

Report on Technical Tournament held on 8th March 2023

The day started with a layer of snow all around and crisp and even. My heart sank as the media is always keen to point out that risk averse School Heads are wont to close schools at the slightest possibility that they could be sued for negligence if somebody's little darling slips over dodging a snowball.

In the event all eight schools turned up and we had twenty four teams, nine intermediate level and fifteen foundation.

All twenty four teams made good attempts at the problem, which was a coin sorter that needed no power to work.

Not only that but we received twenty four feedback forms.

We thought it was a good day and so did the students who gave us an overall approval rating of 8.4/10.

How could we improve things. Some said 'Feed me'. Some said could we have more time? Some said background music, please. Even the staff feedback form wanted that. And one lot wanted a stanley knife, which never gets mentioned on the permitted Tools List. Can't think why not.

So to the day, all appeared to go relatively smoothly. We had to change the catering because the Inner Circle was unable to assist so we got Waitrose to make the sandwiches instead. Obviously more expensive but everybody seemed to like them. A big thank you to Jacqui and Maggie for organising and dealing with all of that.

Thanks also to Tony Abbott and Bettavend for supplying 200 bottles of water.

A big thank you to Mike Thorne and his team of Judges. They tested all the models with a selection of pre-decimal coins supplied mainly by our chief Numismatist, Dave Sillence and were very pleased with the results.

The final results were in reverse order:

- Foundation Runners-up John Hanson School of Andover
- Foundation Winners Bitterne Park School
- Intermediate Runners-up Romsey School
- Intermediate Winners Mountbatten School

The same team of four lads from Mountbatten won last year apparently so at least the judges were consistent.

I also want to thank all the volunteers, too many to name, who set up, manned the hot glue stations, generally looked after the students and cleared away most efficiently afterwards.

We run this tournament with some assistance from the Rotary Club of Southampton Magna. They provided a judge, some stewards and a percentage of the budget based on the number of teams from their area.

As a consequence, we met our budget even though the two most expensive areas, catering and first aid provision had increased quite significantly since last year.

What would I change? I found that quite a number of students had little idea of how to use the tools safely and efficiently. There was a supposed sheet of techniques but it wasn't particularly helpful. So I will try to persuade the national organisers to improve the techniques sheet for next year.

Oops, did I say next year? Oh well.