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Newton High School's Robotics Takes Top Prize at N Brunswick Competition

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NORTH BRUNSWICK, NJ – The Newton Robotics Team Aperture from Newton High School won the Brunswick Eruption competition with their robot called The Gnarwhal. The team traveled to North Brunswick High School for the off-season competition.

Newton's Aperture was selected as a part of the top alliance after 32 qualification matches, according to the teams Public Relations manager Liam Oakes.

Aperture will advance to the finalist section along with two other teams: Nemesis from Robbinsville and RoboVikings of Archbishop Wood High School of Warminster PA. The back-up team to the alliance is Don Bosco Preparatory High School in Ramsey. They would be called on should one of the other three teams have a robot malfunction," said Oakes.

This alliance team succeeded through quarterfinals and semifinals. They finished up in the finals with the winning score of 194 points.

"I definitely had a lot of fun at this event. It was a great experience being able to compete on the field, and it certainly expanded my insight of the Drive Team," said Oakes. "I am proud of our team for working collaboratively and sharing the opportunity to be on the field with each other. We are pretty much like a family, and we help each other out in every way possible."

Aperture had 11 team members at the event:

- Elysa Taylor
- Cameron Osborn
- Nick Nannery
- Liam Oakes
- Casey Duran
- Jake Kolzow
- John Bugay
- Michael Valentine
- Katie Nelson
- Emily Mercado
- Kya Savva

Each member was able to participate in the field at each match in the qualifying rounds. "We wanted each team member to be able to recognize what it is like for our Drive Team, the subteam that normally competes on the field during competitions, while on the field. Jake Kolzow, our Build Leader, assisted our team members on the field," said Oakes.

This was an off season competition. They are typically run by other teams to allow the robotics programs to continue to stay active before the start of the new season in January. The North Brunswick competition, run by their team Raider Robotix, has occurred each year since 2002.

Aperture will begin preparing for the season by recruiting new team members; students and mentors. In January FIRST, the sanctioning body for the robotics league in which Newton competes, will release the details of the competition. At that time they will have six weeks to build their robots to the required specifications.

Oakes said "*FIRST* has released a teaser for next year's competition, called "Stronghold." It can be inferred that next year's theme will be medieval times, but we cannot be too sure about that since it hasn't been fully disclosed. We will be attending the "Kick-Off" at the New Jersey Institute of Technology on January 9, as this is the date where the competition is unveiled. Each team member is really excited and cannot wait to see what the challenge is."

Newton High School Assistant Principal Kurt Walton said, “The cream is beginning to rise to the top. Congratulations to all.”