

Camdenton's rookie robotics team wins big

by [Mallory McGowin](#)

Posted: 03.30.2010 at 5:08 PM

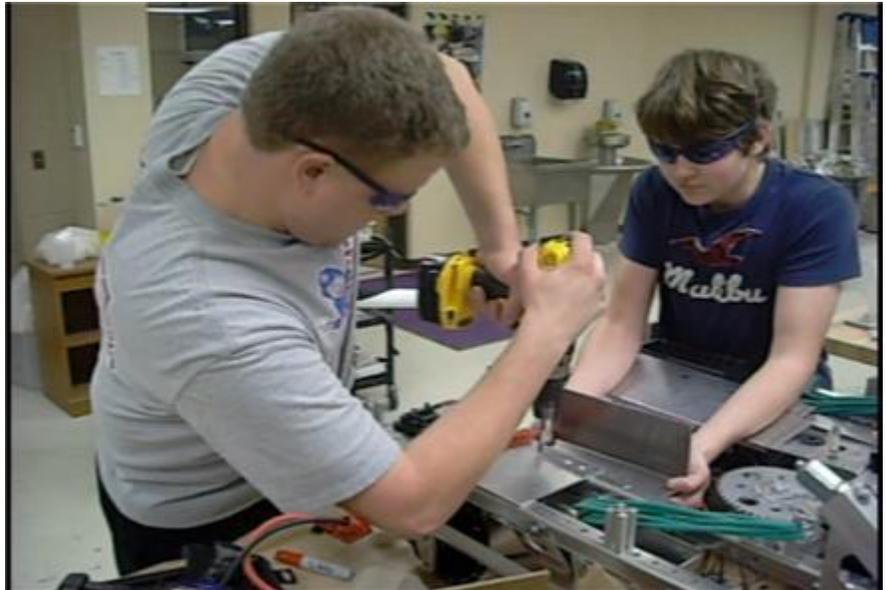




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CAMDENTON, MO, --

The LASER Robotics Team at Camdenton High School made some last minute adjustments to their robot Jenny's undercarriage before sending her into the soccer field.

In the team's rookie year, a group of 20 plus students took home the top prize at the "Superbowl of Smarts" robotics competition in St. Louis, beating out over 30 other veteran teams Tuesday.

"As a driver especially, when you're one of the people out there right be up in the competition, its really exciting," LASER team member Luke Abbott said.

The task for this year's competition: build a robot that can play soccer. You and two alliance team members face off against another group of three. The group that scores the most goals wins.

The robotics competition aims to make science and engineering fun for students.

"I'm in really heavy physics and math classes and this is actually given me an opportunity to take what I've learned in the classrooms and apply it to a real-life situation," LASER team member Sean Brady said.

But its also hard work. Students put in about 2,500 hours of work in the allotted six-week time frame.

"I tell you what, this has been one of those life changing moments," LASER team teacher Mitch Comer said. "The students coming in and putting in so many hours and working and

coming together as a team."

The team received over \$10,000 in grants from the 4H Club and the JCPenney Afterschool Program to fund their efforts. The grants the team received cover only a portion of the expensive competition. The group needs to raise another \$5,000 before the national tournament, held April 15-17 in Atlanta.

The team will hold a fundraiser at Culvers restaurant in Osage Beach Wednesday evening from 4 to 9 p.m. and again Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Speedline Technologies and Lake Professional Engineering, both in Camdenton, also mentor the team and have put in over 1,000 hours of their own helping these students.

You can also contact the team through Sherry Comer, Camdenton Afterschool Services Director, at 573-346-9233.