

# Illinois Tech Robotics wins 2nd consecutive demolition title

**Kori Bowns**

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

For over 10 years, Illinois Tech Robotics (ITR) has been a student organization on IIT's campus devoted to sharing robotics through outreach events and robotics competitions. On March 13-14, ITR competed in the 27th annual Jerry Sanders Creative Design Competition (JSDC) after months of preparation.

JSDC is a two-day competition held at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign that ITR competes in each year. JSDC is one of the oldest robotics competitions in America and routinely draws competitors from schools across the Midwest. This year, the more than two dozen robots competing represented both the Chicago and Urbana-Champaign campuses of the University of Illinois, College of DuPage, Valparaiso University, Northern Illinois University, Michigan Technological University, and, of course, Illinois Institute of Technology.

The goal of the competition changes slightly each year, but always is based on

rounds where four robots compete head-to-head to score the most points in a limited amount of time. This year's game had robots scoring points by moving a variety of different balls around the playing field. Nerf balls and Wiffle balls were scored by robots collecting them and shooting them into a rotating goal in the center of the field, much like a carnival game of skill. Robots could also score by putting golf balls from their corner of the field onto a scoring zone on a putting green. Lastly, robots scored points simply by navigating some obstacles on the field; large ramps, bumps, and trapdoor tunnels prevented robots from traversing the field easily.

On the first day of competition, ITR participated in a variety of round-robin matches that pitted them against other teams, each competing for a high average score to benefit them in the later playoff rounds. After the playoff rounds began on Saturday morning, all four of the robots that ITR brought to the competition succeeded in scoring or moving on to future matches.

Roslund, ITR's oldest remaining robot, was knocked out after the first round of

playoff matches at the competition after falling just shy of scoring enough points to move on. The same fate befell Goliath, one of ITR's newer robots. ITR's Modulus, the team's newest competing robot, advanced to the quarter-finals of the competition before being defeated.

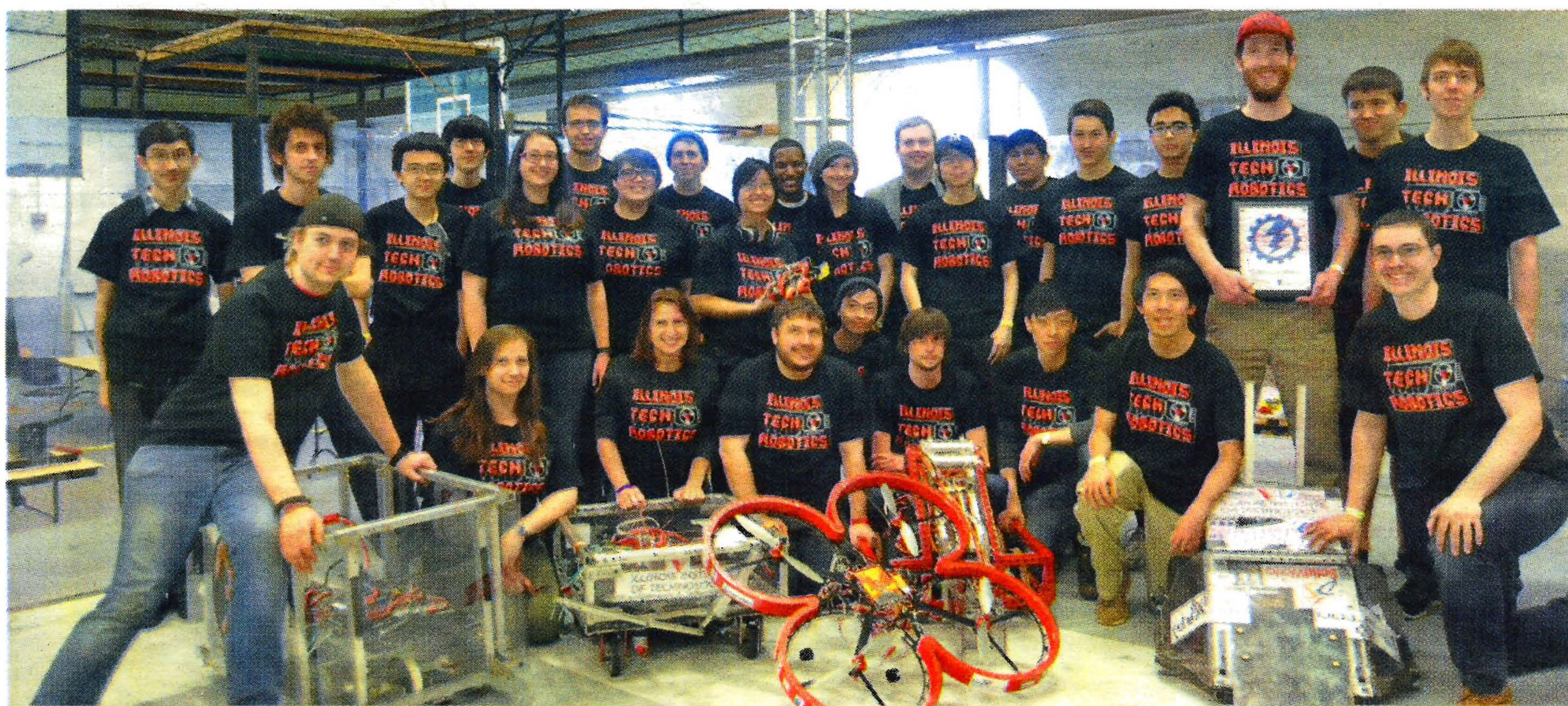
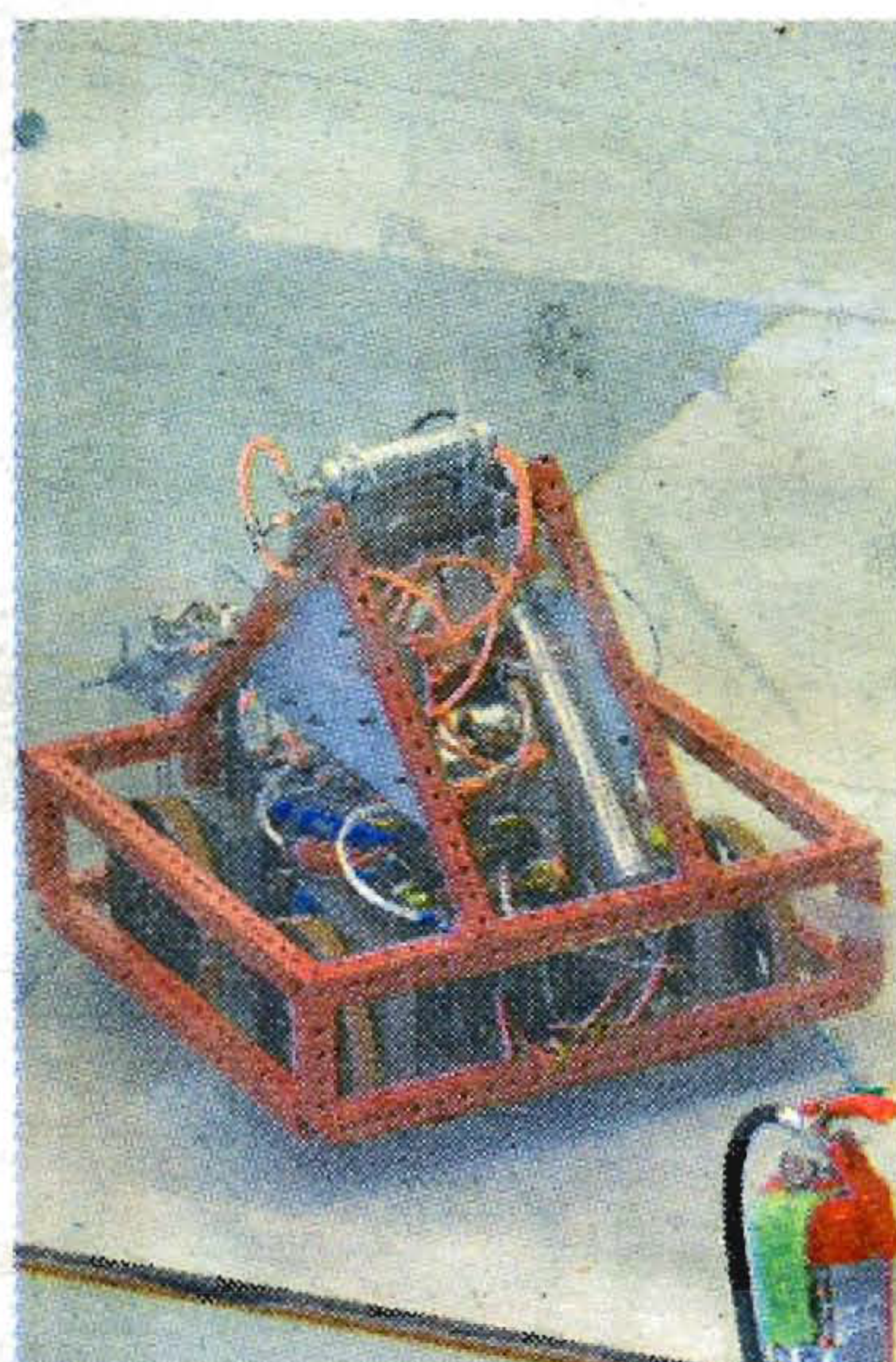
Icarus, ITR's flying quadcopter robot, rose above expectations and advanced to the semifinal matches of the competition after 3 rounds of competitive play against other aerial as well as ground-based robots. After falling a few points shy of moving on to the finals matches, ITR's chance at the main competition championship came to an end.

After the competition's final match ended and a team from UIUC took home the gold, the final match of JSDC, known as the demolition round, was set to begin. After a long two days of points-based competition, the traditional last match of JSDC is a round where any robot present at the competition is welcome to enter the arena, and all of the robots compete in a battlebots-style fight where the last robot able to move is declared the winner.

As the demolition round title hold-

ers from the previous JSDC season, the demolition round was ITR's time to shine. Once again, ITR's wedge-shaped Goliath took the field after a few modifications from its drive team, namely, adding a steel plate to the front of the robot and removing its fragile manipulator. Soon after the match began, Goliath disabled a robot from Northern Illinois University as other robots on the field fought each other. The final two robots standing were ILLINIhilation, a robot from UIUC, and ITR's Goliath. After a few minutes of Goliath chasing ILLINIhilation and the later robot hiding under tunnels on the field to avoid further damage, ITR's Goliath was declared the winner of the JSDC demolition round for the second consecutive year.

Illinois Tech Robotics has returned from their competition season and is now working on maintaining their robots as well as completing some outreach events to wrap up the school year. More information about the organization can be found on their website, [illinoistechrobotics.org](http://illinoistechrobotics.org) or by emailing [iit.robotics@gmail.com](mailto:iit.robotics@gmail.com).



Photos by Kori Bowns