

## **Teams from La Jolla, Helix and St. Augustine High won top honors at the Mathematics Contest**

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Teams from La Jolla, Helix and St. Augustine High Schools won the top awards at the 18th annual High School Honors Mathematics Contest Saturday, May 17, at the University of California, San Diego.

Individual students receiving high honors for their test scores were Larry Doolittle, La Jolla High School; Joel West, Point Loma High School; Jeff Mulligan, La Jolla High School, and Bill DeHope, Helix High School.

Some 166 students from 31 schools throughout the county participated in the contest which was co-sponsored by the UCSD Department of Mathematics, the Greater San Diego Math Council and the Departments of Education of the San Diego City and County schools.

The three-hour exam contained 25 multiple choice questions and four problems requiring written answers. The test, which was written by Dr. John J. Wavrik of the UCSD math department, covered algebra, trigonometry and geometry and included logic and probability problems.

The La Jolla High School team received a trophy for its first-place finish in the city schools division. Tied for second place were Madison and Point Loma High Schools.

Helix High School won its award for finishing first in the county schools category. Dana Hills High School placed second and San Dieguito High School was third in the division.

St. Augustine compiled the highest score in the independent schools category. Second place went to the Bishop School and University High School was third.

Doolittle, West, Mulligan and DeHope, the top four individual scorers, were awarded calculators.

Participants were chosen by their schools through elimination contests, math clubs or by individual selection. Each school was allowed to send up to six students.

"The test was designed to see how well the students could reason mathematically," according to Wavrik, assistant professor of mathematics. "The problems were similar to those in college-level text books and they required the type of logic used by professional mathematicians."

Some students began preparing for the contest last fall with guidance from their school math teachers who were provided copies of last year's exam and suggestions for working with the students.

"The whole experience is an opportunity to learn about mathematics," Wavrik said. "The excuse is to prepare for a contest. The aim is to give students some idea of the flavor of the field of mathematics and the type of reasoning used."

The exam has been given by UCSD since 1971 with the cooperation of the Math Council, a confederation of individuals in education and industry which promotes mathematics.

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