## Second day of tasks

The tasks for the second day of competition were elaborated the previous night for about 4 or 5 hours. The committee wanted to make sure everything was easy to understand and the contestants wouldn't have to waste time by asking questions.

On the day of the competition they squeezed their brains for another 4 or 5 hours to find at least a partial solution, as they said. Most of the JBOI participants said the tasks were harder than the ones in the first day, but they liked especially the second one, *Samba*, both for the story and the solution. In the BOI contest, the tasks were also more difficult, but we think this might have also been caused by the fact that they were tired. When asked which one they liked best, the answers were *TimeIsMoney*, because it was a bit more accessible. The contestants also liked the fact that the problems weren't misleading with long stories.

Anyway, after this day of competition they seemed more happy and relaxed, maybe because the contest is now over and everybody is waiting for the final results, the overall ranking, and the medals, of course.

Bored or hard working?
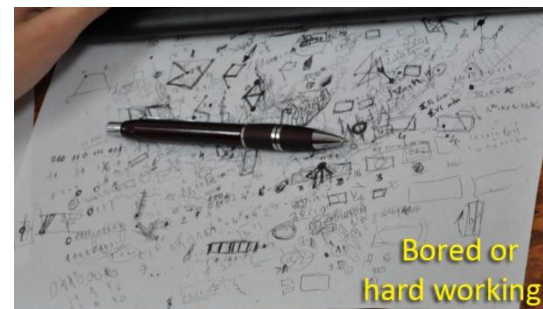
Some are thinking…

Others are kinda relaxing…

Important faces

Krassimir Manev

- Ph.D. in Comp. Science
- Deputy leader of Bulgarian JBOI team
- member of International Committee of IOI
- Deputy Chairman of IOI'2009
- Publications: Software for Discrete Math Research, many publications in the field of Discrete Mathematics

Thursday, July 7th

The 19th **Balkan Olympiad in Informatics**
and
The 5th **Junior Balkan Olympiad in Informatics**

NEWSLETTER No. 4

Some words with Assoc. Prof. Krassimir Manev, Ph. D. – Bulgaria JBOI team leader

It is really impressive for us to see such young children involved in international competitions. How do you discover these little geniuses?

Oh... this is very difficult. One of the possibilities is that one school organizes lectures on information technologies. They start learning Word, Excel and the teachers look at the guys who are really interested in using the computer.

Secondly are, of course, the results at math for some students. So they choose some of them, but this is especially in the mathematics school. Some of the math-schools in Bulgaria have the possibilities to take the students in 5^1 grade instead of the normal 8th, for the rest of the schools.

And there are some guys that come because of their parents, who are programmers. So there are different ways to find them. Initially, the groups are really small. Later at 13, 14 years old the group is getting larger.

So you think that mathematics is a basis for informatics?

Yes, it is a criterion for the teachers. They choose basically on mathematics, of course. You have no other base to check their qualities on.

There is a wrong mentality around here that young children don't fully understand the complex techniques of programming. Do you think it's true?

I think that what is interesting for most of them is to solve tasks. The game of solving tasks is the instrument that has to be used, not the language.

All right, and what about understanding the algorithms?

Oh, understanding the algorithm comes later when they understand that the tasks we solve here are easy, but there are tasks that need more experience, more knowledge, some theory.

Coming back to our JBOI, what do you think makes this edition different from others?

First of all we are here both young and elder and it is interesting to see how younger people go to the older contestants to ask something. Older contestants can tell them things that, if we were only in JBOI they couldn't learn. Practically, on a simple JBOI nobody experiences too much. In JBOI the people participate once, and the next year they are over 15. Now they have this possibility to hear new things from the older guys.

Do you have any advice for your team, or other teams?

Yes, for all the contestants.

I would advise them to write first a trivial solution of the task. The trivial solutions shows you the task inside; if you try the trivial solution you can get 10, 12, 20 points, but you understand your task, and you have a solution that is ready to take no 0 points, and if you are here for

a better result, then you can try a harder solution and you can compare the results of both, supposing that the trivial solution does not make mistakes. So my advice is to write a trivial solution to compare it with the complex one.
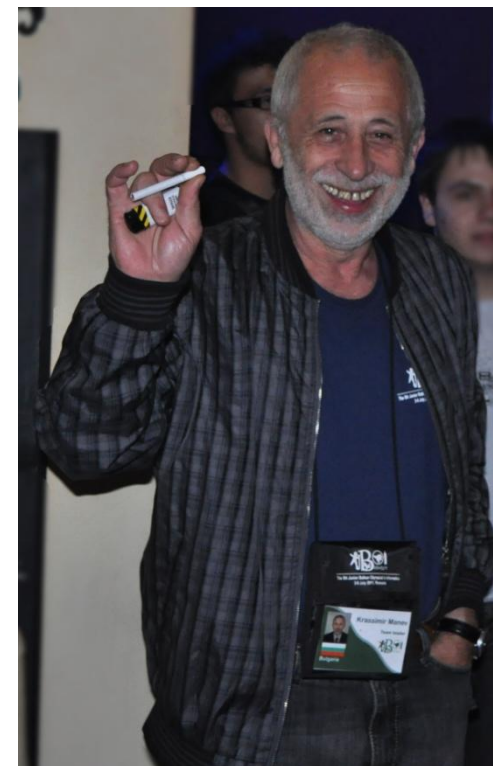
NEWSLETTER No. 4

Meeting the *Vampire*

In the afternoon, around 5p.m. the trip to the Dracula castle began. According to the legend, Count Dracula, a fictional character, was inspired by one of the best-known figures of Romanian history, Vlad Dracula, nicknamed Vlad Ţepes *(Vlad the Impaler),* who was the ruler of Walachia at various times from 1456-1462. The castle was also as a source of inspiration for the well-known novel written by Bram Stocker and therefore it is an important sight in the Bistriţa-Năsăud county. The castle is situated in the Tihuţa Pass and in order to get there, visitors could admire the Bârgău Valley, which encompasses some of the most beautiful unspoiled mountain scenery in the Carpathians with picturesque traditional villages located in valleys and on hillsides.

We got to the castle at around 7p.m. and the sightseeing tour began with a visit to a nearby monastery and the surroundings. There the Greeks and Swiss tried to get in the center of attention. The images speak for themselves:

(Can you hear the teachers screaming in the background?)

(the Greeks wanted to see *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, ©Metallica)

After so many adventures, it was time to watch a play inspired by the local legend. The play had lines both in Romanian and English, so that everybody could get a piece of it.

We then had a picnic consisting of traditional Romanian food. We also danced traditional dances and most of the contestants joined the Romanian dancers in the so-called *Hora* dance. We could all tell that the contestants were of Balkan origin, since they were very good at it.

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After the picnic, groups of contestants visited the frightening Chamber of Dracula. At the exit they shared some of their impressions with us, which were ranging from: "*I got really scared*" to "*Wow! That was very funny!*" and "*Count Dracula will never return to his coffin because of me!* (evil laughter)" (after he made the Count stumble).

Dinner was then served in the castle restaurant where the guests could taste more traditional food and everything ended with a campfire.

The contestants seemed very enthusiastic about it; they even started singing and had a wonderful time. They also received as souvenirs traditional pottery meant to help them remember the beautiful moments spent at the Dracula castle.

We continued having fun on the buses by singing songs (each team in its own language).

The real computer definitions

Software: Parts of the system that don't work.

Printer: That system component that blocks when you're not looking at it.

Cable: That part of the system that is always too short.

Restore: A procedure that works perfectly until you need it.

Error message: An approval of destroying your own data.

what's ur address?

pizza

KEVIN@NET.be

Courtesy of DavesDailyDose.com

THIS MODERN LIFE:

WORK   HOME   PLAY   SLEEP