

New Sponsor:RD Manufacturing

Recently, Team 2168 was invited to RD Manufacturing to meet the owners and take a tour of their shop for a potential sponsorship. We were greeted with a warm welcome and then introduced to the different machinery around the shop. The first of these was a large laser cutter, bright with the green light that was used to cut thin pieces of metal. We were told that this laser was able to precisely cut thin pieces of metal in a timely manner. Moving on, we were introduced to a punch machine, something very impressive to our team who only uses a small hand tool in order to do the same job. The striking sound of the punch overpowered Lou's voice, but other than that it was an incredible machine. Next, we were shown a metal break. While a pretty basic machine, it is incredibly important for quickly folding parts. Finally we saw probably one of the coolest place there: the powder coating room. This is something the team has looked into so it was cool to see how it actually works. Powder coating does not need to dry, and we were actually able to touch it before the powder set. It cleans quickly, looks incredible, and it's actually safer than normal paint. At the end of the tour, the students were able to present to the owners and show how strong of a team we are. They were really interested in our robot, and we actually had the opportunity to teach them how to drive the robot. They were clearly impressed and found out the next day RD Manufacturing would become an official sponsor. They are donating their service and have been placed on the list of "Aluminum" sponsors. This tour was an amazing opportunity for us as students to personally get to know a sponsor, and we hope to tour other sponsors and potential sponsors in the future.



Upcoming Events

End of Build Season: 2/21/2017

Bryant University Competition: 3/17/2017

Bridge Water Competition: 3/31/2017



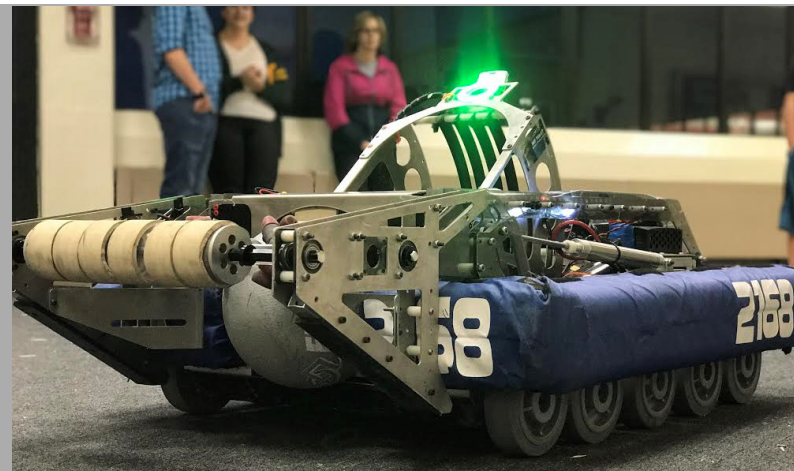
2017 Game Revealed!



January seventh 2017, the Fitch High School Aluminum Falcons robotics team held kickoff at a local student's house. Quickly, the game was presented and everyone felt up to the challenge. This year's game is a steampunk theme where each team/ alliance needs to fill a steam tank in order to "take off" in their airship. Each robot collects balls (fuel) to put in their alliances' boiler. The robots can score in a high goal and a low goal. Scoring is different in autonomous, a time where the robots run on their own, and in teleop, the student drivers step up to take control of their robot.

During autonomous each ball in the high goal is one point and every three balls is one point in the low goal. Scoring in teleop is harder, where three balls are one point in the high goal and every nine balls is one point in the low goal. Robots also collect gears to power four rotors on top of the airship. Each robot can bring a gear to the base of the airship and place it on a pole where a human player, on the airship, pulls it up and places it on a peg to create a gear train to spin the rotor. Each rotor earns you 60 points in autonomous and 40 points in teleop but are progressively harder and harder to complete. If all four rotors are spinning at the end of the game an extra 100 points are awarded.

Each airship also has three ropes that can be deployed with thirty seconds left in the game. Robots can climb these ropes and press a pressure plate in order to win a bonus fifty points each. When time runs out, the airship is ready for liftoff and the higher scoring alliance is deemed the winners!



New Student Testimonials



My name is Nick Perry, I am a sophomore at Fitch High School, and this is my first year of robotics. I wanted to join the team to be a programmer, but I am actually doing much more than that; I am also a member of the marketing team, and I am having a lot of fun during fundraisers and team events. Not only am I having fun, but I am learning about the importance of teamwork, organization, and determination (not to mention the technical skills and Java coding). What I am learning will be so valuable in pursuing my education and career.

Before I entered the team, it's not surprising that I did not know what to expect. It turned out to be a very well organized, well oiled machine, that had every different aspect I could think of. Knowing that I would be a part of such a professional team was very exciting to me. I am also very glad that the team has fun as one of the top priorities, with many activities, events, and competitions ahead his year. I love the feeling of learning things throughout the pre-season, and knowing that I will use them to make our robot and our team better. I can't wait to see the robot that we have been thinking about and planning for so long finally come together. The programming classes that I am taking with Kevin contain information that will make the robot tick, and that is a cool feeling. It may sound boring to others, just typing on a keyboard for hours on end, but without us, there would be no robot. That alone is enough to drive me to keep coding. Making a difference in a team is awesome, and that is especially prevalent in this one. I look forward to spending more time on the team, because I am having lots of fun, and learning new things about many subjects.

I spoke with Colin Kennedy, another first year member on the team, and got a first impression of his experience so far. He said that he did not really know what to expect from the team before he joined, if anything he thought it would be just building robots for fun, which, is really what we do in a nutshell. He was pleasantly surprised when he discovered that the team is so much more. He told me that his favorite part of being a member of the team is that he just enjoys driving the robot, which is why he is on drive team. Just like programming, without the drive guys, there would be no team. He also said that he wanted to drive in a competition, and he is striving to get better in order to do so. Lastly, I asked him what drives him to stay dedicated to the team, and he told me that it was just coming to practice, and being part of a team, similar to me. In all, I love being a part of Team 2168, and I do not take what I am learning for granted, and I will never forget what I am learning.

Pancake Breakfast



The Aluminum Falcons held their annual Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser on Dec 3. The event is the single largest fundraiser held by the team and it is an all-in event supported by all team members and families. The event was very successful in both community outreach and financially.

Setting the mood, Christmas music could be heard, with the team raffling off various holiday themed baskets, and a remote-control drone with a video camera. The hard-working kitchen volunteers provided a breakfast consisting of plain, berry or chocolate chip pancakes, sausages, and eggs, with either syrup or Nutella as a topping, and various drinks.

The team had their robots, from the last four years, on display, with a demonstration of this year's robot, Jimmy Talon. People could learn about the competition, team's history, its development over the years, and the team's place in the community. The drive team was demonstrating the Stronghold robot, offering to teach other how to operate it. In addition to the competition robot, the team was showing their new chassis design, the new base for future robots.

