



## The PVDE (Springfield) Competition Update

All of our hard work has paid off. We attended our first district competition this past weekend in Springfield. The team had a fantastic time cheering our robot and drive team on to victory, dancing and helping other teams. With the completion of our first event, we have learned a lot; in terms of designs and strategies that we plan to implement for greater success at the upcoming Hartford district event.

### ***Before:***

The weeks before competition were busy for everyone. All the last minute items needed to be addressed. We had one out of bag session where we were able to work on the competition robot, ensure that everything worked perfectly and have actual drive practice with it.

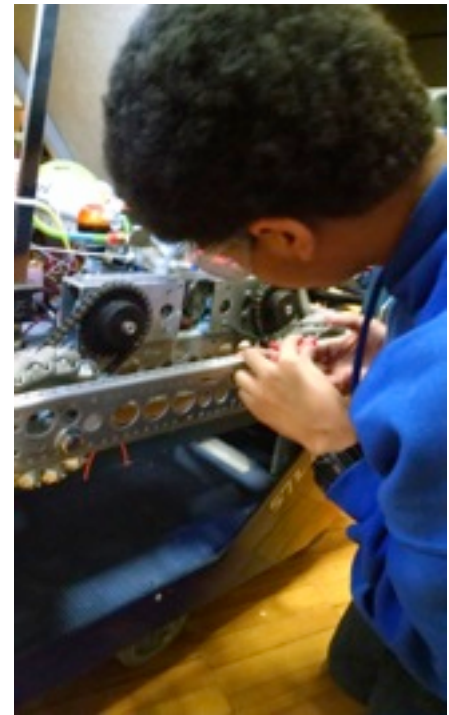


Imagery finished the pit book, aka Paragon's Bright Ideas, to give a pictorial and editorial reference to what the team does throughout the year to share with other teams and the judges. They also finished updating the robot cart with the



names of our top sponsors. For the first time this year, we had a digital photo frame for the pits documenting the build process for our robot. As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand

words. Our final priority was packing and getting the "build site on wheels" ready in preparation for the Pioneer Valley District Event. Many totes were loaded with objects ranging from a soldering iron to duct tape to honey pretzels. Things can get very unhappy if the drive team and pit crew do not have provisions in between matches. We not only wanted to be prepared for whatever may happen to our robot, but also to be able to assist other teams if the need arose.



Of course, within the last couple weeks, there was a lot of drive practice that had to happen...and it did. We are glad to say this year for the first time in many years, we had made enough progress with the robot and the practice robot that we were able to have a few weeks of solid drive practice before our first competition.



With the robot in the bag, we had the time available to do what Team Paragon does very well... share our enthusiasm for robotics, STEM and FIRST. We spent an evening showing cub scouts from



PACK 203 around the build site and telling them about Team Paragon and what we do. The FTC team, The Blazing Paranormals, also gave tours of their build area and demonstrated their robot for this year. Many kids got to drive (and break) a multitude of robots ranging from Blue Cyclone to this years practice robot, Lucy. Everyone had a great night learning about science and technology while having fun at the same time.



## ***During: The Pioneer Valley District Event. (The Competition): First Half***

Thursday was our first day of the competition where we unpacked and got our robot inspected. Things did not start out so great.

At first, we were told our tote grabbing mechanism was illegal because it was too dangerous. We had to completely rethink our design and come up with something new. Where is Wendy's when you really need it? Our new design, consisting of a set of aluminum teeth was not our vision, but it still works surprisingly well. Also, at the last minute, programming had to update the software on our robot in order to finalize the code and communication between the drive station and the robot.



## **Second Half**

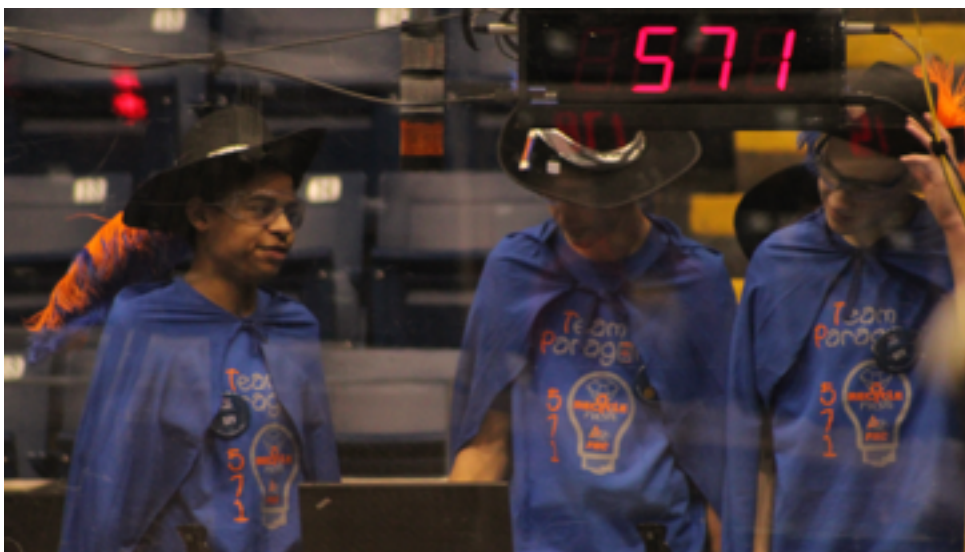
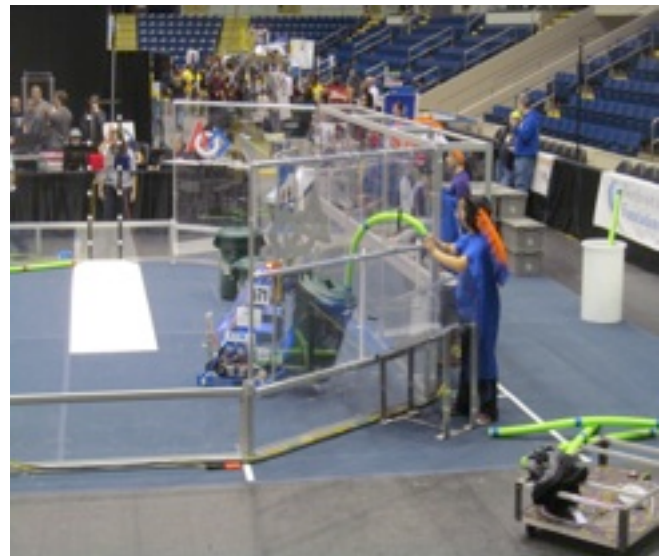
On Friday, team members showed up bright and early for an exciting day of competition and cheering. (Missing school helped offset the early arrival time a little bit) Again things did not start off so well. During our first match there





was delayed communication with the robots, resulting in very low scoring. Luckily, it was an issue with the play field computers so we got to replay that match at the end of the day. As the day progressed, we got better with each match. We were able to lift

totes and stack them, lift recycling cans and stack them, move around totes, and consistently score cooperation points. We were even able to feed the noodles into a recycling can with the human player (way to go Aidan!). Throughout Friday we were all over the place with rankings but ended the day at rank 13 out of 33!





The team celebrated their small victory at a local restaurant; *Red Rose*, which was right down the street from the MassMutual Center. Everyone had a great time and we had some fun discussing the game and what the final day of competition might look like.

### Third Half

On Saturday the team spirit matched their enthusiasm! (Excited and not tired) A lot of



dancing was done by all the students (and some mentors), and the team debuted the new mascot costume.





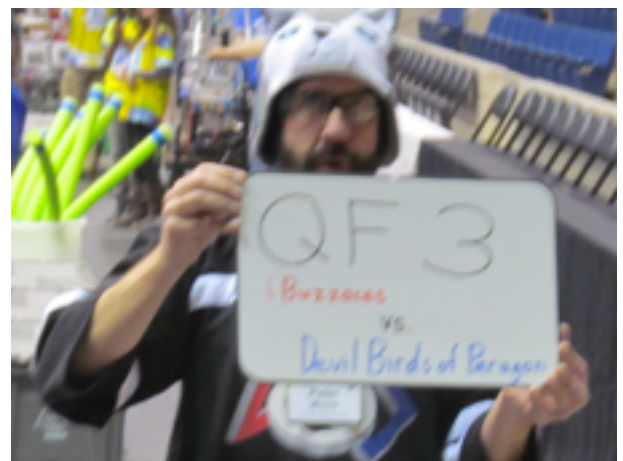
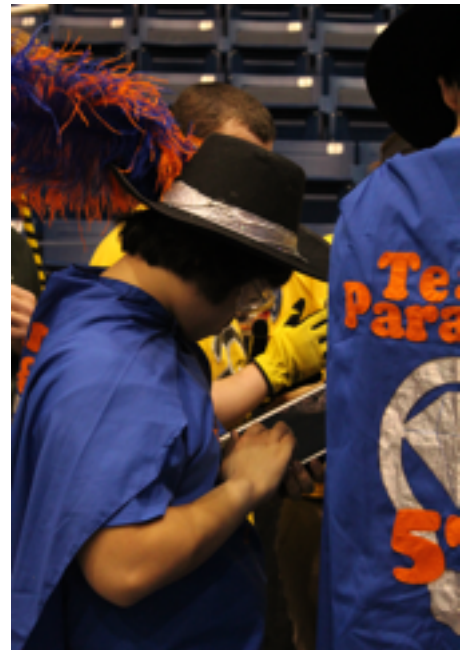
The team finished up its qualification matches and thanks to the hard work of the drive team, we placed 11 out of 33. During the selection process the team advanced to being a selecting alliance and alliance captain!! Thanks to Addison's

web based, smart phone scouting app, our team was able quickly size up who we wanted to select for our alliance

partners in the final rounds.

We paired up with teams 191, The Birds of

Prey, and 4097, the Devilbots, to become the alliance known as "The Devil Birds of Paragon." We played well together as an alliance







but unfortunately we got knocked out

at the quarter-finals. Even though we did not walk away with any awards we did make a good showing with the robot, were highly spirited, showed our image well



and extended our gracious professionalism

where ever we could, especially helping out other teams. We also had the chance to shake down our robot and find the flaws. Finding these flaws will be huge help in doing better next competition at Hartford on March 28th and 29th.

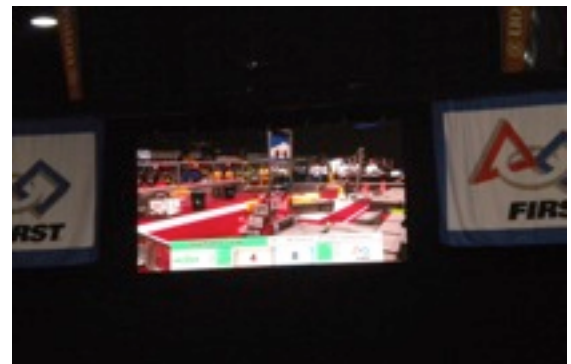
ALLIANCE	ALLIANCE TEAMS	AVG SCORE	FIRST RECYCLE FIRST LEADERBOARD
6	3623 - 178 - 839	66.00	
2	176 - 175 - 2370	64.00 ▲	
3	316 - 61 - 663	60.00 ▼	
7	571 - 181 - 4097	54.00 ▲	
5	3146 - 3718 - 2168	51.00 ▼	
4	166 - 3205 - 213	43.00 ▼	
1	4048 - 1991 - 3719	0.00 ▼	
8	501 - 716 - 1699	0.00	

Quarterfinal 3 of 8	
AUTO: 0 TOTE: 26 CONTAINER: 32 LITTER: 12 FOUL: -6	AUTO: 0 TOTE: 20 CONTAINER: 16 LITTER: 18 FOUL: 0

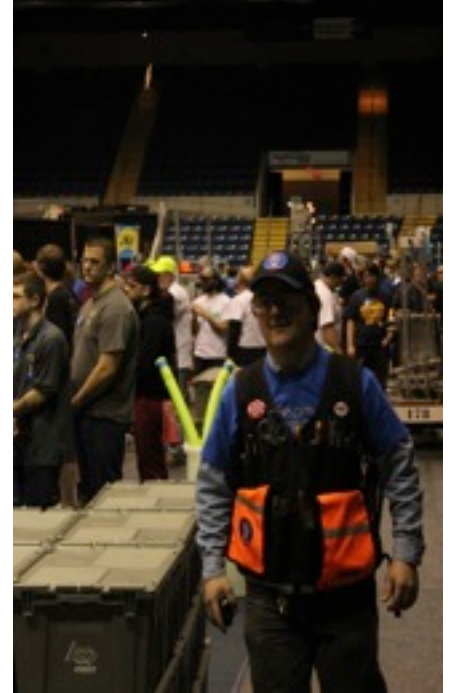
  

NE District - Pioneer Valley Event	64	54	FRC FIRST Robotics Competition
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Springfield was not only a day of surprise and success, but a day of gratitude and happiness for one of our dedicated mentors, Chris Koenig. He found out he was nominated for the Woodie Flowers award by the team. He was surprised



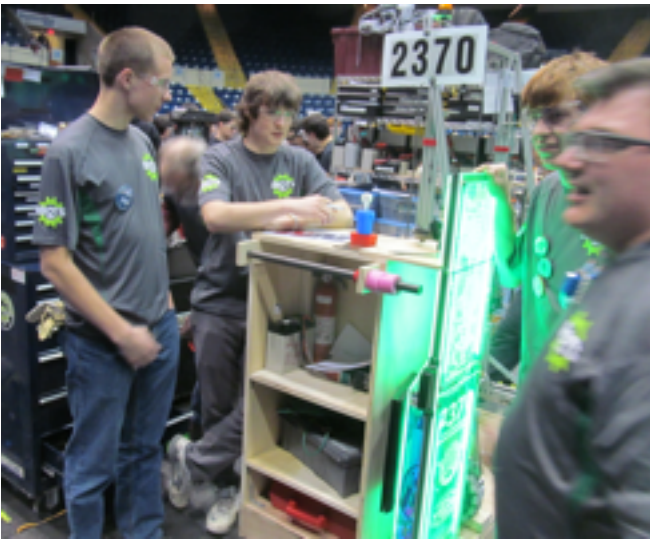
to

say the least and will be competing for the award during the regional competition at WPI in April. Good luck Mr. Koenig!



Imagery also got to present the awards that were so diligently 3D-Printed for us by Mark Markiewicz. The Flo's imagery award went to team 2370 for their awesome driver station, and the





laser engraved plate on their

robot.

The Tow Mater Spirit award went to team 166, as we could hear them yelling and screaming behind us whenever they were cheering! Finally, the Doc Hudson Gracious



Professionalism award went to Team 716 for lending us a USB Cable for updating all of that pesky firmware on our robot. If we didn't update that firmware, our robot would have not passed inspection.

On the subject of thanking and awards, the team would like to thank the Pinckney's for the amazing lunches they provided on Friday and Saturday









Springfield was a time of trials and tribulations. However we were able to come out close to the top with an amazing robot and drive team. The Team looks forward to Hartford and the possibilities that lie there for us.





***You can follow Team Paragon on:***

***[www.team-paragon.org](http://www.team-paragon.org)***

***[Twitter](#)***

***[Facebook](#)***



***AFTER: Upcoming events:***

3/8 - 3/26 - Drive Team Practice, Practice, Practice, (and Wendy's).

3/27 - 3/28 - Hartford Competition at Hartford Public High School

Also note that the Windsor School Board will be discussing the future of the Wolcott School building where Team Paragon calls home. We ask that all the parents and friends of the team show up to support the team and recommend our continued use of this wonderful facility.

7 PM at Windsor Town Hall.

***From the Captains: ~ Matt & James***

