

Robotics competes at CalGames

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Opinions Editor

The school's robotics team, also known as FIRST (For the Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Team Quixilver 604, successfully competed at the CalGames competition on Oct. 12-13 at Woodside High School in Palo Alto.

The team participates in a competition called FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC), a worldwide robotics competition that pits teams of three robots apiece against each other in a sports-inspired challenge. The CalGames tournament is typically used as a learning experience to prepare for the upcoming season.

"CalGames provides an excellent time for new team members to experience the combination of learning and excitement of robotics," Junior **Jeremy Lee** said.

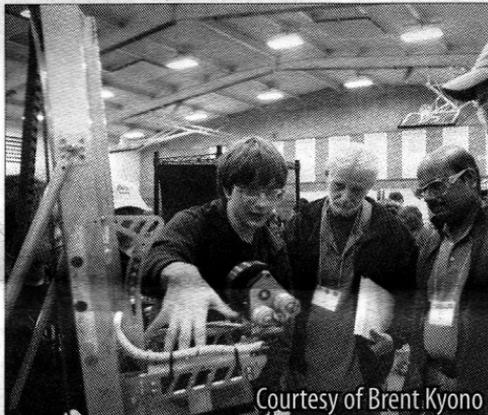
This year's challenge, called Rebound Rumble, was loosely based on the popular game of basketball.

The field was set up with four baskets on either side: one on top, two in the middle and one on the bottom. The top baskets were worth three points, the middle two points and the bottom hoop one point.

The first 15 seconds are played autonomously as a prewritten program performs the robot's actions on the field. Baskets scored during this time are worth three more points than their value during the tele-operated period, when human players are in control of the robot. During the last 30 seconds, robots can balance on a bridge.

Prior to the competition, optimism was running high.

"I thought we had a good chance going into CalGames, since we had been working hard as a team over the last couple of months," Senior **Colin Aitken** said.



Courtesy of Brent Kyono

Chargers demonstrate and present their robotic creation to the judges.

At CalGames, Team 604 was able to reach their semifinal, allied with the two robotics teams from Vanden High School and Pleasant Grove High School, before falling to the eventual first-place champions from Bellarmine College Prep, Mountain View High School and Menlo-Atherton High School.

They furthered their success by bringing home the Entrepreneurship Award for excellence in the business and management aspects of the team, as well as the AMD Computer Aided Design (CAD) Award for excellence in the usage of CAD in the design of their robot. In all, the competition was a huge success for the team.

"I believe that after our major changes to [our robot] over the summer, our robot performed better than I imagined," Junior **Anthony Li** said.

In addition to their high school competitions, FIRST promotes Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education at a younger level.

On Nov. 11, Quixilver will be hosting a tournament for FIRST Lego League (FLL), a competition intended to inspire students in elementary or middle school to pursue STEM fields of education.