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Edition 18 – Friday 7 December 2018

Trinity BaCoNeers Win a Third Consecutive Inspire Award!

A team of 14 students travelled to Sydney last weekend to compete in what was to be the Australian FIRST Tech Challenge Championships. In reality, it was an international event, dubbed the 'southern hemisphere championships' with teams from New Zealand, Indonesia and Tonga competing. The team members were:

Nathan Axford (Year 12)
Simon Seedhouse (Year 12)
Leo Keane (Year 11)
Tom Johnston (Year 10)
David Yan (Year 10)
Phillip Crosby (Year 9)
Maninder Dhillon (Year 9)

Max Grivell (Year 9)
Deegan Harker (Year 9)
Naomi Lawson (Year 9)
Ying Lieu (Year 9)
Alex Ramsey (Year 9)
Jack Burt (Year 8)
Max Kershaw (Year 8)



It was wonderful to meet the teams we mentor from Indonesia and Tonga in person after exchanging Skype calls and social media conversations for months. Our International Liaison, Ying Lieu, went straight into action, leading the teams to judging, robot inspection and sourcing tools for them. She was tireless and ensured the teams had a great tournament.

With a (very) last minute schedule change to accommodate the 48 teams competing, our own team were assigned an 8.00am judging session and blew the judges out of their seats with a RAP designed to share the huge amount of outreach we do in as short a time as possible. In just 90s they managed to communicate all our events, workshops, mentoring and awards, this left time for our incredible programmers and builders to discuss the robot in depth, something we often fail to do.

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We knew the judges were impressed when we had eight call back sessions in the pits. The team performed beautifully and when the engineering judges chose to grill the team individually, they were awed by the depth of knowledge from every single member of the team.

Our robot, Andy Thomas did very well, finishing seventh at the end of the qualifying round. This was due to the complex, accurate and brilliant autonomous programming by our Year 12s Nathan Axford and Simon Seedhouse. Using a combination of vision control, encoders and control systems they managed to achieve maximum points in all but one match, and that was due to an electrical fault.

Naomi Lawson and Phillip Crosby were our drive team and they, with our Captain, Nathan Axford, quickly had 'Andy' scoring points by moving objects into a depot and hanging from a latch in end game. Alex Ramsey and Max Kershaw, in addition to running the Pit Crew, entertained the crowd with impromptu beatboxing sessions.

We were overjoyed to be chosen to play in the finals as part of the Fourth Alliance and our final score of 22-249, while not enough to win, was a new record for our team.

We were able to relax then and watch the New Zealand team *The Referees* win the robot game and wait for the closing ceremony.

The team waited with baited breath as they were announced as finalists for the Think Award (Engineering Notebook), the Control Award (for programming) and the Connect Award (for best connecting with our community and engineers). When we did not receive any of the awards, they were feeling quite despondent and I was very nervous. And the winner of the Inspire Award is...the Trinity BaCoNeers! The Inspire Award is awarded to the team that:

"This judged award is given to the team that embodied the 'challenge' of the FIRST Tech Challenge program. The team that receives this award is a strong ambassador for FIRST programs and a role model FIRST team. This team is a top contender for many other judged awards and is a gracious competitor. The Inspire Award winner is an inspiration to other teams, acting with Gracious Professionalism® both on and off the playing field. This team shares their experiences, enthusiasm and knowledge with other teams, sponsors, their community, and the Judges. Working as a unit, this team will have showed success in performing the task of designing and building a robot."

Required criteria for the Inspire Award:

- *Team shows respect and Gracious Professionalism® to everyone they meet at a FIRST Tech Challenge event.*
- *Team is a strong contender for several other Judged awards. The Inspire Award celebrates the strongest qualities of all the Judged Awards.*
- *The team is an ambassador for FIRST programs. They demonstrate and document their work in their community.*
- *Team is positive and inclusive, and each team member contributes to the success of the team.*
- *Team must submit an Engineering Notebook. The engineering notebook must include an Engineering section, a team section and a Business or Strategic Plan. The entire engineering notebook must be high quality, thoughtful, thorough, detailed and well organized.*
- *Robot design is creative and innovative, and the robot performs reliably on the field. Team communicates clearly about their robot design and strategy to the judges.*
- *Team presentation is professional and engaging.*

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It was an absolute honour to be associated with this group of students. They exemplify, and seize every opportunity to demonstrate, excellence.

Thank you to our sponsors; Nuago, InteractivIT, Refreshing Memories, the Trinity College Foundation, Salisbury Council, Playford Council, Barossa Council, Lego Australia and Modern Teaching Aids. Thank you also to Michael Holmes, Robert Smedley, Stephen Rosier and Nick Hately, the parents and the staff of Trinity College for their endless support of our teams. Special thanks to Lisa Southwell, our team manager. We wish her well as she moves to a new position at St Peters, she will be missed.



SUE O'MALLEY

Head of Robotics & Multimedia

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