



TEAM 1718

FIGHTING PI WEEKLY

JANUARY 22, 2011

PI MENTORS NEW HAVEN TEAM 3621 BY: TREVOR GOOLSBY

FIRST:

The sport where
anyone can turn pro

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 22
ROBOT BAG DAY

FEBRUARY 25
SPAGHETTI DINNER

MARCH 18-19
WEST MICHIGAN
COMPETITION

APRIL 1-2
TROY COMPETITION

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- As a result of Team 1718 presenting FIRST to the Michigan State Board of Superintendents last Nov there are 22 new rookie teams in Michigan
- There are 2073 robotics teams with 414 new rookie teams registered with FIRST this year
- Team 1718 will produce a weekly newsletter now that the new 2011 build season has begun

The Fighting Pi is constantly trying to spread the message of FIRST by introducing high school students to science and technology related fields. Our team started to interest school districts at the MASB Conference. Now, The Fighting Pi has started to interest nearby school districts. New Haven High School asked members of Team 1718 to demonstrate our robot during their lunch period. On December 10th, Alex Kesek, Stephen Kline, Jacob Capruscio, Lauren Grobbel, Vince Ragap, Trevor Goolsby, Head mentor Craig Roys, and mentor Richard Wahl, went to New Haven High School to demonstrate our robot. During both lunch periods we answered questions

ROBOTICS: A FRESHMEN PERSPECTIVE WRITTEN BY: MICHAEL AND STEVE SCAGLIONE

Being a freshman on FIRST Team 1718, so far, has been interesting.... It was a little confusing during the weeks before kickoff in choosing what role you would take on. At first, it was just a challenge to learn everyone's names, with 30 members on the team. One thing that has proven to be a challenge was choosing which business and robot groups to be in. Since there are so many groups to choose from (CAD, Mechanical, Electrical/Programming, Business groups, etc.), you can find something you enjoy doing. It was important to choose which group was right for you, as you would be working in this group throughout the season. It was reassuring to be told that as a freshman, you could move around and try all of the groups to see which was your favorite. There were many opportunities in the offseason to make friends and to meet

and let students drive the robot. (The robot wasn't all they were interested in; Stephen Kline was clearly an object of attraction to many of the New Haven girls, who kept asking other team members about him.) At the end, the principal of New Haven High School thanked us, and we told him that we would be able to help with any questions the team may have.

This past Friday, January 14, team members Alex Kesek, Vince Ragapp and mentor, Richard Wahl, were invited to a New Haven Team 3621 meeting to help them in construction of their 'kit bot' and to answer any questions the New Haven team may have had about the game or robot build season.

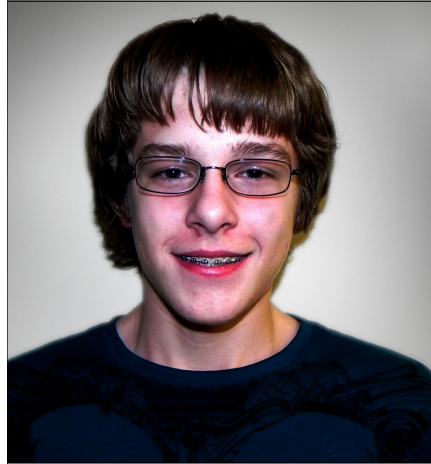
other members of the team. Most freshmen had lots of questions, and most were answered through various meetings. The mentors also helped in explaining different aspects of the team. Since freshmen have no prior knowledge of what the team does, asking members about the team at the Community Outreach events and the Christmas Party cleared up many items. These events also helped with socializing with members to get to know the rest of the team and what they do.

During the kickoff presentation video, there were also things to learn. The kickoff video seemed pretty exciting, especially everyone's reaction to learning they had to deploy a minibot from the robot. Everyone looked pretty surprised when seeing this feature of the game, as this feature was something past members had never seen before. Most members were

**TEAM 1718 ROOKIES INTRODUCED
BY: MICHAEL GRAHAM**



Andrew Graham



Michael Patrick

The phrase “Children Are The Future” is tossed around a lot these days, whether it is by a politician arguing for increased funding for education or someone describing Angelina Jolie’s trip to yet another adoption center. It is a true statement, especially when applied to robotics, because robotics teams lose members to the necessary evil of graduation as often as a football player loses brain cells. A steady flow of fresh rookies are essential to the survival of a team like the Fighting Pi. Because of this, the next few editions of the newsletter will include articles presenting the “fresh rookies” of 2011. There are more this year than ever before, with a gain of thirteen members to our ever-growing team.

The lucky freshman to have the honor of being detailed first is Andrew Graham. (It seems that it is one of the benefits of being my cousin...or one of the drawbacks, depending on who you ask). Andrew is a freshman from Richmond, and the younger brother of student mentor Christopher Graham, who graduated last year and is now a student-mentor, and the son of John Graham, a longtime mentor on the Fighting Pi. In addition to robotics,

Andrew is on the tennis team at Richmond and the track team, where he is not yet sure whether he plans on running long or short distance. (I say go for long distance, but I won’t say any more because to do so would turn this robotics article into a sports column). Andrew hopes to get involved in the media aspects of the team such as filming and editing videos. He enjoys this because it allows him to be creative and take pride in knowing he has created something that could help the team, like a Chairman’s Video. Andrew has had an interest in joining the Fighting Pi for a while now, but the interest grew especially after seeing the team’s great success last year. “I wanted to be part of something big”, he explained. At the end of the interview I asked my cousin if there was anything else he wanted to mention. “Well, my favorite colors are blue and green” he said in that typical example of Graham humor. Then he amended his statement, and decided to replace the green with orange. In addition to the Detroit Tigers and a smurf hiding in a pumpkin patch, blue and orange happen to also be the Fighting Pi’s colors.

Michael Patrick, of Armada, is the

next freshman to be highlighted. (He’s my favorite, because I like his first name. Just kidding, but his name definitely is cool.) Michael enjoys a variety of pastimes, including soccer, track, computer work, and most important of all, food. Michael hopes to join the electrical team, which should go well with his love of computer work and food. He also plans on helping out with fundraising, seeing the necessity for the less than glamorous but incredibly important task given the current economic conditions. Michael enjoys sketching designs, and he showed me a notepad with some of his superb drawings of prototypes for this year’s game. He is excited to be able to draw those in 3-D when he joins our CAD (Computer Aided Design) Team. Michael is excited to be on the robotics team because of the team’s good balance of good-natured joking and seriousness at the right times. “The robotics team is one of the main reasons I joined the academy,” Michael told me. As this year gets off with a bang, I am confident he will not regret using The Fighting Pi as a basis for his educational career.

FRESHMEN (continued from pg 1)

very excited to start a new season of FRC. For the first game we would experience, it seemed like an exciting one. Now that kickoff is over and the build season has started, there were many interesting parts at some of the meetings. One part was the brainstorming sessions. Brainstorming sessions seemed very organized. One day, you could only think about understanding the game (which was very hard to do). Later, when discussing design, everything was accurately drawn in CAD so we absolutely knew what we could and couldn’t do and to what extent. Being a freshman on Team 1718 is tough, as there is much to learn, but there is also much to gain. Speaking for all freshmen, we are looking forward to competitions, more robots, and (hopefully) four more great years to come!