

“More Than A Game”

VEX Robotics Essay Challenge Submission

ACME Robotics: Team 12

Another late night in the robotics lab and the robot still won't move. “Did you cycle the power?” shouts a teammate from across the room. I respond with a “yes” then release a long sigh as I focus my attention back to my robot sitting on the practice field. As odd as it may sound, this moment perfectly describes my love for VEX Robotics.

Let me clarify, watching the clock tick down before a major tournament the next morning is not my idea of a “good time”, but problem solving has always been a passion of mine. Working with the VRC platform, I am constantly presented with new challenges in my attempts to perfect each year's design.

“Could it be an error in the code”, asks the same teammate as he meticulously searches for charged batteries. Racing the clock, I turn to the VEX Forum to check other if any other Vex Robotics enthusiasts from around the world share my dilemma. Another half-hour passes, and finally it hits me! We had forgotten to double-check our cortex ports. Going through each motor port, I realized that I had plugged them in erroneously. Finally, satisfied with the day's achievements, I packed the robot away and left for the night.

Before I knew it, I heard, “here are our tournament champions!” I could not hold back my smile as the applause rose, and my team and I walked down the line of judges, shaking each hand that was outstretched in embrace. So many countless hours of problem solving had finally paid off, each one completely worth it. The overwhelming satisfaction hit me instantly, and I knew that I had found a program that would always be an important part of my life.