



Math League News

■ **Our Calculator Rule** Our contests allow both the TI-89 and HP-48. You may use any calculator without a QWERTY keyboard.

■ **Our Internet Score Center** All students whose scores you report must have been tested at exactly the same time. Don't list students from any later class period. Instructions for submitting scores appear on each contest envelope. Scores you enter may be reviewed at any time by returning to the Internet Score Center. About 3 weeks after a contest, scores appear on our Web site, www.mathleague.com. Late scores must be accompanied by a brief explanation of the reason for lateness. Catherine Broyles asks, "is the score entry web page going to start having an entry for grade level?" Catherine, we are redesigning our database to be able to include this information in the future, but we cannot yet say when the new design will be up and running.

■ **Send Your Comments** to comments@mathleague.com

■ **Contest Dates** Future HS contest dates (and alternate dates), all Tuesdays, are Nov 17 (10), Dec 15 (8), Jan 12 (5), Feb 23 (16), & Mar 23 (16). (Each alternate date is the preceding Tuesday.) For vacations, special testing days, or other *known* disruptions of the normal school day, please *give the contest on an earlier date*. If your scores are late, please submit a brief explanation. We reserve the right to refuse late scores lacking an explanation. We sponsor an *Algebra Course I Contest* in April, as well as contests for grades 4, 5, 6, 7, & 8. See www.mathleague.com for information.

■ **Not Yet Received Your HS Contest Package?** Phone 1-201-568-6328 so we can reship. If you just recently got the contests, *please take Contest #1 as soon as possible, even if it's late!*

■ **Carefully Check Your Contest Package** Without opening any contest envelope, please check that the remaining envelopes are numbered 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. If you're missing a contest envelope, e-mail dan@mathleague.com with your name, the school's name, the full school address, and the number of the contest envelope you're missing. We'll mail you another set of contests right away.

■ **Eligibility Rules** Only students officially registered as students at your school may participate. That's our rule.

■ **Authentication of Scores** To give credibility to our results, we authenticate scores high enough to win recognition. Awards indicate compliance with our rules. Please have students read the *Selected Math League Rules* on the back of this sheet and then sign a sheet to confirm knowledge of the rules. *Keep* the signed copies. Do not send them to us unless we request authentication from you.

■ **General Comments About the Contest** Rita Singh said, "This was a great first contest! My grade 9s were hesitant going into this contest but fortunately they experienced much success and are almost eager to write the next one! Thanks!!!" Warren Groskreutz said, "Good contest to start the season-difficulty level was such that many students experienced relatively good success with solving the problems. Success keeps students motivated to participate in future contests." Steve Lifer said, "Nice first test for the younger students!" Maria Gale said, "Great first contest. Thank you." Richard Serrao said, "Thanks for another great start to the season!" Cyndee Hudson said, "No matter the grade level or math class, this test interested and challenged everyone." Todd Braun said, "A nice first competition. Students of a variety of skill levels were able to experi-

ence success. Thanks for your efforts." Doreen Mantilia said, "I have quite a few strong students, but I think this was one of the easiest contests I have seen in a long time. I hope you were giving them a nice start and that future contests will be a bit tougher." Benjamin Wearn said, "We felt this contest was easier than usual, but a good way to build interest early in the year." Dave Ollar said, "We had about 80 kids take this. I liked it because younger kids had a shot at every problem ... We'll have lots of students take it again next month." Susan Cantey said, "This was a nice contest. It started off easy and then got tricky." Fred Harwood said, "Another great start to the year with a contest where the younger students were competitive with the older ones. Well done." George Reuter said, "What a super contest! The questions were all 'get-able' without any fancy techniques, but were challenging to even my best students. Nice job!" Pamela Brownell said, "Great first contest. Easy enough to hook students, but challenging enough to make them think." Keith Calkins said, "Nice first of year contest to inspire confidence and close encounters." At least one school reported its first ever perfect score.

■ **Question 1-3: Comment** Jeff Schwartzman said, "I assume that a million other people have pointed out the typo in problem 1-3." No, Jeff, not quite a million. Due to a printing error, some schools did receive copies of the contest in which the triangle symbol was replaced by "q."

■ **Question 1-4: Comments and Appeal (Denied)** Benjamin Wearn said, "We liked the connection to the calendar; several students reported enjoying an AHA! moment." Keith Calkins said, "Nice touch with question 4 having multiple solutions and only requiring one—not to mention the blending of something which should be familiar with nice mathematics!" Keith also questioned whether parentheses indicating an ordered triple would be required for an answer to be considered correct. Yes, in this case an ordered triple in parentheses would be required. The question instructs the students to "write a triple of positive integers (a,b,c) ..." Our rules state that "if a specific answer form is required for a problem, the answers for the problem must be written in the required form."

■ **Question 1-5: Comments** Susan Cantey said, "Surprisingly, the toothpick problem was the one that most of my ... students missed ... including EVERYONE from my current calculus classes who competed!" Patricia Kassis said, "With the probability of guessing way up at 20%, I think some of my students' correct answers were lucky guesses." Dickson Benesh said, "We had a lot of students confused about 'perfect subsequent play.'" Eric Freund said, "We almost used an entire class period playing and analyzing different versions of Nim."

■ **Question 1-6: Appeal (Denied)** Trudy Thompson asked whether \$1000 would be an acceptable answer on the grounds that "next year" could mean the second or the third year of gift exchanges. We don't think there is any ambiguity here; the problem discusses three different years: "last year," "this year," and "next year." Only one expression is used to refer to each year, and "next year" is clearly the third of the three years.

Statistics / Contest #1

Prob #, % Correct (all reported scores)

1-1	94%	1-4	69%
1-2	82%	1-5	30%
1-3	63%	1-6	45%