



Good Morning

On behalf of the entire Top of the Form 2012 team, I would like to thank you for your kind donation. This generous support has enabled the team to deliver a truly successful competition that concluded with a showpiece final at The Coronation Hall in Ulverston on the 24th April. Furness Academy narrowly beat St Bernard's in a gripping encounter that had the 200-strong audience on the edge of their seats.

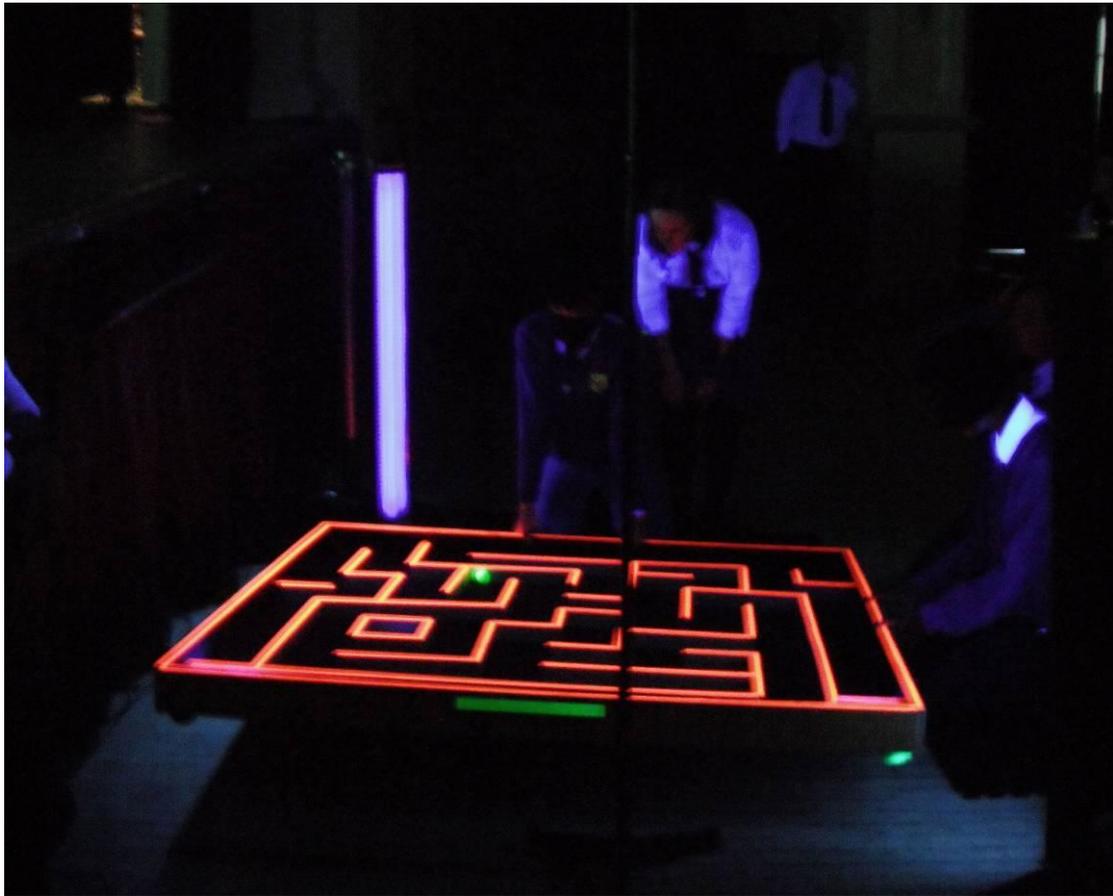


200-strong audience watching the first round of the final

Both schools faced tough competition in previous rounds as they made their way to the grand final. In the first round, Furness Academy were victorious against Chetwynde School with St Bernard's overcoming John Ruskin. The semi-finals proved to be very close, with Furness narrowly beating Ulverston Victoria and St Bernards managing a triumph over Cartmel Priory.

As in previous rounds, the Top of the Form Final included a Practical round. This was an interactive challenge whereby the teams had to apply their engineering knowledge to complete a practical task. In the lead-up to the final, both teams were invited onto the BAE Systems site in Barrow to prepare for this round.

The finalist were tasked with creating "coastal defences to stop the escape of enemy submarines". Simply put, each team was tasked with designing and building a 1.6m² wooden maze. The opposition would have to complete this maze by manoeuvring a small ball around it, 'tilting' the maze around a central pivot. There was an added twist to the challenge, the two team members tilting the maze would be blindfolded and under instruction from the other two team members.



St Bernard's solving Furness Academy's maze

During the build phase, points were awarded for economical use of materials, reflecting the demands placed on engineering companies to produce quality products at a low cost. St Bernard's used less material than Furness Academy so went into the final with more points from the build phase. An equal value of points were available during the final based on the time taken to solve the opposing team's maze.

The final started in absorbing fashion; after the first two rounds it was neck and neck. In the third round, Furness Academy just managed to build a small lead but the match was still wide open going into the Practical round.

Teamwork was essential at all stages from designing the maze to manoeuvring the pivoted maze and navigating the submarine through it. Two members were blindfolded and controlled the direction of the maze while the other two members directed them.

Neither team had seen the opposing maze and St Bernard's went first. The complexity of Furness Academy's maze caused St Bernard's a degree of difficulty, solving it for one of the submarines in the 6 minute time limit. Furness Academy seemed to have an improved technique, making good steam around the slightly simpler design of St Bernard's. They solved the maze for both submarines in 3 minutes 21 seconds. Furness Academy won the practical round and extended their lead.

Both teams did well in the final two rounds; however, St Bernard's couldn't make up the difference in scores. The final ended with Furness Academy crowned 2012 Top of the Form winners with 410 points. St Bernard's were runners up with 340 points.



Presentation of Winners trophy to Furness Academy

St Bernard's Catholic High School was awarded a runner up cheque for £100 towards STEM activities with each team member receiving a small prize and the runners up trophy. Furness Academy was awarded a cheque for £500 towards STEM activities, the Top of the Form Trophy and each member received a digital camera and a winners plaque.

The event was hugely successful with numerous attendees congratulating the team and commenting on how much they enjoyed the event. Both schools said how enjoyable the events were and thanked the team for being able to run the event.

Finally, I would just like to thank you once again for your contribution. Without the sponsors, we wouldn't be able to run events like this. Events like these encourage and inspire young people into STEM subjects, as highlighted in the speeches by both the Project Lead and Guest Speaker. I believe that your company has made an impact on the young people that have taken part.

Thank you very much for your support and I hope you will be able to support future events.

Kindest Regards

Sponsorship and Prizes Lead
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