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Robots Roll Into Missouri State Fair

SEDALIA - Camdenton High School students involved in Laser, an after school robotics program, participated in a Missouri State Fair Show-Me Robots Competition.

Monday, the song Mr. Roboto echoed through Assembly Hall at the Missouri State Fair. Robots were everywhere. Children had a chance to try their hand at making mini Lego robots at one table while other robots sumo wrestled and played soccer.

Laser is the only high school robotics team in Mid-Missouri. Almost half of this year's team's funding comes from NASA.

"There's a current decline and shortage of engineers coming out of our college systems here in the United States," Mitch Comer, the team's coach, said. "So we want to get some excitement, get these high school students interested in the engineering, math and science and get them to go on and finish their degrees in college."

Connor Brady, who will be a sophomore at Camdenton this year, worked with his teammates Thursday to find a solution to a problem the team was having with a robot.

"I'm really a 'go in the corner and work on it by myself' type of person but working on a team with other kids and whatnot it really got me brushed up on my teamwork skills," Brady said.

Besides the teamwork Brady also says he learns basic engineering skills, from those who come to help with the robots on occasions, but also from assembly.

"Putting it together, it's not easy you don't have instructions you don't have a guide you got to do it all yourself," said Brady.

Team Laser assembled its robot in less than six weeks but call themselves a rookie team. Thursday the team was not overly concerned with winning ribbons, the focus was on the fun.

