

Math Day at the Beach

History: A project like this can take anywhere from a minimal effort: an announcement to the local schools that a contest will be held . . . to the equivalent of a stage production. I chose the latter . . .

and paid its consequences in the number of hours of work. The result, however, has been that the local high school consider that Math Day at the Beach a well planned and classy event.

- I was asked by the chair of the department, Dr. Art Wayman, to start a mathematics contest program for local high schools
- We named it “Math Day at the Beach” after the University’s nickname
- We have now had three contests, all in during the Spring Semesters of 2000, 2001, 2002, with the fourth one scheduled for March 22, 2003

Objectives: The idea was to

- Make the Math Department more visible in the local community
- To attract some of the more mathematically talented local youth to CSULB.
- There were some unexpected outcomes...
 - A Mentoring Program
 - A first-ever Southern California ARML team
 - Results of 2002
 - Chris Barrett – at CSULB on scholarship
 - First practice this year 46 kids!

Planning: Do it carefully . . .

- The first year was pretty much a Herculean effort on my part.
- The second year I got some help from our graduate students. I did about half the work.
- The third year, the graduate students did 85% of the work, in particular, Ms. Sherrie Waddle, Ms. Kate Ko, and Ms. Cathy Yang
 - Now they’ve gone . . .and guess who’s at bat again?

Description of the program

- Registration
- Individual Round
- Team Round
- Lunch and Speaker
 - Professor Robert Mena CSULB, James Merryfield UCB Student
 - Richard Walker, UCLA
 - Professor Will Murray, CSULB
- Jeopardy Round
- Awards

Some Pictures: I think the success of this program can be seen in these pictures

Supporters: Through a lot of hard work we were able to secure supporters for this program that allowed us to award the winning teams

- An event T-shirt for everyone!
 - The 49'rs store
- Three computers to the first, second, and third place teams
 - Pacific Life Foundation
- Palm Pilots and T/I and Casio Calculators to the first five individual winners
 - TI, Casio, Publishers
- Trophies and plaques to teams and individuals
 - Funds from the Pacific Life grant
- One of the biggest supporters was President Maxson
 - The Pyramid facility
- And our Department
 - A one year scholarship
- Faculty and publishers
 - New and old books

Press: Sometimes yes, sometimes no . . . but they do cover “slam dancing.”

Evaluation: We have the participants fill out a short evaluation to check the degree of success of the program and to ask for suggestions

Do's and Don'ts

- Start small
- Get lots of help from graduate students
- Get to the teachers, not the principals or chairs
- Involve the parents if you can

Exams:

- Individual Round
- Team Round
- Jeopardy Round