

Students shine in robotics meet

Engineers' teams best finish is 7th at Indian Creek

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An overnight robotics competition that pitted high school students against professional engineers ended with the students winning the top six spots.

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About 130 students from schools from around the state flocked to Indian Creek High School earlier this month for the weekend event, said Indian Creek technology teacher Travis East.

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Lock Tight Night gave the students a 12-hour head start on the professionals: School teams got to work at 8 p.m. Dec. 10, while teams from Cummins, Overton Carbide, Rolls-Royce and Visual Edge didn't get started until 8 a.m. the next day.



Unlike other robotics events, teams at Indian Creek had to start from scratch when they arrived. Robots were not assembled in advance.

"There aren't many competitions where you say 'Here's the rules, here's the stuff, go compete against professional engineers,'" East said.

The game was designed to resemble cornhole, with teams using robots to score in the beanbag competition. But, as teams found out, that is easier said than done.

"We purposefully built into the contest alternative parts," East said, explaining that after six hours, staff members distributed rubber bands.

"At first they were like 'Rubber bands, what are we going to do with rubber bands?' Then within a few minutes they were like 'Rubber bands!'" East said, noting that many teams used them to boost the power of their motors.

In the end, Greenfield-Central High School took first place with its alliance partner Columbus North. Jay County and Columbus East finished second.

The top-finishing company team was Cummins, which came in seventh