

Trumbull Team Earns Top Spot in Yale Physics Olympics Event

The Trumbull High School team won first place in the Matter of Some Gravity Event at the Yale Physics Olympics on Saturday (October 24). This event involved estimating the approach time of astronauts accelerating towards each other due to their own gravitational attraction. The team members -- Robin Lo, Michael Madden, Joanna Suriani, and Lauren Walkup -- made several time-stepped, iterative calculations leading to their approach time estimate, which was the most accurate of all the competing teams.

This year's field of fifty teams came to New Haven from New York, Rhode Island, and Connecticut to test their creative problem-solving abilities in a series of events developed by the Yale University Physics Department. The other events included toothpick structure endurance, electrical resistance optimization, spray pattern probability analysis, fluid flow rate prediction, and an order of magnitude quiz. The accompanying photos show the team participating in two of the event's challenges. The team's advisor is Hans Drenkard.



The Trumbull Yale Physics Olympics team prepares their toothpick structure for destructive testing in the Yale physics lab. (l to r) Michael Madden, Joanna Suriani, Robin Lo, and Lauren Walkup.



The Trumbull team crunches the numbers to estimate gravitational approach times, their winning event at the Yale Physics Olympics.

