

WE

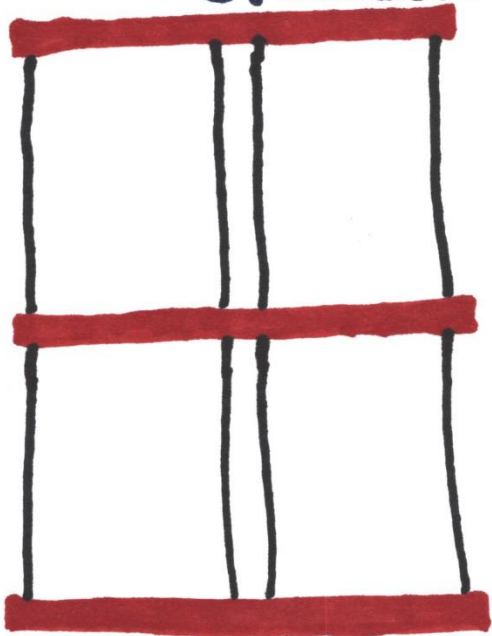
Will

RISE

UP

By: Adya Datta
and
Sonya Chamberlain

TEAM-
94568G



VEXOTICS-
CURIOSITY

PART 1- A SUDDEN CLOSURE

Five seconds left.

I was laser-focused on the robot, my eyes darting towards the ball intake. Was it jammed?

Four.

One ball was in- but that wasn't nearly enough to get us a good average in states.

Three.

However many balls I had was going to have to be enough- time was running out.

Two.

I was positioned perfectly, just waiting for the balls to pop out of the conveyor and on to the cube. What was taking so long?

One.

The balls finally rolled out of the robot- but just a second too late- I had already pulled away from the cube and could only watch as the bright orange balls were strewn across the field.

Buzz.

I sighed. "You can do this Adya," I muttered to myself. "All you have to do is concentrate."

I pulled the robot from the field as I dragged the empty cubes back into place. I had gotten lucky once on states being postponed, but there was no way that was happening again. There was no way I could get more practice time than I already had. I had to be ready.

"Adya, come down," my dad called. "The email from states has been sent out. You should read it and see if there is anything you're missing."

I raced down the stairs and grabbed the phone from the couch. Tapping on the email, I started to skim, prepared for the overload of information that I would be greeted with. Instead, I only found a single sentence.

'Due to COVID- 19, the 2020 state championships in San Carlos, California, have been cancelled.'

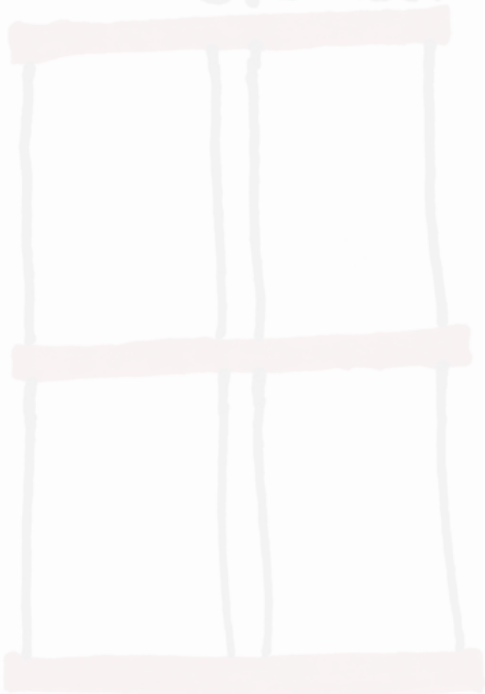
The word rang in my ears. *Cancelled. Cancelled. Cancelled. Cancelled.* Each syllable was an hour long, and each second, an eternity.

And then, as soon as it started, it stopped.

"I guess I better tell Sonya," I mumbled.

Numbly, I walked upstairs, forcing my feet to move. As I entered the robotics room, I took one long look at my robot, and suddenly everything was okay. I still had to break the horrible news to Sonya, but one look at my robot told me that I could do this again. To quote my STEM role model, Reshma Saujani (the CEO of girls who code), 'What if we tried to be brave instead of perfect?' We would rise up, and be just as strong during the next season, as we were during this one.

By: Adya Datta
and
Sonya
Chamberlain



TEAM-
94568G
VEXOTICS-
CURIOSITY

PART 2- LET THE GAMES BEGIN

"That's a huge field!" I exclaimed, as the game reveal played in the background. This year's game was called rise above, and instead of the standard four-foot by eight-foot field, this one was fifty percent larger.

"We got this," Sonya said over FaceTime. "Let's just focus on the new game."

I quieted down as told, but my mind was still racing. We would have to build a much faster robot if we wanted to have any chance at winning.

"So... what do we do now?" asked Sonya as the game reveal ended.

"We should probably brainstorm," I replied, running upstairs to grab a paper and pen.

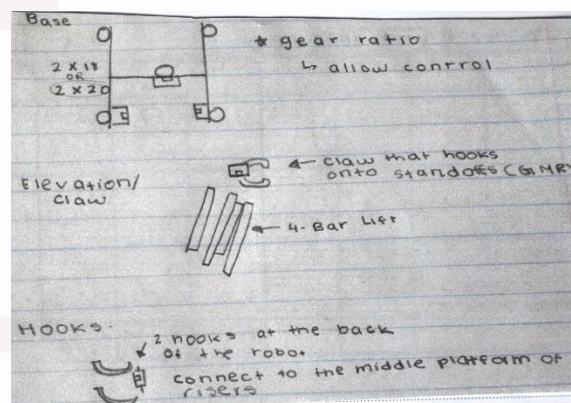
"But we can't do anything together, since we're on lockdown."

"That's fine. We can still do the design notebook over FaceTime. And whoever builds the robot can program it, since they have the robot. Besides, isn't that what Girl Power is about? You know, sticking together and facing anything, no matter what. We've done this for the last two years, and we can do it again. I know we can't physically see each other, but that doesn't mean we have to grow apart. Technology these days can basically do anything."

"I guess."

"If we keep an open mind, this year can be just as good- or maybe even better- than the last. To quote Mr. Forkle from the Keeper of the Lost Cities series 'It seems we're attempting to drain the ocean with a leaking spoon. But even if that's the case, we can either give up, or we can continue taking it one dripping spoonful at a time.'"

"When you put it that way... what are we waiting for, we have a robot to build!"



Early Brainstorming

~~~~~



"And... done," I said, as I plugged in the last wire. The first robot of the season was finally built. Grabbing a battery and three risers, I set the robot onto the field. Clumsily, I took the controller and powered it on, my hands trembling as I attempted to score a triple stack. One riser was scored. Then two. Taking a deep breath, I grabbed the third riser. I lifted it up, praying that I had built the lift high enough. And then it scored, meaning that Vexotics- Curiosity had their first successful robot.



**Building the Robot**



**Our First Robot**



**Our Second Robot Named 'Baymax'**



Our Third Robot Named 'Florence'



Our Fourth Robot Named 'Greyfell'

~~~~~

"Come on, come on, come on," I whispered, praying that the program would work. I squeezed my eyes shut, too nervous to watch. It was the robot that **I** built on the field, following the code that **I** wrote. If this program failed, it was on me. The buzzer sounded, and I slowly opened my eyes, beaming when I saw that my robot had scored a perfect 70 points. I let out the breath that I didn't notice I was holding and smiled to myself. Now that I knew how much I liked to code, what was stopping me from making a better autonomous?

By: Ananya Datta
and
Sonya
Chamberlain

94568G

VEXOTICS-
CURIOSITY

PART 3- RISING TO THE TOP

"When will they post the awards on Robot Events?" I asked. It was our first judging tournament of the season, and unfortunately, we were on lockdown, so I couldn't do the tournament with Sonya.

"Hopefully soon," my brother answered. "I want to know how you did."

"So do I." I crossed my fingers, hoping they would finally put up the awards. Mentally, I was sifting through the questions that the judges asked during our engineering notebook interview. Each word I said could be a reason to add or dock points, and each point could be the only thing stopping us from winning. Had I rambled too much? What if the judges thought our robot was dumb? What if our design notebook wasn't good enough? Did we even have a fraction of a chance at winning an award?

I clicked and re-clicked the button that refreshed the page, barely stopping for a moment to see if we had won an award. In all the hastiness, I almost missed it when the awards finally came up. Scrolling down, I started check who won.

Robot Skills First Place.

Nope. Not us.

Robot Skills Second Place.

Still not us.

Robot Skills Third Place.

Again- not us.

Design Award.

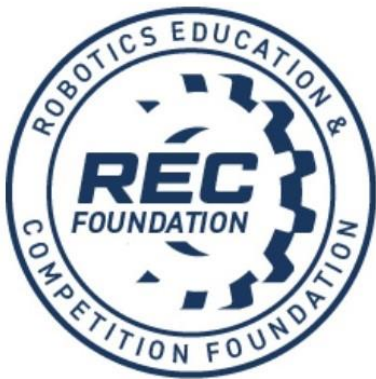
Wait a minute, did we really win? I rechecked the team number and was surprised to see that it said 94568G. That was us! We had won our first award of the season!

PART 4- A TOAST TO CHANGE

What's next for Vexotics- Curiosity? Will we make it to states? To worlds? All I know is that we will play hard and work even harder to make sure that girls have a chance. It doesn't matter who you are or where you live. All that matters is that you use girl power- whatever that means to you- to foster change and rise.

"I've realized now that our world doesn't define us. We define our world."

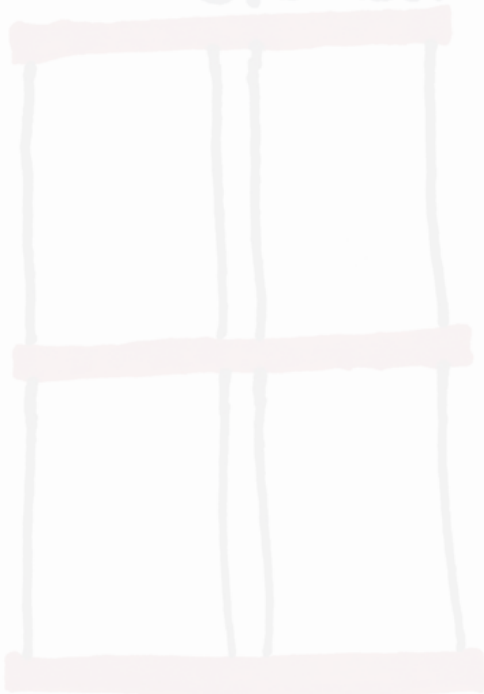
~Shannon Messenger



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, we want to thank Vex for providing this great platform to do robotics on virtually and in person. We also want to thank the REC foundation for providing us with all these great tournaments that all teams can participate in. And last but not least, we want to thank our families (including our brothers, 94568B) for being so supportive, and always helping us if we need anything.

By: Adya Datta
and
Sonya Chamberlain



WE

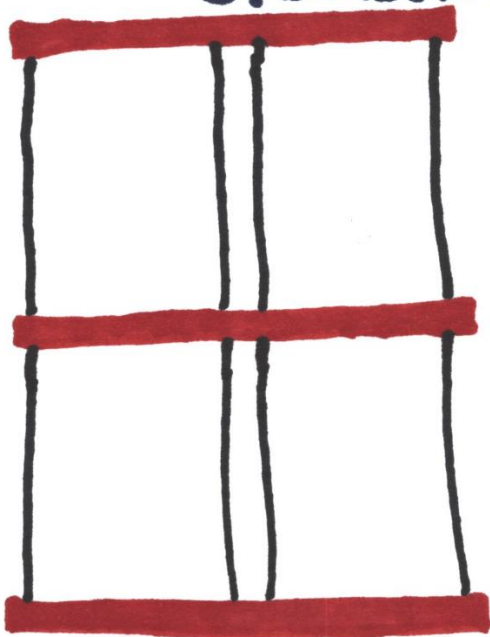
Will

RISE

UP

By: Adya Datta
and
Sonya
Chamberlain

TEAM-
94568G



VEXOTICS-
CURIOSITY