overdrive Competes at NY State Championship

Team Overdrive had signed up to compete in the NY State Championship at the Jacob Javitz Center in New York city. However, due to the large number of robot teams in NY, there was no room for out of state teams. Coach Scalzo received a phone call the night before the NY State Championship that asked if Team Overdrive could compete. There was a team from NY that was unable to make the tournament and that would leave one slot open if Team Overdrive could make it. Coach Scalzo called the team and with a team meeting that night,



the team was able to attend. At the NY tournament the team played well and won all of its qualifying matches and finished with a record of 4 wins and 0 losses. This put the team in 2nd place after the qualifying rounds. Then the team used its scouting

data to pick two other teams to form an alliance. Team Overdrive alliance then played the 4th place alliance, and defeated the team in two matches. The Team Overdrive alliance then played the number 1 alliance. Team Overdrive lost the first match on a penalty, then won the second match. The third match was hard played but the Team Overdrive alliance lost by three points. It was a great day even though it snowed a few inches making travelling a challenge. The team had two days to prepare for the NJ state Championship held at the NJIT

Teen Technology Bridge Building Team takes 1st place: again! (Cont. from Pg 1)

tion around it. Eventually a small part of it broke, but the bridge still did not collapse, it stood. But the judges decided to end it there, as the bridge was already in first place. It was holding 580 lbs when they unloaded its weights; a record



Novice division team with their
"unbreakable" bridge

for this event (the previous record was more than 300 lbs less). Teen Tech entered two bridges in the Advanced division. Team B's bridge did very well and placed fourth overall. Team A's bridge weighed 1044.3 grams (2.3 lbs) and held 705 lbs, completely shattering the previous record (also set by Teen Tech) of 464.5 pounds. The combined weight that the three bridges held was 1780 lbs! This was the fourth straight year that Teen Technology's bridge building team has won this competition. The team consisted of 9 homeschooled high school stu-



Advanced division team— Winners!

dents, many of whom are also on Team Overdrive. The team was mentored by George Wittel, Howard Scalzo, Jack Lerchbacker, Kenny Shoty, and Adrianna Scalzo.

Team Overdrive competes at Delaware State Championship

Team Overdrive competed at the Delaware State Championship. The day started with some snow that delayed things a bit. The team started out with a win and then had a loss due to the arm mechanism not functioning

properly. The team wound up ranked 12th out of the 36 teams in attendance. Although this is a respectable finish, the team realized the robot arm was too slow to be competitive against the best robots at the competition. From this, the team decided to design and build a robot with a slider instead of an arm. The day was good and the team had direction moving forward!



Team Overdrive Earns Inspire Award at NJ State Championship—Headed to Worlds (cont. from Pg 1)

...and celebrate science, technology, engineering and math”. The award was given to Team Overdrive, because of their very creative video “commercial” promoting FIRST Robotics! As other awards were given out, the three teams that were finalists for each award were mentioned. The Think Award was given to the team that best documents the season in their engineering notebook. The finalists were announced and Team Overdrive was one of the finalists! The winner was announced, but Team Overdrive did not win. The next award, the PTC Design Award, is “for the team that designs and builds a robot that is both aesthetic and functional”. The finalist were announced and Team Overdrive again was a finalist but did not win the award. The Rockwell Collins Innovate award was next, with this award being given to a team whose robot is innovative and in competition is stable, robust and controllable. Team Overdrive was again one of the three finalist, and again did not win the award. The team was very honored win the Promote Award and be finalists in the other two awards, but was a bit disappointed, as this was Team Overdrive’s last scheduled competition for the year. However, it was a good year of competition, with the team competing in

three State Championships and being ranked 2nd out of 36 teams in NY and 2nd out of 24 teams in NJ. The team had made it to the finals in NY and the semi finals in NJ and were the captains of their alliance in both NY and NJ. But the one award that earns the winner an invitation to Worlds hadn’t been announced at NJ yet. The team that wins this award, the Inspire Award, is determined by the judges as having best represented a ‘role model’ FIRST Tech Challenge Team. This team is a top contender for all other judging categories and is a strong competitor on the field. The judges stated that “the winner of this award make their opponents Yellow with envy, and they have the drive to go up and over obstacles. The NJ Championship Inspire Award winner is TEAM OVERDRIVE!!!!” What a great honor and with this honor comes an invitation to the World Championship!! The final competition of the FIRST Robotics season is the World championship held each April. This year, the championship will again be held in St. Louis, Missouri, at the Edward Jones Dome. Team Overdrive is currently getting prepared to do their best at the World Championship, and cant wait to compete! Go Team Overdrive Go!!!

Team Overdrive visits Evonik (cont. from Page 2)

Robot there. The team also volunteered at many educational and robotics events. Katie Shotyk then completed the presentation by outlining the team’s plans for this year. She explained this year’s competition called “Ring it Up” and the design concepts the team planned to use. The teams current robot made the trip to Evonik and was demonstrated to all in attendance. The visit provided the students the experience of giving a presentation in a corporate setting and allowed them to demonstrate the robot as well. Team Overdrive wants to thank Evonik for their support and the great opportunity to give a presentation in a corporate environment.

Team Overdrive competes at the Livingston Qualifier and earns Inspire Award 2nd year in a row!

Team Overdrive competed at the Livingston Robo-Joust competition. In the qualifying rounds Team Overdrive was doing well with 4 wins and 1 loss. This was good enough for being ranked 2nd in our division. By using our scouting data, Team Overdrive picked two other robot teams to form an alliance. With our alliance we then went on to win the semifinal round. The final round was hard fought, and Team Overdrive alliance was overpowered. It was a good day and much was learned. The team was pleased with how they performed, but also had ideas for im-

provement. When the awards were given out, Team Overdrive was awarded the Inspire Award!! This is the second year in a row, they were awarded this at the Robo-Joust competition. Winning this award qualified the team for the NJ State Championship.

