



Ready to rumble.

It was a relief, though.

I had worked so much the last two days, so it was nice to just sit back and watch two other people tear each other apart, simply because they

wanted to.

All in all, I enjoyed my first event. From the awesome people to the robots, everyone was kind and helpful. I got to meet some amazing

people and even see my 8th grade teacher that helped me start the robot in class. You can't get that kind of experience anywhere else that's for sure.

People see the shows on television and think that it's almost like kill or be killed, but it's not. The community was super welcoming, and I didn't feel excluded as a first-timer like you do in almost every other sport. We all helped each other repair, build, and have fun. Even after someone totally destroyed you, they came over and helped repair for the next match.

You will never see a positive community like this anywhere else, that's for sure. I look forward to my next event. **SV**

EVENT REPORT: I Survived!

● by Paul Grata

You may not recall my last article chronicling my initial adventure into the frozen reaches of the great Canadian plain — otherwise known as SCRC Kilobots' 2017 Canadian National Championship. This time around, I was asked (for some strange reason) to chronicle my spectacular success and equally

spectacular failure. Since this is supposedly some kind of event report, I guess I can throw a line or two in about the rest of the competition as well.

Let me start by stating I've never written an event report before. That said, the first thing I want to point out is that I was actually segregated for

additional screening by Canadian customs. Fortunately for me, I managed to persuade the Royal Canadian Mounties perched on their mighty moose that I was not here to steal the snow back to Florida. They waived me through, albeit with continued suspicion.

In the name of thoroughness, I'd



Most of the competitors.

COMBAT ZONE

like to proudly announce that FingerTech guru, Kurtis Wanner spent most of the night before the event building robots with way more of us than there should have been. Waking up a couple hours later to the gloom of a brisk overcast sky was not fun.

The Canadian National Championships are held every year at the Saskatoon Comic Expo. This is awesome for a variety of reasons; the venue, people, and vendors all contribute to the fun. This year, we were stationed right next to the food and one of the merchandise stands, allowing for lots of audience room and a steady stream of viewers.

The Con attendees do their thing — dressing up and generally being very enthusiastic to see us do our thing. If you're lucky enough to not work on your robot the entire time, you have a sizeable amount of vendor space to wander through.

Naturally (I consider it to be the custom at this point), the event started a bit late. Not by much, but not on time, and we had a LOT of fights to get through. There are also a LOT of prizes, so we always need to jump right into the fights to be able to hand out all the goodies before they turn the lights off roughly 36 hours from the start.

The brackets are all on a screen above the arena for all the competitors to see; and boy, are the brackets stacked. There are 65 robots through four different divisions: Rookies, Fleas, Ants, and Beetles, competing roughly in that order until everything is destroyed, revived for the



Did I mention the prizes for this event were AWESOME?! The poster and puzzle were bonus gifts from the Con and Canadian Adventures afterwards.

rumble, and destroyed again.

Rookies are first up, being thrown to the wolves (I mean crowd) to get their robot blood lust up. The Rookie class that Kilobots has is meant specifically for new drivers and consists of one pound robots. Personally, I think it's cool that the rookies can fight in a structured event (double elimination) without worrying about being completely blown to pieces in their first fight. They don't get to fight for any prizes, but they win by being there and being awesome. (They still receive a small award though!)

Somewhat surprisingly, there are a lot of rookies to watch, with the youngest driver being the six year old daughter of one competitor (driver of

Cookie, definitely one of the better decorated robots), and the oldest driver being the father of another competitor. Watching the newbie drivers have fun is always worth it.

The 150g robots are second on the docket. Fleas (Here, they are called Fairys. Also known as Skeeters, and if you're European, you'd call them Antweights!) are new to this competition and to many of the competitors as well. This makes this class fun since many of the experienced

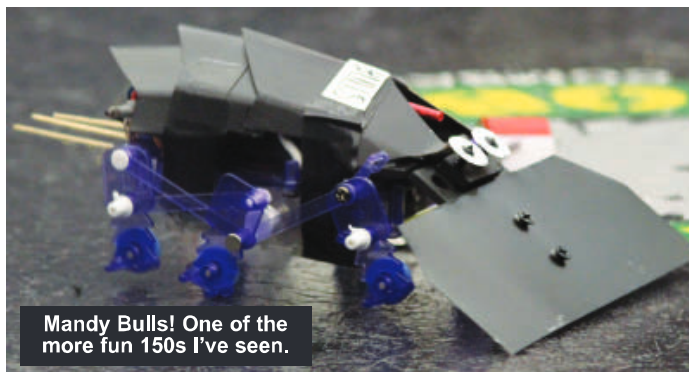
builders took it on as a new challenge and were forced to adjust to the dramatically smaller scale.

Some of the designs are fun, some insane, and a few were just downright sneaky (looking at you, Derpy Dozer and your hidden magnet!). I think both the audience and the builders were pleasantly surprised at this new weight class, though that might just be because it was in grams and not some archaic weight system (aren't pounds currency after all?).

The Ants and Beetles round out the event and provide more spectacular fights with a ton of damage and "Woah!" moments throughout. We manage to attract a nice crowd and even get a few short

breaks in between rounds, including a lunch break (gasp!), though I think that's more to keep us from fainting.

I'd like to take a moment to sincerely thank the event staff for all their hard work to keep us all well informed and fed; the mini-fridge and snacks were really appreciated and the event ran really well from



Mandy Bulls! One of the more fun 150s I've seen.



So. Many. Antweights.

all angles.

Enough of the fluff! I know everyone wants the low-down on who beat who and how many ceiling shots there were.

I've said it before and still stand by this view: The 3 lb robots up here are nasty! Dr. Horrible (another American from sunny Florida) is typically a nasty bot, but it was handily beaten. It would've survived the competition relatively unscathed had it not been for the utter chaos and carnage that was the Beetle rumble. (Seriously, go check out the video. It's GREAT!) Scary Thing is plain scary and got blown up at least once only to return. InsaniTi was another great bot and Super Shooter McGavin has to get a shout-out if only because of its name.

Over in the Ant division, we had Tiger Shark (which kept eating itself but still managed to beat my Bing Bang up fairly well) and Blue Steel (which awed me both for its ability not to blow up and its overall cool factor). AbsurdiTi is naturally absurd (in a good way) and had a

streak of bad luck while \sqrt{v} wedge 1 (velocity wedge?) is a very well driven super-fast wedge.

Personally, I think the 150g bots put on a great show. They are tiny, but I hear a lot more chants for robots in this bracket than I do for any of the others. As I mentioned previously, Derpy Dozer milks the magnet rule and performs extremely well, taking advantage of other robots

almost at will. Mandy Bulls gets a mention for looks and robustness (a shuffler, in the 150g division!), while Nibbles becomes an instant classic for literally launching other Fleas into the ceiling. (Yes! Into the ceiling!) Oh, and then there's (my) Pissed Off Unicorn, which provided inverted entertainment to go along with a little destruction too.

The Rookies put forth a couple rather hard-hitting bots in Chopper (who had some problems staying together but made it through till the end) and DERP bot. Then, you've got Rainbow Barf (gotta love that name), the aforementioned Cookie (decorated with cookies), and Mini Turtle (which was definitely NOT a real turtle). While

many of the fights turn into driving exposés, there were a few solid hits mixed in. I don't think anyone takes too much damage that isn't self-inflicted, so everyone that wants to joins the other maniacs in the Ant rumble at the end.

After two full days of fights, one fun (and exceedingly creative, possibly inebriated) dinner, and countless questions about why we subject

ourselves to this insanity on a regular basis, we ended up with the final results.

The Rookie class win is celebrated by DERP bot, who managed to go through the entire competition undefeated. Chopper steps into second place, while Lift (minus the lift part) limps into third after being handled by DERP bot earlier in the round. While no prizes were given out, the rookies do go home with their pride and cool little medals. Hopefully, we'll see y'all again next year (in the regular bracket too)!

Taking the new 150g class (and managing to salvage a shred of dignity after my two Ants both went 0-2), Pissed Off Unicorn



Unicorn was fatally wounded but managed to limp through the finals with the use of some help.