

IMO TRAINING CAMP

June 25 to July 10, 2005

REPORT

The 2005 IMO Training Camp started on Saturday June 25 with the arrival in Calgary of four of the six student Team members and two of the three adult Team members. Two of the Team members, Peng Shi and Yufei Zhao, were permitted to show up at the Camp a few days late so that they could attend the awards ceremony in Washington for the USAMO, in which they had tied for third place. One of the adult Team members, Adrian Tang, is a graduate student at the University of Calgary and was already here. Also arriving on June 25 were two students from Edmonton and one from Vancouver, chosen, along with three students from the Calgary area, to participate in the Calgary portion of the Camp.

The participants were:

Team members: Lin Fei, Elyot Grant, Richard (Yang) Peng, David (Dong Uk) Rhee, Peng Shi, Yufei Zhao;

Adult trainers: Felix Recio (Leader), Dorette Pronk (Deputy Leader), Adrian Tang (Deputy Observer), Elena Braverman, Andy Liu, Paul Ottaway;

“Local” (Alberta and BC) students: Graham Hill and Brian Yu from Edmonton; Allen Zhang from Vancouver; Sarah Sun from Okotoks; and Zheng Guo and Yiyi Yang from Calgary.

Everyone was housed in Cascade Hall, an apartment-style Residence on campus, two students to a room. Meals were catered by the Students Union, at set times in a certain room.

Training began in the morning of June 26, with lectures and problem sets. The three adult Team members were assisted by Paul Ottaway, a graduate student at Dalhousie, who had just finished attending a math meeting at Banff and had volunteered to assist in part of the Camp. Another Calgary student, Boris Braverman, was invited to take part in this training during the day. In the afternoon, all seven Team members present at the Camp went with me to a nearby mall to purchase the Team uniforms (pants).

Graham Wright arrived in Calgary in the early afternoon of Monday June 27, to prepare for the Media Event to take place the next day. That evening he treated the adult Team members and me to supper at a nearby restaurant.

In the morning of Tuesday June 28 we were joined by three more (much younger) “local” students for the day: Jaclyn Chang and Hunter Spink of Calgary, and Mariya Sardarli of Edmonton, along with their parents. After some “fun” math activity in the morning, the “Media Event” took place from noon till 2:00 PM. Peng Shi and Yufei Zhao arrived in Calgary just in time to take part in this event and be introduced to the media and the guests along with the rest of the Team. The rest of the afternoon was spent in further “fun” training activity, and at 4:00 the Calgary portion of the Camp ended

with the departure of all the local students. The Team members and trainers were then driven to the BIRS facility in Banff for the remainder of the Training Camp.

BIRS of course was again an unmatched setting for the Camp, with the facilities, the food, and the scenery all superb. (There were, however, noticeably fewer elk than in 2003.) Training continued, with an increased emphasis on mock contests.

Besides the concentrated training that took place at BIRS, the Team was taken on some excursions. On July 2 we drove to the Columbia Icefields with a stop at Lake Louise on the way back. That evening we went to see “War of the Worlds” at the Banff movie theatre. In the evening of July 5 most of us attended a concert at a Banff church. Then on July 6 we all walked up the Sulphur Mountain trail. The weather turned rainy once we were at the top of the mountain, and we eventually decided to take the gondola down rather than risk the slippery hike down the trail. Once at the bottom we visited the hot springs, where only two Team members were prepared to go into the pool.

On July 3 Paul Ottaway left the Camp to return to Halifax. On July 6 both Elena Braverman and Andy Liu arrived at the Camp to help out with the rest of the training, and Elena and her family took part in the excursion that day to Sulphur Mountain. On July 7 Felix left the Camp to fly to Toronto, where the next day he continued on to Merida, Mexico (the site of the IMO) to help prepare the contest. The rest of the Team stayed at Banff to continue training under the supervision of Dorette, and with the help of Elena and Andy.

The Team left Banff on July 9 and returned to Calgary. That afternoon everyone took in the Calgary Stampede. The next morning the Team left for Toronto, where they stayed in a hotel near the airport, and in the morning of July 11 they flew to Mexico.

Many thanks to:

- The staff and management at BIRS, especially **Brenda Shakotko**, the BIRS Station Manager, who made our stay there so memorable; also, **Gemai Chen**, the Calgary representative of PIMS, and **Nassif Ghossoub**, the BIRS head, were both very supportive of the idea that the IMO Camp should be at BIRS.
- **Paul Ottaway** of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics of Dalhousie University, **Elena Braverman** of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics of the University of Calgary, and **Andy Liu** of the Department of Mathematics of the University of Alberta, who were Trainers during the IMO Camp.
- **Betty Teare**, Budgets and Administration Manager of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics of the University of Calgary, who helped to arrange the site of the Media Event, booked the food, and took the pictures at the Media Event.
- **Grady Semmens**, of Media Relations at the University of Calgary, for assistance in setting up and running our successful and enjoyable Media Event in the Learning Commons on campus.
- University of Calgary graduate student **Garth Boucher**, who drove the van taking the Team to Banff on June 28 and bringing them back on July 9.

- **Anthony Fink**, who helped meet the IMO Team at Calgary airport on June 25 and drove them to the University.
- **Tong Yu** of Edmonton, who drove Edmonton students Brian Yu (his son) and (Team member) David Rhee to Calgary on June 25.
- Former IMO Team member (and now University of Calgary student) **Alex Fink**, who helped out during the Calgary part of the IMO Camp.
- **Hugh Williams** of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics of the University of Calgary, who met Graham Wright at the Calgary airport on June 27 and drove him to the university.
- **Yanmei Fei**, a secretary in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics of the University of Calgary, who drove Graham Wright and Vancouver student Allen Zhang to the Calgary airport on June 28.

– Bill Sands