Bellarmine VEX Tournament Guide

By Team 254

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Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities

IT Manager

4 weeks before:
- Gather required materials:
    - Network switch to connect computers
    - Ethernet cables to connect computers and field controllers
    - USB extension cables
    - At least 1 USB stick
    - Laptops with administrative privileges
    - At least 2 fast printers.
    - At least 2 reams of paper
    - VEX electronics, including match controllers
    - Power Strips
    - 1 laptop per field controller/projector
        - Laptops connected to the field controller must have USB 2.0

1 week before:
- Shut off the 2.4 GHz networks where the competition fields will be.
- Ensure sufficient Wi-Fi bandwidth for the pits.

Internal Scrimmage:
- Install [tournament manager software](#) on all laptops.
- Setup and test field electronics.
- Teach scorekeepers how to use the tournament manager software
- Label laptops according to use.

Tournament Setup:
- Set up scorekeeping table with printers and laptops, and connect them to the network switch.
- Set up projectors and associated computers.
- Set up webcams.
- Test all equipment.

Judge's Assistant

4 weeks before:
- Finalize the list of Judges. The judges should not be affiliated with the school or its team to reduce biases.
- Give the Judges a copy of the [judges document](#).
- Get t-shirt sizes for judges t-shirts

Friday before:
- Print 2 copies of the order form, and 5 copies of the award criteria.
- Set up classroom for judging; get supplies, t-shirts, and clipboards for judges from Pit Admin.

Day of tournament:
- Don't allow teams to start scheduling interviews before the match schedule is posted.
- Make sure concessions gets the water to the judges early enough

Example Timeline:
9:00 AM: Split judges into 5 groups of 2 to interview teams in the pits (Judging all awards in general through informal interview), and 2 groups of 3-4 to formally interview teams in the judges rooms (Excellence judges).
12:00 PM: Lunch break and deliberation until 2, with extra time until 2:30
3-4 PM: Write final award scripts for Judges or emcees to read. Once written, print and deliver to whomever is presenting the award.

Inspection

Thursday before:
- Email all the inspectors, ideally 4, with basic information. See [Appendix](#) for example email.

Friday before:
- Set up inspection table. Two lines- one hardware, one software.

Day of tournament:
- Use two competition switches and two sizing boxes to streamline inspection.
- Work with Pit Admin to ensure that all checked-in teams go through inspection.

Queuing

2 weeks before:
- Obtain and test dedicated walkie talkies (One walkie talkie for each station). Use a separate channel for queuing
- Buy red, blue, and white gaffers tape
- Determine layout of queuing tables and queueing flow in relation to field placement

1 week before:
- Email all volunteers to confirm shifts and duties

Friday before:
- Set up the main queuing table 4-5 feet from the entrance to the competition area, so no one can walk by it.
- Set up the tape, tables (Suggested: 6 for robots, 1-2 for volunteers to check in/keep track of teams), and signs

During the tournament:
- 1 person should check in all teams and call the pit with which teams are missing
- 1 adult at the door to check badges, safety glasses, no food, and stops people from exiting. (bouncer)
- 1 person to keep teams organized on the field & send them from the tables to the fields
- Need a screen to display the match schedule in the back for the teams.

Pit Admin

1 month before:
- Finalize pit [map](map).
  - Make sure that there is power for all of tables, avoid daisy-chaining by using all outlets possible
- Order trophies

1 week before:
- Finish badge template, and print badges.

Friday before:
- Print name badges
- Set up pit tables
- Print and place signs on tables for teams
- Route extension cables
- Set up practice field

During the tournament:
- Check in teams and volunteers
- Manage pit volunteers, including team queuers
- Be on call for any questions teams have
- Make sure everything runs smoothly
- Manage teardown of everything in pits

Scorekeeper

2 months before:
- If lacking necessary number of fields ask local teams

1 week before:
- Test all tournament laptops. Verify that you have administrative privileges, install Tournament Management Software (TMS), and label laptops with their role.
- Test Robotevents integration - download teams & upload scores

Setup:
- Setup laptops & projectors in pit area, for both displays and the pit admin.
- Label all practice field elements.
- Setup Tournament Manager Software

During the tournament:
- Steps for scorekeeper:
  1. Match Ends
  2. Queue Next Match
  3. Show Saved Scores
  4. Switch back to "Intro" View
  5. Start Auton Control
  6. Start Driver Control
  7. Enter in last match scores during match
  8. Save score and make sure it shows up under "saved match"
  9. Match Ends
  10. Periodically submit and display skills challenge results

Skills Coordinator

1 month before:

- Obtain a competition switch and a stopwatch

1 week before:

- Read the rules carefully and field setup guide, and forum posts related to skills to look for rule changes.

Friday before:

- Set up the laptop with TMS and then lead setup of the perimeter of the Skills field.

During the tournament:

- Notify teams early on in the day to attempt the Skills Challenges, as teams often scramble and do not have a chance to do so at the end.
- Train two assistants with field setup.
- When a team arrives, you should write down their number to keep track of who arrives first.
- Teams with two or fewer attempts have first priority. Otherwise, teams may attempt the skills challenges as many times as they want. Record scores on paper forms. Periodically, have the scorekeeper enter in the scores.

Volunteer Coordinator/Check-In

About 2 months before:
- Create an online form for students and parents to sign up with (not a paper form).
  - Make sure to ask for t-shirt sizes on both forms, or let volunteers indicate they already have a shirt.

2-4 weeks before:
- Continue to remind people to sign up for volunteering.
- Request t-shirt sizes for Inspectors, Judges, and Concessions.
- Keep an updated volunteer list based on the signups.

1 week before:
- Send out a confirmation email to each group of volunteers (ex. one email to all the Field Reset, see Appendices for example email) telling them their shift and when to show up.
- With finalized list of volunteers, order T-Shirts. Order extra shirts as necessary.

2 days before:
- Create 2 spreadsheets for volunteer check-in, one for students and one for parents.

During the tournament:
- Organize Volunteer Check-In/Out or teach a parent how to do it.
- Make sure when checking in students that day is recorded so there is no confusion between Friday 7pm to 9pm and Saturday 7am to 9am. Remind student volunteers they need to check out to get hours recorded.
- Give volunteers their shirts

Post Tournament:
- Send thank-you email to volunteers.
- Record hours for student volunteers.

A/V Manager

3 weeks before:
- Check with venue regarding any rules they may want you to follow.

1 week before:
- Make sure the IT manager sets up the TMS.

Friday before:
- Use one computer to stream video.
- Installed Open Broadcaster
  - Open source
  - Simple and easy to use
- Installed Vex Tournament manager
- Have a separate computer for all audio mixing. Make sure the DJ knows how to mix audio and DJ well.
- Connect all computers to projectors and speakers.
- Set up field cameras so they will not be blocked by people around the field, and connect them to the appropriate computer.

Concessions

1-2 months before:
- Find 2-4 adult volunteers to head up the purchase and sale of concessions.
- The volunteer team will need to know what kind of space is available, and is there equipment that can be used on site (ovens, refrigerators, coffee machines, etc).
- Decide what to purchase and sell (items for breakfast, lunch, snacks, drinks, etc.) They should include vegetarian options. Include paper goods and utensils.
- Decide if Judges and/or Mentors will be served different food in a separate room.
- Decide what time concessions will open and close.

2 weeks before
- Make the schedule of volunteers who will work concessions that day.
- Get student and adults to help with set up the night before if needed, and have people signed up to help with clean up.
- Get teams to sign up and pay for advance food orders if applicable.
- Purchase any necessary supplies.
- Decide how much to charge for each item in order to make the sale profitable.

1 week before:
- Talk with venue cafeteria staff, if any, about what food & materials (coffee, ice) they need to buy for you
- Learn how to use cafeteria facilities (coffee makers, warming ovens, and trash compactor).
- Learn how to clean up and lock up the facility, where to dispose of trash and recyclables.
- Scout prices for the items to be purchased at warehouse stores.
- Arrange for someone to unlock the venue in the morning.

A few days before:
- Confirm that volunteers will indeed be working their appointed shift.
- Purchase non-perishable food and drinks.
- Place advance food orders for to be picked up from local restaurants.
- Print up signs and menus with food options and prices.
- Get lots of change (ones, fives, and quarters) for the cash boxes.

Saturday morning:
- Take orders for Judges' lunches as teams and helpers arrive. Collect payment. Confirm pre-orders.
- Chill drinks, heat coffee and hot water.
- Put bags in trash cans.
- Put breakfast food and drinks in Judges' room.
- Set up the cashier's station and keep it manned continually.
- Post the menu/pricing signs.

During the event:
- Monitor drink stations, trashcans, etc to keep items stocked up and the area clean.
- Make sure volunteers take breaks.
- Run to store if more items are needed, or cross them off the menu if sold out.

- Thank the volunteers.

At the end of the day:
- Give a "last call" shout out 20 minutes before closing.
- Clean up, take out trash, sweep or mop floors, wipe tables and counters, turn off machines, pack up unsold items.
- Count and secure the cash. Hand off to lead adult.
- Lock up facility.

Soon after the event:
- Make notes about what was sold and how well things went. Take note of changes for next year.
- Return unsold food if possible, or donate it.
- Turn in receipts for reimbursement.
- Return any borrowed items.

Referee

1 month before:
- Watch [referee training videos](#) and read the [current game manual.](#)
- Read through the [VEX Forum](#) for any rule changes

1 week before:
- Either print out a hard copy of the game manual or keep an electronic copy handy. Keep it with you during the tournament.

General Notes to the Organizers and Referees

If you have questions after watching the videos and game manual, you should request an answer at on the [VEX Forums](#). You should have either an electronic or hard copy of the game manual. You should hold a scrimmage the week before the tournament at the lab, and had the referees practice scoring matches and making correct calls. If a team is late to a match, but they have sent a representative to the field, give them a minute or two to get ready. If they haven't sent a representative, start the match without them, so that the event can run smoothly. In the event of a dispute about a ruling, the referee's decision is final. Video replays are not allowed.

Places To Reserve

Stage or large indoor area (gym)
Classroom or small open indoor area (for skills challenges)
2-3 smaller rooms (for interviews)
Cafeteria or large indoor area with seating and tables (for the pits)
Classroom or meeting room (for the judge's room)

Extra Help

Schedule pick ups of any extra fields from other teams. Avoid mixing field parts and game elements between fields. Recruit younger students for short shifts on the field reset crew.

Public Relations

After opening up tournament registration, create a press release and flyer, and distribute to local schools and relevant organizations.

Camera Setup

Ideally, one fixed camera should be set up to cover each competition field, and someone is assigned to switching the video feeds for the audience.

Skills Challenges

You will need two student volunteers. You will need a stopwatch to record the time and a competition switch to make sure no teams exceeds the 1 minute time limit. Notify teams early on in the day to attempt the Skills Challenges, as teams often scramble and do not have a chance to do so at the end. When a team arrives, you should write down their number to keep track of who arrives first. If no other teams are present, allow the team to go multiple times, should they choose to. If multiple teams are present, do not let the teams go multiple times, to allow others to attempt the challenges. If no one is attempting the Skills Challenges, you may allow teams to use the skills field as a practice field. However, the teams using the skills field as a practice field must leave as soon as a team shows up to attempt the Skills.

Judges

Judges will need to familiarize themselves with the game rules for that year, as well as the criteria for the various awards. Dependent on their role, judges should prepare questions that they will ask teams. Possible questions, as well as other important information can be found in the Judge's Guide.

Master Schedule

A Master Schedule is a necessary to coordinate the volunteer positions and remind the Event Coordinator what needs to be done and when it should be done. The Master

Schedule focuses on information pertaining to the Event Coordinator and other volunteers. It should contain all the plans for setup and teardown to reduce the possibility of forgetting equipment. It also must contain all the information for when meetings with Judges will happen, when things like the Qualification match schedule will be announced, and other important events during the tournament day(s).

Public Schedule

The Public Schedule must be given to each team (usually in paper the day of the tournament and also through email to the registered teams a few days before the event). It will not contain information such as setup and teardown, but rather focus on information pertaining to the teams. This includes things like the time periods for inspection, driver meetings, lunch, and when the qualification matches will be taking place. Note that the Public Schedule does not contain the Qualification Match Schedule, as that must be decided after all the teams have check in and been inspected.

Team Registration and Welcome Packet

Teams should receive pit maps, 2 driver badges, 1 coach badge, an agenda, a map of the rooms, and a pizza order form. Judges should receive judge's shirts and judge's badges. Referee should receive striped shirts and referee badges. All badges should have the event agenda printed back. All event staff should receive badges.

T-Shirts

Event t-shirts should be made for judges and general volunteers. Referees should use black and white striped referee shirts. To save costs from year to year, avoid including dates on t-shirts.

Music
General Guidelines

Keep in mind that we're trying to appeal to a broad audience. You're not DJing in a themed club or at a concert; there will be students, teachers, parents, grandparents and people on the webcast all listening. No explicit or suggestive lyrics. In general, start or switch songs right when matches start (don't change during a match). If there's already one playing, fade it out just a couple of seconds prior to the new one. Play songs from a variety of genres (pop, rock, electronic, oldies, etc.) Don't play more than two songs in a row from the same genre. If you play any dubstep/electronic music, stick to well-known tracks. Don't play anything that less than 10% of the audience would recognize. Don't play anything slow during a match. Minimize the use of joke songs, parodies, and songs that only make sense with video. Don't play any song more than once (and remixes count as the same song). VirtualDJ is a good, free DJ software. Be sure to understand the software beforehand, to avoid making noticeable mistakes during the tournament.
Lunch

Queue a playlist for the lunch break with slower and less energetic music that can be played at a lower volume.

Alliance Selection
  Play something quiet and suspenseful; the goal is to build tension.
Elimination
  The goal is to crank up the energy and excitement. Turn up the volume slightly.
Start the first match of the elimination rounds with something energetic and well-known.
You can use some of the traditional FRC selections for the finals rounds, if you want, like
Sirius (The Alan Parsons Project), or The Final Countdown (Europe).
Awards
  Mute music while the awards are being read. Start music after the team is
announced. Stop music for the next award.

Appendices
Example Inspection Email
Thank you for helping with inspections at the tournament!

We will have inspection sheets printed out for you and a laptop to enter the results into the tournament
manager software. Inspections will start Friday at 6pm, but the vast majority of teams will arrive Saturday
morning and will need to be inspected, starting at 7:15am.

Here are some important documents related to inspection (if you haven't received them yet). We are only
doing VEXnet, so you can ignore references to Crystal in the documents below. We will have printed copies
of the documents for you at the tournament.

Inspection sheets:
http://www.roboticseducation.org/documents/2013/06/inspection-checklist-vrc.pdf
Inspector's Guide:
http://www.roboticseducation.org/documents/2013/06/inspection-guide.pdf
Software Inspection Guide:
http://www.roboticseducation.org/documents/2013/06/software-inspection-cortex.pdf

May be of use:
Cortex and VEXnet user guide (includes troubleshooting chart):
http://www.roboticseducation.org/documents/2013/06/cortex-user-guide.pdf

Example Volunteer Sign-Up Email
Hey Parents!
Our annual VEX tournament would not be possible without your help. Parents can choose to either help with
Concessions or a number of other volunteer positions. These forms are different from Google Forms in that
they limit the number of people that sign up for a specific slot, so if you really want to do something make
sure to sign up fast! Parents are not restricted to volunteering for only one timeslot or one role (so long as
they don't try to be in 2 places at once!).

Example Volunteer Confirmation Email

Hello,

Thank you for signing up for Concessions on this Saturday, from ___ to ___. Please check in at the Pit Administration desk in the school cafeteria 15 minutes before your shift starts, where you will pick up a name tag and be directed to your role.

You will be working in the ___ area with ____.

Thank You.

Example Volunteer Thank-You Email

Hello all,

On behalf of Team 254, I would like to thank all of you parents and students who volunteered to help make this weekend's VEX Tournament happen! Due to your hard work, our tournament remained on schedule, a huge feat for VEX tournaments, and ran incredibly smoothly.

At the tournament, 254A, 254B, 254C, 254D, 254F, and 254G all made it to the elimination rounds! Two of them, 254F and 254D, made it to the finals, qualifying them for the Northern California VEX Championship!

Example Event Manager Email to Send to Teams

The 8th Annual Bellarmine VEX Tournament, hosted by Team 254, will be held November 20-21, 2015. The event is free for spectators. The best time to watch is from the alliance selection process (3pm on Saturday), through the finals, which will finish by 6:30pm.

Information

Changes from Last Year
Schedule
Tournament Location & Parking
Northern California VRC Championship Qualifications
Concessions
Information for Competitors
Information for Novices

Changes from Last Year

There are more teams competing, so if you can, please get inspected on Friday evening (6 – 8pm). We'll officially open the pits at 7am and start inspections at 7:15am on Saturday.

Schedule

Friday, November 20, 2015
_____

6 pm - 8 pm	Check-In and Inspection
7 pm - 9 pm	Practice time for teams

Saturday, November 21, 2015
_____

7:15 am	Pit Area and Registration Opens
7:15 am - 8:30 am	Inspection
7:30 am - 8:30 am	Practice Rounds
8:00 am	Skills Challenge field open
8:15 am	Check-in closes (Teams will be removed from the tournament if they are not checked in)

8:30 am - 8:45 am	Driver's Meeting
8:30 am - 9:30 am	Sign up for judging interview
8:45 am	Welcome
9:00 am - 12:30pm	Qualifying Rounds
12:30 pm - 1:00 pm	Lunch Break
1:00 pm - 2:45 pm	Qualifying Rounds Continue
3:00 pm	Alliance Selection Process
3:15 pm - 5:00 pm	Playoffs
4:00 pm	Skills Challenge field closes
~5:00 pm - 6:30 pm	Finals, Awards, Closing Ceremony

Tournament Location & Parking
Bellarmine College Preparatory 960 W. Hedding St. San Jose, CA 95126
Google Maps

Campus Map
For the competition, the pits are in Liccardo cafeteria and the competition fields in Sobrato theater. These are #6 and #7 on the campus map at: http://www.bcp.org/about-us/our-campus/index.aspx.

Street parking is very limited due to permit parking restrictions. There is additional parking by Emory and Stockton streets. Check in with the Pit Admin when you arrive, who will provide you with a map of the tournament facilities.

Northern California VRC Championship Qualifications
We are qualifying 8 teams for the Northern California VRC State Championship:
    3 Team Winning Alliance
    3 Team Finalists
    1 Design Award winner
    1 Excellence Award winner

Awards Given
    Excellence Award
    Design Award
    Judges Award
    Sportsmanship Award

Concessions
We will offer pizza for preorder. Info will be sent in a different email. We will have a few pasta dinners available for Friday night and will be offering snacks and drinks on Saturday.

Information For Competitors
If you cannot arrive before close of check-in at 8am, please call or text the event manager at: _____
If you want to be considered for the Excellence or Design awards, you will need to sign up for an interview by 9:30am. Go to the Pit Admin to schedule (or change your appointment time if needed). The interview rooms are on the second floor of the Sobrato Theater building near the swimming pool.
The skills challenge field is also on the 2nd floor of the Sobrato theater building. Teams are not limited to the number of attempts, however, any team with fewer than 3 attempts can move ahead of other teams waiting in line.
Bring your signed VEX competition waiver, available at:
http://www.roboticseducation.org/documents/2013/06/vrc-participant-release-form.pdf.

Check the match schedule when it is published and make sure you are ready for each match. We try hard to keep matches running on time.
Be sure your robot is ready for inspection. Double check the requirements here: http://www.roboticseducation.org/documents/2013/06/inspection-checklist-vrc.pdf.
Have fully charged batteries for each match.
Be sure the drivers and coach have safety glasses when they arrive at the field to compete.
Bring a power strip. We should have an outlet within 6' of your table for you to plug into.
WiFi will be available in the pits.

Information For Novices
It is highly recommended for you to arrive Friday to go through the inspection and try a couple practice matches. Friday will be much more relaxed and our inspectors will be able to help you through the inspection process. Also, our field managers will be able to guide you through the competition process. Be sure to bring fully charged batteries, chargers, spare parts and tools in case anything breaks. Ensure your VEXnet keys are working well.