

# High schoolers show a gift for gadgetry

*Governor Simcoe robotics team combines with students from two other schools to win event*

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Standard Staff

**A** St. Catharines high school helped its team to robotics competition glory by teaching its five-foot mechanized creature to bend it like Beckham.

Using the skills of famed British soccer player David Beckham as a model and namesake for their robot, students from Governor Simcoe Secondary School's award-winning Simbotics club led their team to capture first in the Great Lakes regional For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) robotics competition in Ypsilanti, Mich., last weekend.

The goal of this competition was to win a game, a complex cross between soccer, football, hockey and basketball.

In the finals, two teams of three robots take to a carpeted field and try to score goals with rubber balls.

The robots are created and controlled by high school students — comprising three teams that come together with a common goal.

In the case of the winning team, Governor Simcoe joined Westlane Secondary School in Niagara Falls and Huron Valley

schools from Milford, Mich.

"It's very high energy," said the team's co-captain Jeff Beckett, 19, a Governor Simcoe Secondary School student.

"By the end of the weekend, it's draining."

In preparation for the four-day competition, robotics team members spent six weeks building and practising controlling their new creation.

Their weeks of hard work came down to one final game that lasted two minutes and 10 seconds.

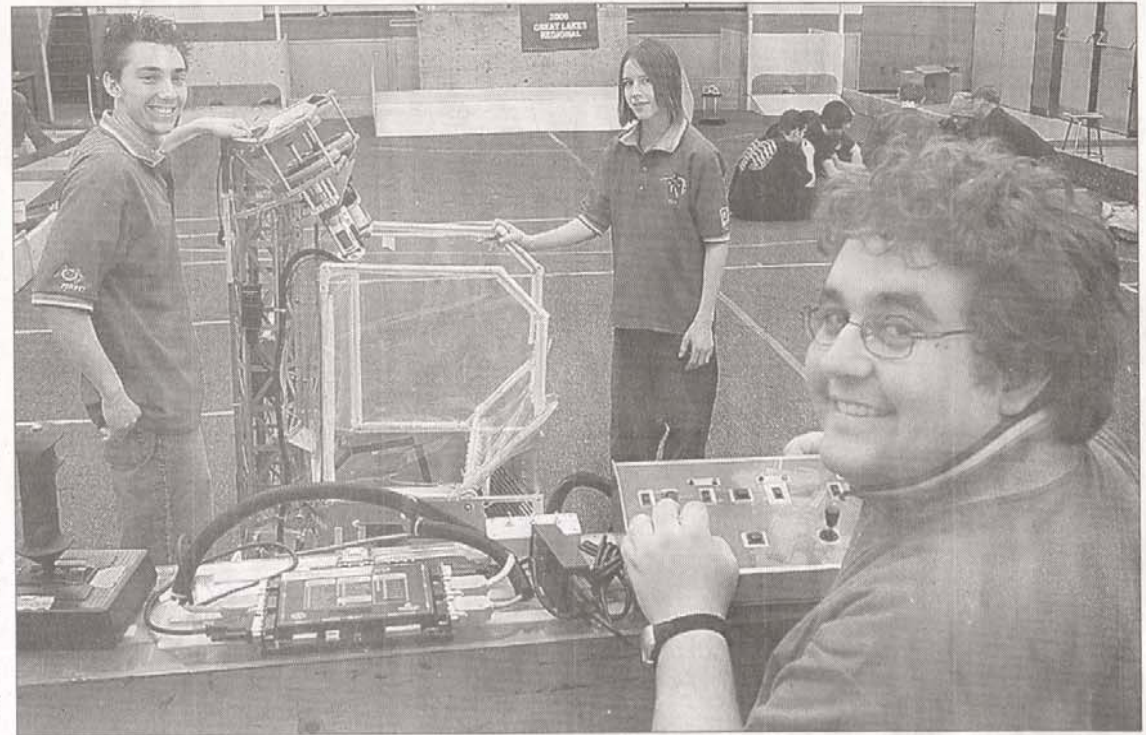
Governor Simcoe technical design teacher and team leader, Greg Phillips, said the 19-member team performed well.

"They had a great design and a great team," said Phillips.

The local schools will go on to test out their creations late next month at the FIRST world competition in Atlanta, Ga.

Last year, teams from Governor Simcoe, Westlane and Fort Erie Secondary School made it to the quarter finals of that competition.

General Motors St. Catharines Powertrain sponsors the local robotics teams.



**Captain Jeff Beckett and fellow members of the Governor Simcoe robotics team Peter Diakow, left, and Brandon Pruniak were on the combined team that recently won the Great Lakes regional FIRST robotics competition.**

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