



The Flying Toasters

Building Bridges and
Ahead into a Better Future



2015 Build Season Newsletter

"To inspire and intrigue, unite and achieve greatness"

2015 Challenge: Recycle Rush

Issue #4 States Edition – April 2015

State of Michigan Competition

Soaring at States in Grand Rapids

This year's, State of Michigan competition was held in Grand Rapids on April 9th-11th. Qualifying for States is not easy. Only 102 teams out of 345 Michigan teams made the cut. During the qualification rounds, the Flying Toasters soared up the ranking board.

At the end of qualification rounds, the team was ranked 2nd out of 102 teams with an average score of 176.66.

Thus, the Toasters became the second seed captain. During alliance selections, the Flying Toasters selected Team 67 The HOT Team from Highland and Team 5114 Titanium Tigers from Fenton.

At States, there were 16 alliances instead of the usual 8 alliances for playoffs. The Toasters and their partners advanced to quarterfinals and semifinals and made it to the Top 8 playoffs. In the end, they finished sixth in the playoff rounds.

At the conclusion of States, the results from the whole season were tabulated to see who would go to the FIRST World Championship in St Louis. The Flying Toasters qualified and are going to World's for the second time in 3 years. The Top 78 teams in Michigan will be traveling to St. Louis. The Flying Toasters are currently ranked 14th in the State of Michigan.

Governor Snyder stopped by the Flying Toasters pit during States. He even tweeted about it on his official Twitter site.



Governor Snyder visits the Flying Toasters pit at States



Pictured above are the Flying Toasters at States



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Upcoming events!

April 22-25th -- World Championships

Chairman's Reaches Across Generations

The Flying Toasters Chairman's Committee has been busy spreading the word about FIRST Robotics and the power of STEAM to the young children in South Lyon.

Rookie members of the team have revived the VEX robots and teamed with the Chairman's group to create the "Reading with Robots" program. Groups of Toaster members have been visiting the elementary schools in our community and reading their children's book, "The Flying Toasters Spread the Word: A F.I.R.S.T. Reader." Then the Toasters demonstrate the different robots they have built and allow the young children to interact with these robots. During the "Reading with Robots" visits the high school students also share information about FIRST Robotics and the Lego League Robotics Teams that are available for interested students from kindergarten to fifth grade. The interest has been phenomenal!

The Chairman's Committee has not stopped there. They have also taken their children's book and VEX robots to the "Moving Ahead with STEAM" classes they are running at the library and in their East robotics workshop. The classes consist of five interactive stations, which the elementary students rotate through, focused on STEAM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics. The response by the parents and children to these classes has moved ahead not only STEAM education, but also Lego League teams in our hometown. Thus far, our outreach has helped us gather enough parent coaches and interested students to create four Jr.FLL teams and four FLL teams for the upcoming robotics season! Now is the time for the whole team to step up and mentor our new little Toasters! Building the Lego League in our community creates awareness and interest, which reaches across the generations and cultivates The Flying Toasters of the future!

For information on the new book "[The Flying Toasters Spread the Word: A F.I.R.S.T. Reader](#)", please contact Mrs. Ann Bizer.



Dean Kamen's Visit

Dean Kamen signed our robot. Who is Dean Kamen? He's the founder of FIRST and a renowned inventor. He made a surprise visit to the States of Michigan competition and stopped by the Flying Toaster's pit.



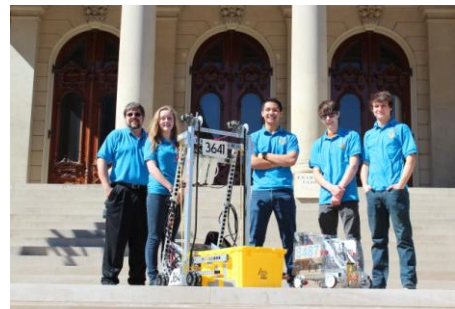
FIRST Impressions

Since this was your first States, what did you like best?

- Alex F – the constant communication and team effort was pretty darn good.
- Alexander M – getting to see Dean Kamen and doing well in the competitions.
- Andrew O – seeing Dean Kamen who created FIRST. Also, when Governor Snyder gave a speech on how we need more engineers in Michigan and we are the future engineers that will solve the nation's problems.
- Brendan K – the excitement in the crowd, the size of the pits, and some cool robot designs.
- Isaac M. – learning how to use a lathe at States to make spacers and plugs used on our robot.
- Nickolas D – the excitement of it all including the actual competitions.
- Shashank R – watching the matches and robots and all the mechanics they had and innovation the teams used.

Toasters Take on Lansing

Recently, the Flying Toasters and an FTC team mentor traveled to Lansing to testify about how FIRST robotics has impacted their lives and how more funding is necessary to help promote STEM careers.



Tweaking the Robot 101

Standing in our pit at States, I had a closer view of our robot. Thus began my question and answer session with mentors Mr. Manny Novilla and Mr. Ed Debler.

Q. Hey, this robot looks different than Gull Lake. I don't remember those "handle bars" on top. Are those new? Per Mr. Novilla, that's the "recycle bin stabilizer." It steadies the recycle bins.

Q. Why change?

Well the team has made several changes for weight reduction as the season progressed. There's a 120 pound robot limit. So for every added part another part has to be weight optimized.

Q. So what other changes has the team made?

They changed the steel shafts to aluminum for weight reductions. They removed excess motors that weren't needed for force. With small cylinders, you can save air so the compressor doesn't need to cycle as much.

Q. What is mentor Jim Burkowski and the students installing in the pit right now?

They swapped out the plastic rods with lightweight carbon fiber rods.

Q. So the robot loading is faster?

Yes, they were able to take out 10 seconds which is phenomenal added Ed Debler.

Interview with Mr. Manny Novilla & Mr. Ed Debler



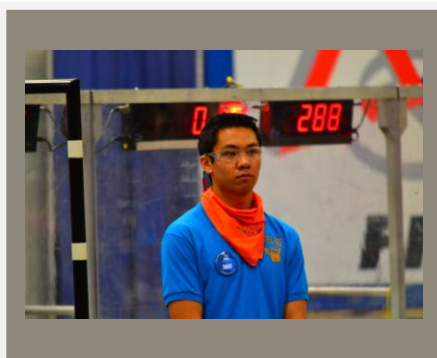
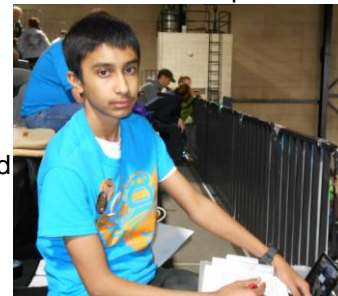
How Do I look?

Yes, the Flying Toasters website had a makeover! A group of students took on the ambitious project this year. Brendan K, Tanner N, Michael K, & Matthew K learned a program called Wix to complete the redesign. Booster President, David Ascher, is overseeing the students work. (As a principal, he was the perfect choice for spell check duty.) According to Brendan, "It was fun to learn and experiment with the Wix Creator." Check it out at www.theflyingtoasters.org



Scouting Goes Digital

Scouting entered the digital age at States. Freshman Shashank R revised the process. He developed a simpler method for data collection that could be more readily tabulated in Excel. The data was sorted and analyzed. Then a Google sharing site allowed the freshman to communicate with alliance captain Ethan N. Shashank crossed off teams electronically as alliance selection progressed and shared with Ethan real time. – Interview with Shashank R.



Dean's List Finalist – Ethan N.

The State of Michigan Dean's List nominees were announced at States. Ethan N received the award. "These past few days at State Championships have been awesome. Ranking second during the qualification matches and becoming a Dean's list finalist feels wonderful. It's nice to know that after all the hard work and commitment demonstrated by this team, we are beginning to receive some recognition. I may have received the Dean's list award, but I have the whole team and our exemplary mentors to thank for such an honor."

– Interview with Ethan N.



Thank You To All Our Sponsors

- “Sponsors, thanks to you we have what we need to achieve all we have and will do at Worlds, nothing would be possible without you.” – Kyle R.
- “I would like to thank all of the sponsors that made it possible for my teammates and I to work and build a piece of machinery that we take pride in.” – Josh C.
- “I am really happy with the fact that I am learning many new things including CAD.” – Alex F.
- “The sponsors are very important because without them I wouldn’t have been able to experience the team winning the Chairman’s Award at Gull Lake.” – Brendan K.
- “Thank you very much for sponsoring the South Lyon Robotics team. We wouldn’t have gotten this far without your sponsorship. I’ve learned so much about technology from robotics.” – Jay S.
- “Thank you sponsors for helping us out throughout the season. I have learned so much about designing a robot and being part of a team.” – Ryan S.
- “Thanks so much to our sponsors for making it possible for the Flying Toasters to become such a successful team in only 5 years.” – Carl G.

The Flying Toasters welcome some of our many sponsors for 2015:

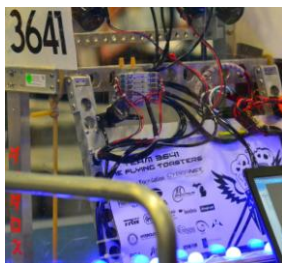
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TEAM 3641 THE FLYING TOASTERS



Sponsors on our 2015 team shirt

Thank you Sponsors for helping inspire students in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Science (STEAM).



For more information on helping to sponsor the team, please contact Coach Ron Weber at weberr@slcs.us

The Flying Toasters welcome some of our many sponsors for 2015:

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Thank you so much, The Flying Toasters