

Rookie Conference Call #1

Tuesday, December 20, 2011, 6pm

Hosted by Teams: 27 (Kyle Hughes) and 2337 (Brandi and Clinton Bolinger)

Rookie Teams In Attendance:

Kevin Veltman	4002	South East Campus
David Austin	4003	Allendale High School
Mike Gerstweiler	4004	North Muskegon
Kristine Grunwald	4294	Early College at LCC
Dale Thomason	4377	Boyne City HS
Lee Ann	4391	Gladstone
Brian Ziegler	4408	Pennifield High School

Conference Call Notes:

As a team, you NEED to know ...

Your Team Number

- Designated by FIRST – will be a 4 digit number > 4000
- Use on all emails to FIRST or FIRST in Michigan (FiM)

Your Team Name

- Decided by you – have the students brainstorm a Team Name to represent your team!
- Ex: your High School, or something that you come up with – ex: EngiNERDs, R.U.S.H.,
- Look at the team listings through FIRST to get more examples

Your Sponsors

- Make sure you get logos from your sponsors when they sponsor you (high quality for printing)
- **These logos should be displayed on all of your shirts and banners**
- Deadline to submit sponsors for the program was in early December. However, you should still update your sponsor listing now through TIMS <https://my.usfirst.org/frc/tims/site.lasso> This way, when they announce you at competitions, the sponsors will still get.
- Remember to invite your sponsors to ALL special events you are participating in – this is a great way to build your relationships!

Meeting location and schedule

Meeting Location - Building Access

- Make sure you have access to the building on evenings and weekends, too
- Where are you building?
 - School
 - **Know what your school hours are**
 - **Get keys or access codes as needed**
 - **Ask for extended liability insurance if you will be there after hours**
 - Company
 - A garage is fine

Have a snow day plan!

- Know your school's policy on holding meetings when school is cancelled
- Have a phone tree or e-mail list serve to notify people if a meeting is cancelled

Schedules

- You need to find a schedule that fits your team's needs
- There is no "Right" answer – every team does something different!
- Possibilities
 - After school every day – weekends off
 - 1-2 days during the week, with Friday and Saturday
 - Examples of calendars (reminder – these are veteran teams – don't panic):
 - Team EngiNERDs Calendar: <http://calendar.team2337.com>
 - Team RUSH Calendar: www.teamrush27.net/calendar.html

School task list:

HINT: Sit down with a school administrator to discuss the following items. Identify **WHO** the school contact person will be for your team to help guide you with the following questions.

Purchasing – Usually you will be purchasing after hours or on weekends – Questions to ask:

- *Could you get a school purchasing card?*
- *What is the reimbursement policy?*
- *Can you get open PO's?*
- *Personal Credit card, if your district won't give you a credit card – what would the policy be?*

Shipping – *Where are the packages you ordered going to be delivered?*

- **School office** – Make sure you have open communication with the staff – often packages get delivered and then lost in the building.
- **Off-site facility** – will they accept packages for you during the day and on weekends?
- **Keep in mind (and check into):**
 - When the buildings are closed, the packages may go back. Have a plan.
 - When shipped to a business, it is almost ½ the cost of shipping.
 - Shipping companies may refuse shipping to a place other than the billing address.

Mentor background check

- May be required by your school (check school policy on "mentors", "coaches", etc) to determine what level of background check is needed. It is a state law.
- There is a cost – it may be covered by school – check into it

School permission process

- Find out what the field trip policies are
 - **Daytime field trips** – if building is offsite, *do you need a blanket permission slip?*
 - **Overnight field trips** – if you stay somewhere overnight for competitions – *Do you need School Board approval for overnight?*
 - **Weekend field trips** – again, offsite or competitions – *do you need a permission slip?*
 - **Parent permission slips for travel** – the parent signed permission slip – giving permission for the trip – *can it be a blanket permission slip from January to April?*
 - **Transportation for private vehicle** permission slip – *For parents to drive students to competitions – can you do this? Can parents drive legally?*
- *Can school buses be provided?*
- *Medical emergency form – will this be needed to travel?*
- Examples of all of these documents can be found on the Team RUSH website - <http://teamrush27.net/resources/parents.html> as required by the Clarkston District

Safety glasses (NOT chemical goggles) – EVERYONE needs them!

- Does your school PROVIDE Safety Glasses? ASK!
- If district won't provide, ask for donations from local companies/purchase from Lowes, etc.
- Label every pair with students' names and team number (possibly give them a lanyard)!
- Create a place to store safety glasses at your meeting location
- Be prepared – you will **need** them for competitions – have students take care of them!
- Start wearing your safety glasses NOW! It's a great habit to get into.

Kickoff – Explanation

Release Forms (needed to attend Kickoff) Please use the online version and then bring a roster

- Fill out FIRST Consent Release forms
 - STUDENTS: Go to <https://my.usfirst.org/stims/site.lasso>
 - MENTORS: Go to <https://my.usfirst.org/frc/tims/site.lasso>
- There is a tutorial video on <http://teamrush27.net> to help your team get started!

Kickoff

- The kickoff is the event where the game is presented to the teams and where you pick up your kit. Depending on the event (which kickoff you attend), there may also be training opportunities as well. This is a GREAT opportunity to network with other teams!
- **Kickoff Video: 10:30am EST**
- **Who:** All are invited – you can bring students, parents, mentors to the kickoff to get them involved!
- **FIRST “KIT”** – You MUST send at least **2 people** to the kick-off to get your kit
 - You will be given your “kit” – a couple of plastic totes with lots of “stuff” to build a robot
 - Bring a dolly, sometimes the totes are heavy!
- **How can you use the Kickoff to the best advantage?**
 - Download the team manual from usfirst.org before the kickoff – this way, when they release the encryption code, you already have it downloaded on your computer!
 - Reserve a classroom at your kickoff location for a team meeting to:
 - Talk about the game
 - Talk about strategy
 - Consider attending “training sessions” that may be hosted the day of kickoff – depending on kickoff site
- **If ENTIRE Team cannot attend kickoff:**
 - **Remember to send at least 2 people to get your kit – very important**
 - Have a viewing “back-up” plan
 - Check with the school – *can you get in and watch on a Saturday? Do you have internet access to view? Or, can you watch the NASA Channel?*
 - *Is there a restaurant that would tap into the internet or NASA Channel?*
- **On Sunday** – Attend 2337 workshop on how Strategy Dictates Design – Sunday
<http://www.team2337.com/strategy-workshop.html>

Team Communication

Do what works for your team specifically! The more you communicate, the more you can minimize frustrations with students, parents, mentors and sponsors! Find a method that works for your team and USE IT!

- Google Groups
- Team Website
- Phone Tree
- Twitter
- Facebook
- A message board at school – in a teacher’s classroom that the kids can check

Mentors and support people –

What is a MENTOR?

- Any post-high school person who helps out with the team,
- Similar to a Coach
- Usually possess technical or educational skills/training (but they don’t have to!)

Who can be a MENTOR?

- Engineers
- Teachers
- Parents
- Anyone with knowledge or skills to help the team
- Be sure to check into the district's policy for background checks if needed

Who can be a HELPER – SUPPORT PERSON?

- Parents
- Neighbors
- Anyone who can help with the management of the team

Where do you go to find these mentors/helpers/people?

- Ask your student body if their parents have any skills to help
- Put an ad in the local newspaper asking for help
- It's not what you know, it is who you know! Start asking!

Team RUSH Toolkit and Team27/2337 Website coming!

RUSH Toolkit: Please go to www.teamrush27.net/requesttoolkit.html to download your own FREE copy of the Team RUSH guide to operating a FIRST Team. The Toolkit has 10 chapters which will be a great help to you throughout the season! We will reference it during the calls.

Team 27 and 2337 will be co-hosting a website for rookies as well. Look for that site location to be coming to you soon! ☺ This will be a deposit of all our notes and any resources that we think will benefit YOU! Coming soon!!

Team Resources (Click items to be directed to site)

FIRST Resources

- FIRST in Michigan – www.firstinmichigan.com
- FIRST Manual <http://usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/competition-manual-and-related-documents>
- FIRST Team Updates – <http://usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/team-updates>
- FIRST Safety Manual and Information <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/safety-video-and-manual>
- FIRST's calendar of Important Dates <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/frc-season-calendar>

Forums

- Chief Delphi Forums - <http://www.chiefdelphi.com/>

Suppliers

- AndyMark - <http://www.andymark.com/>
- McMaster Carr - <http://www.mcmaster.com/>

FIRST in Michigan Consent and Release forms (same as listed above)

- STUDENTS: Go to <https://my.usfirst.org/stims/site.lasso>
- MENTORS: Go to <https://my.usfirst.org/frc/tims/site.lasso>

Autodesk – download free software! - <http://firstbase.autodesk.com>

Old Game Animations (2003-2011):

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLF7A1B9B8A2E125D7>

History of FIRST Robotic Competition (1992-2011):

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUHsAkY_3ow

A Rookie asked, “When recruiting mentors, what are the top 3 things you would tell them?”

Our responses

- Clinton: Go to kickoff! There is no better way than to get the group excited than to share and learn at the kickoff!
- Brandi: Commitment - communicate what they can do and what they cannot do, and how often they're available to do it. It is very important to know what they can commit to and what they can do!
- Kyle: Provide a safe environment that is conducive to learning, failing and growing.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, January 3, 2012

6:00 pm

Call in number changed (so we can audio-record the meeting)

Conference FREE Dial-in Number: (218) 632-0550

Participant Access Code: 903553# (don't forget the # at the end)

Next meeting questions:

Agenda will be posted soon

Kevin, Team 4002 asked, “Can you cover sponsorship/grants and how to handle them”

These calls will be recorded – so we can host for those who cannot attend!