

Robotics prevails at competition

BY JENNIFER TSAU

Last weekend, the nine-member Robotics Club arrived home from Portland not only with pride in their hearts, but also trophies to go with it.

As one of three champions at the For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Pacific Northwest Regional competition, the team (604) went through three days of competition from Thursday through Saturday.

Considering the club members are all rookies, the team did astoundingly well. Club Advisor **Helen Arrington**, Math Dept., said, "The Robotics Team students are my heroes."

With each elimination round requiring at least two games, the team (working with their alliance of two other robots) went through eight rounds – a streak of six wins, one tie and one replay due to malfunctioning errors of the arena – and helped set the second highest score in the nation so far with 92-12 in the second Quarterfinal match. The team's winning Final rounds scores were 49-23 and 89-4.

Although the team performed consistently in its

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Courtesy of Robotics Club

Robotics heading to Nationals

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qualifying rounds, the arena computers randomly selected faulty alliances and ranked the team 27th out of 37 places, according to win-loss record, after the qualifying rounds.

Luckily, Team 492 (The Titan Robotics Club from International School in Washington), the first seed, had its own computer ranking program, which put the Chargers in fourth place. So when time came for the top eight seeds to choose alliances, Team 492 picked them as one of its two selections.

The Robotics Club also came home with the Safety Award, thanks to a well-engineered defense system on the robot and safety suggestions made by Sophomore **Gabriel Arambula**.

One of the team leaders, Sophomore **Amy Qian** said, "There are so many people to thank. If it were not for our mentor, Mr. Mori, Mrs. Arrington, wonderful parents and our sponsors like NASA and Exatron, none of this would have been possible."

The main objective of this year's game was for the club to work with two other teams' robots in strategically stacking large tetrahedrons (pyramid forms made by plastic piping) on goals, which would allow the alliance to score points against another team of three robots.

As one of six finalists in this regional competition, the Robotics Club will be heading off to the National Championship in Atlanta, Georgia, from April 21 to 23 to compete with over 200 teams from 30 different regions.

Freshman **Jennifer Mori** said, "I am really excited about going to Nationals. It is going to be a once in a lifetime experience."