

January 12, 2016

# COONEYTECH

## TRAINING 2.0

PRE-BUILD SEASON  
NEWS!!



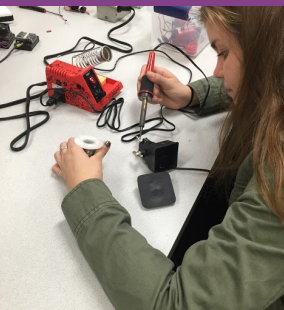
Build season for the FIRST Robotics 2016 competition has finally begun. On January 9th, the 2016 competition was released. Before we begin the new season in the new year, we thought it would be a good time to recap our off-season training and all our summer activities that lead us up to our new build season. This year, our team decided to take a different approach to our off-season



training during November and December. We wanted to keep CooneyTech Robotics a unique student-taught training system as we have always done in the past, but this year we added a twist to the traditional system. Normally in student-taught training, each team member chooses a section of robotics-- design, electrical, mechanical, programming or Chairman's Award, (which deals with advertisement and the business portion of our team), they would like to focus on. They are then trained by other robotics members that are experienced in that area. The twist we added this year was that we broke training into two different sections. The first section of training that took place in November required students to attend eight nightly training sessions where instead of jumping into to just one section of the team they rotated from station to station



learning the basics of every section of the team. By starting out with this approach it allowed new team members more of a chance to understand how the team works and allowed old team members to get a better feel of what pressures other sections of the team are under during build season. The second section of training that took place in December required students to pick the section of the team they wanted to work under for the rest of build season and begin to learn more in-depth skills in their chosen section. By changing our approach, we hope to improve communication and understanding between all members of the team during the pressures of build season. This new approach to training will also



allow new recruits the opportunity to get a taste of the different sections of the team before committing themselves to one section. Our new build season for 2016 will last for six weeks, giving us a very limited time to design, prototype, build, and program a functioning robot for competitions. Thanks to this awesome new training program we are ready to face the new competition challenge.

Besides off-season training, we also love to help out in the community when we can. One of CooneyTech's favorite things to do is mentor Silver Lake and Nature Hill Intermediate schools VEX Robotics teams. This year, we had a blast working with the awesome students from both schools as well as helping them hold two of their own unofficial competitions.

This summer, our team attended Kid's Day at Summerfest where we had a blast giving demonstration matches with one of our past robots, as well as teaching kids how to drive our robot. On July 25th, 2015 we participated in the R2OC Rockford Regional. R2OC is a partnership of Rock River Valley US First Robotics Teams. They have been providing an off-season tournament based off of each year's game. Last year's game was "Recycle Rush," (the kickoff video can be found at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAN1B7oKDXE>) and R2OC used the basis of that setup, creating a set of new rules to switch things up while putting our critical thinking skills to the test. It required a different way of observing how to play the game, and encouraged us to think outside of the box to help broaden our

ideas of what we want to do on the robotics team for the upcoming season. This tournament also allows people to try different things they usually don't participate in, like driving the robot. On the fundraising side of things, we also ran our annual bratwurst sale and car wash sponsored by Piggly Wiggly on August 30th. Plenty of people came to help, and it was great to see all the support we received from our community and team members. At the end of the day, we're proud to say we made over \$600.00. It was a great experience for our team, and we plan on continuing this tradition next year. We also continued yet another annual fundraiser of our's: washing windows after the Homecoming parade. Lots of people showed up to help, and we were able to talk to many local businesses about robotics. Once again, our team's amazing support was there to help. Everybody who came had a great time and we all ate pizza afterwards for our hard work.

Support is always accepted! Whether this is counted as volunteer hours or donations, all help towards our team is always appreciated. Thanks for all you do and stay tuned to the next coming newsletter to learn all about this year's game challenge from FIRST!

## PICTURE RECAP OF KID'S DAY AT SUMMERFEST...



## HELPING OUT WITH VEX ROBOTICS COMPETITIONS!

