



Team 501 News



March 2011

Email suggestions to Newsletter Coordinator: Zach Glennon zachary.glennon@myfairpoint.net

Granite State Regional Practice Day

By: Sam Lewin, GHS Freshmen



Thursday was a day of practice and perfecting our robot. Many teams participated in the practice matches, but many had completed their robot, and still many others spent time fixing their code. Our day was spent doing nothing but attaching our arm and writing/editing more code. We managed to get into the practice field, but that didn't do a lot. The pits were pretty much open, and a lot of team members were down there assisting with the robot. Our minibot deployer was sent to BURNDY, but we didn't get it mounted... It was a fantastic day nonetheless. Many repairs and changes were made

to the robot, and we practiced a lot.

Granite State Regional Competition Day 1

By: Sam Ainsworth, GHS Sophomore

Team 501 got to the pits bright and early for the first day for the Verizon competition. We noticed, however, that our robot had a few problems. First our arm was not working. Then the programming was incorrect. This process continued throughout the day. We managed to get our robot fixed by our last practice match only to be disappointed, because we couldn't connect to our robot to practice. This problem was later fixed and the team practiced in the practice field later that night to make sure that our robot was



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working for tomorrow. Our minibot was taken to BURNDY to be worked on and hopefully will be working for Friday's Competition.

Team 501 started out slowly by losing our first 3 matches, but we won the other 4 matches. One of our first matches that we played was match 10, which we lost, but was replayed because of technical difficulties. The second time we played this match our alliance won, turning one of our losing matches into a winning match. The team started out in 49th place, but by the end of the day the team was in 15th place and we are all hoping that we can keep up our winning streak tomorrow to make it into the finals. We didn't win any awards, but we were all happy that our robot was working and that we were performing in our matches by putting up tubes and creating logos on the top pegs.



Granite State Regional Day 1 (Another student's perspective)

By: Erin Morrison, WHS Junior



Friday was an interesting day at the competition. Qualifying rounds started, and were very delayed at some points. People were fixing robots, testing, and doing their best to get their robot and their team into the elimination rounds. In the land of 501, people were trying to do different jobs, and get the robot to be at tip top shape. There were people scouting in

case we got to the elimination matches, and when ever Bullwinkle(our robot) decided to have an issue, there were people helping him to feel better. We had a rough start to our day, and at one point was in the high 30's in our rank. As people started fixing, others started scouting, and others were enjoying the show, the robot started to be more cooperative. We climbed through the ranks, and we ended the day at rank 15! With a little bit of hard work and persistence, Bullwinkle pulled through, and a good time was had by all.

Granite State Regional Summary

By: Zach Glennon, WHS Sophomore

The Granite State Regional was a lot of fun. We have had many problems with the robot's arm. But the drive team and the pit crew did an amazing job like they always do and got the arm to work on Thursday. On Thursday we had only been to one of our



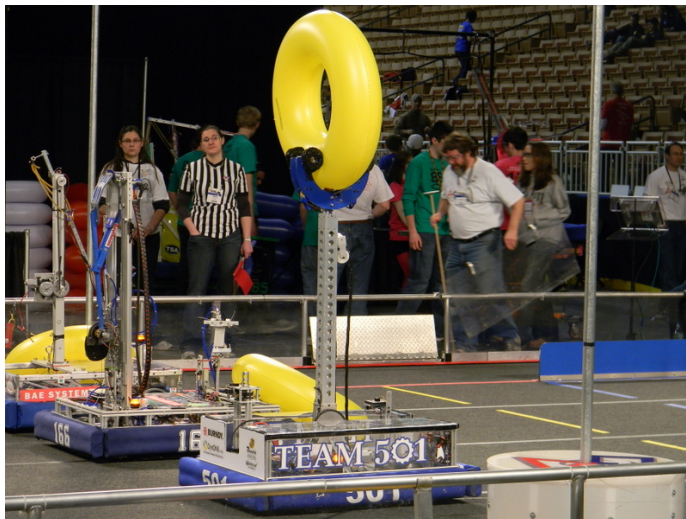
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scheduled practice matches. At that match we were unable to connect to the field, so we did not move. We did get into the practice area that night after the practice matches had ended. The robot worked and it connected to the field. On Friday the robot was still having some problems. The arm had fallen off the robot after attempting to get a game piece from the human player. The drive team and the pit crew did a great job and reattached the arm for the next match. The bot started working and we ended that night at 15th out of 53 bots. We currently do not have a working deployment system for the minibot but we are able to score points and our drive team is doing a great job at driving the robot and making the robot perform at the best that it possibly can. On Friday we found out who won the website award. We sadly did not win the website award but we did put a lot of time into that website and are going to put in even more effort to win the Hartford regional website award. We were 22nd by the end of the qualification matches. We were not picked for an alliance with any other team. So our competition ended a little earlier than I would have liked, but you can only do so much. We all had a great time and it was so fun.



Scouting at Competitions

By: Isaiah Cote, WHS Junior



At every FIRST competition at the end of the qualification rounds, top 8 teams select their alliance partners out of all the other teams. For this reason, all the teams need to go “scouting” to determine which teams are the most effective, which will work well with them, and who will balance them, all in order to make the best team for them. This year I, Isaiah Cote, a junior at West High and a 3rd year member of Team 501, was given the task of leading the search for intelligence on the other teams. In order to complete this task, I directed some of the team

members in the stands to record details of each match. This was to keep tabs on the real “performance” of each team. Then I and one other team member, Erin, went to the pits to interview each team in order to get the details on the design specifications of each robot. Together we interviewed all of the 53 teams at this year's BAE regional.



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From this data (with the help of one of our fine and experienced mentors) we compiled a “pick list” of teams that we found desirable as alliance partners. In doing this team members learn the importance of information, and the people skills required to gather it from the members of other teams.

Mentoring at Competitions

By: Jen Hosker, Team 501 Mentor

Being a FIRST mentor at a competition is a very rewarding experience. It's wonderful to see the pride on the students' faces as they talk to the judges about the robot or watch it perform on the field. The competition is the culmination of nearly two months of intense work. It's the moment where the students get to see their efforts come to life and play the game. It's a celebration of the team's achievements regardless of where we place in the standings. It's also a tremendous amount of fun for everyone.

Note from the Webmaster, Dale Keith

Please check out our site www.powerknights.com for more news using our blog. Check out the calendar for events that are coming up and don't forget to check out the photo and videos page for new photos and videos of the Granite State Regional. Please be sure to follow all the action with our live blog when we travel to Hartford, CT for our next regional competition on March 31st-April 2nd.

Thank you.



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