Fan Club NEWS 02/2010

Page 1

Dear Fan Club Members,

The "SFZ Testers" have recently been successful in Asia, or to be more precise, in Singapore. They took part in the RoboCup World Championships with a fischertechnik robot. The technical section introduces the new ROBO Pro Light software and takes the new LT Controller under the magnifying glass. Page 3 shows how the fischer group supports the East African country of Burundi - oh, and by the way, fischertechnik has moved. And so we are coming to you today from our new premises. Page 3 also shows you where these are. Have lots of fun and enjoy reading the new News! Your Tobias

fischertechnik at the world championships

Lennard, Malte and Paul from OsnabrOck faced up to the challenge of training for twelve months to qualify with a fischertechnik robot for the RoboCup World Championships. Turn to page 4 for more details about the adventure in Singapore.

Fun with bits and bytes - new: fischertechnik ROBO LT Beginner Lab

A construction set with computer controller for kids from the age of 8 - a first at fischertechnik. Turn to page 5 to see how easy it is to control the models with the software ROBO Pro Light and which possibilities the new ROBO LT Beginner Lab offers.

Page 2

Profiles

Name: Ute Bayer, age: 47 years, favourite construction set: PROFI Oeco Tech, trained profession: bread shop salesperson, job at fischertechnik: Ute works in the warehouse where she picks orders for customers and packs them safe and ready for transport. She also deals with returns, complaints and orders for single parts. Name: Marc Schrag, age: 21 years, favourite construction set: COMPUTING Industry Robots 11, profession: trainee industrial clerk, job at fischertechnik: Marc receives orders from our customers and deals with them accordingly. He is in direct contact with our sales team and handles questions about current orders. Our customers can contact him if they want to know about prices, product availability and delivery dates.

Double celebrations: Klaus Fischer celebrates his 60th birthday

Double celebrations at the fischer group, to which fischertechnik also belongs: the company proprietor, Professor E. h. Senator E. h. E. h. Dipl.-Ing. (FH) Klaus Fischer, celebrated his 60th birthday in August. Moreover, he has also been running our company for exactly 30 years. His leadership has seen the emergence of fischer Consulting, a management consulting firm, and automotive systems, responsible for producing components such as cup holders for car interiors. In addition, Klaus Fischer has also constantly expanded the sales and production of our fixing systems at home and abroad, so that today we sell our products in more than 100 countries with 33 own foreign subsidiaries. In spite of all his many tasks, Klaus Fischer as CEO of fischertechnik GmbH is also closely involved with fischertechnik. fischertechnik takes this opportunity to congratulate Klaus Fischer on his birthday and anniversary!

Golden Rocking Horse - PROFI Technical Revolutions nominated

This year once again, another fischertechnik construction set was nominated for the renowned "Golden Rocking Horse" toy prize. Every year after the Toy Fair, the jury of the familie&co magazine chooses from among hundreds of products to select ten products in each of five categories for readers to cast their vote; this year our PROFI Technical Revolutions construction set was one of those nominated. Last year we were pleased to win the category "Toy and Technology"; this year, in the end the readers opted for another product.

Table cleaning robot in TV: school children with fischertechnik on the Johannes B. Kerner Show

A group of children from the Alexander von Humboldt grammar school in Konstanz has designed a table cleaning robot using fischertechnik building blocks, and were invited to the well-known "Johannes B. Kerner Show" on German television (SAT.1). The robot wipes the table down, dries it and sweeps crumbs into a container. The children and their fischertechnik table cleaning robot took part in the "School Children Experimenting" competition and achieved fifth place in the state competition for Baden-WOrttemberg.

Page 3

Meeting point for fans from all over Europe: 1,000 come to the fischertechnik Fan Club Day in Tumlingen Around 1,000 fans from Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, France and also for the first time from England came to the fischertechnik Fan Club Day on 4 July in Tumlingen. Many had the Fan Club Day marked in the diaries long in advance. In spite of the hot temperatures and although the World Cup was on, around 1,000 fans came to Tumlingen. The fischertechnik team had prepared a few highlights: in the Klaus Fischer Customer Centre, young inventors presented an exhibition of innovative models. In the foyer, visitors could admire a crane more than five metres high, brought specially by its builder from MOnster. The company restaurant acted as showroom for large models made by "professional" fischertechnik designers. These included a lignite excavator and a tunnel boring machine. The Netherlands Fan Club had brought its amusement park. In addition, visitors had plenty of opportunities to find out about the new products. Janosch Kuffner held a workshop on "Developing the new ROBO LT Beginner Lab" which provided insights into the development and design of a new construction set. Technical fans listened to the lectures of the guest speaker from Science House. He took a detailed look at a number of unusual questions and produced some amazing results with his experiments on the stage. Visitors young and old, large and small, put their skills to the test not only at the soccer goal or fischer TiP play tables but also in fastening dowels. The whole fischertechnik team would like to thank you for your visit, and we all look forward to the next Fan Club Day!

fischertechnik team under one roof: production, administration and shipping departments now in Salzstetten To optimise workflows at fischertechnik and make production even more effective, the production and shipping departments have been relocated from Tumlingen to the nearby town of Salzstetten. This was already home to the development, marketing and sales departments together with the management. It only took two days to get procedures up and running again so that we could send consignments out to our customers once more. Shortly afterwards, the administration also moved into new premises in Salzstetten. Work is now simpler and more effective for us all, as shorter distances in production and administration facilitate swifter, better coordination between the departments. The production area now covers approx. 1,500 m^2 or one third of a football pitch.

Donations for Burundi - fischer employees support African orphans. Following the initiative of Professor Klaus Fischer, employees of the fischer group have made a major contribution to a fundraising campaign for donations to Africa. Clothing, bedding and electronic devices were collected at all company sites in Germany. The donations went to an orphanage in Burundi where fischer employees were on site to ensure that every1hing arrived safely.

Page 4

SFZ Testers on the road to success: trio from OsnabrOck with fischertechnik robot at the RoboCup Fancy celebrating your 13th birthday at a world championship event? Malte Hillmann enjoyed this privilege, together with Paul Tegeler and Lennard Ruschmeier as German representatives at the RoboCup World Championship in Singapore. After seven exciting days in the mega metropolis, the tester team of the School Research Centre (SFZ) in OsnabrOck returned home in June with team leader Katja Cullmann and their parents, bringing with them not only lots of new impressions and adventures but also the conviction that next year they will be among the winners with the fischertechnik robot, or at the latest in 2012. The SFZ team was the only one to use fischertechnik components for the RoboRescue Primary category in Singapore. After seven tasks, the team reached place 19 of 37 competing teams. "fischertechnik is simply great", says Katja Cullmann, Head of the School Research Centre in OsnabrOck. She is

convinced above all by the stability of the models and the quality of the ROBO Pro software. "98% of the commands are executed as programmed. No other system achieves this." After the summer holidays, preparations then began for the German Open 2011 and for the next world championships. The fischertechnik teams in the SFZ Robotics Club now train together on three afternoons a month, and have been given useful tips by fischertechnik controller expert Wilhelm Brichkwedde from Steinfurt. Moreover, one of the lads also had an opportunity for a work experience placement at fischertechnik during the autumn school holidays. "I can already book ten tickets for Istanbul", says Katja Cullmann, quite sure that Lennard, Paul and Malte will be joined by other convincing fischertechnik teams at the German Open which is held at the end of March. This would have been simply inconceivable only a few months ago: after all, the three "testers" had only started training together in the SFZ in October 2009. This meant that after winning the third place at this year's German open, they only had one month to find sponsors and organise their trip to the world championships in Singapore. On arriving in the Far East, the trio were most impressed with the city and its lifestyle. The team had modified its robot prior to the world championships but there was no time left to test it. Bad luck. It was only after changing it back to the successful German Open version that the team got back on the road to success, winning the last heat. 43 young researchers attend the Robotics Club at the School Research Centre OsnabrCick with support from teachers and students. Here they learn how to program and make robot devices essentially on their own, while those with more experience pass their skills and know-how on to the team's newcomers ..

ROBO experts glow with enthusiasm: 15 children spend a week at Koblenz University's ROBO Pro Camp. Tension rises when Nik starts his robot. He'll soon see whether his ideas, design and programming will make the grade on the final course. Nik is one of those attending the ROBO Pro Camp as part of the Children's Technical Holiday Camp at Koblenz University. Together with 15 other children, he spent a week getting to know the fischertechnik software ROBO Pro and the ROBO TX controller, testing the various possibilities and making lots of different robots. Parents, grandparents, siblings, uncles and aunties were invited to the final event. The participants proudly show their designs, talk about all their experiences with the software and glow with enthusiasm when given an opportunity to show what they have learnt. "This is the eighth time that we have held the ROBO Pro Camp since 2008; this year we were really pleased to offer an advanced course", explains initiator and project leader Or. Martin Fislake from the department for Technical Engineering at Koblenz University. For more information, go to www.technikcamps.de

Page 5

Programming made easy - ROBO LT Beginner Lab for entry-level computing.

Clearly organised, labelled connections make it easy to connect up the sensors and actuators without making any mistakes .• 3 inputs for sensors (push-button, photo transistors) • 2 outputs for motors or lamps facilitate actuation of the 8 models in the ROBO LT Beginner Lab .• Flexible power supply via a DC jack for a 9V power adaptor or jacks for the fischertechnik battery pack or a 9V batter holder .• Overvoltage and short-circuit protection for all connections prevents defects in the electronic components .• USB port for connecting the controller with the PC. USB driver: suitable for 32-bit and 64-bit Windows operating systems (Win 7, Vista, XP). Software ROBO Pro Light: the ROBO Pro Light software is the ideal entry level for young programmers to get to know the world of computer-controlled models. All required functions are clearly arranged on the screen to give programming newcomers in particular an easy start. The program modules are used to produce workflow diagrams on the graphic interface. To this end, the programming elements are marked and moved to the program window with the mouse (drag & drop). Tool bar, programming window, test window for ROBO LT Controller, program elements. The program functions as follows. Press 11 once. The motor starts at motor output M1 and runs for 10 seconds before stopping again. Press 11 again to repeat the program .• Clearly manageable number of program elements: motor, lamp, query button/photo transistor, waiting time, branching· Easily understandable dialogue window for adjusting parameters· Test window integrated in the working screen is visible all the time for checking all functions of the ROBO LT controller· Simply programmed display for output of text messages on the screen. ROBO LT Bfi1ginner Lab: entry-level computing from the age of 8 years. With detailed didactic activity booklet containing programming instructions and tasks for all models in the ROBO LT Beginner Lab construction sets. The construction set contains ROBO LT controller, ROBO Pro Light software, XS motor, lamps, photo transistor and push-button. The ROBO LT Beginner Lab can be used to make eight models of common machines (merry-go-round, lighthouse with blinking light, washing machine, windshield wiper with intermittent setting, staircase lighting, sliding door with light barrier).

Page 6

Gallery: robot arm is Model of the Year 2009.

Winner for April to June 2010: "rail car" by Lasse (8 years), winner January to March 2010: "painting robot" by Ivan (10 years). In the last issue, we showed you all four quarterly winners of 2009. You have now chosen the winner, the Model of the Year 2009! The robot arm by Andreas was the clear winner with 43.2% of the votes. Congratulations! Second place with 26.4% of the votes was Frederik (paddlewheel steamboat) and third place with 18.7% was Andreas (3D printer). Many thanks for all your letters and e-mails with lots of interesting fischertechnik models' Please note that only digital pictures can be posted in the gallery at www.fischertechnik.de Please send the pictures to info@fischertechnik.de (subject: gallery). Votes can be cast four times a year, so keep your eye on this space at www.fischertechnik.de

Find the fault and win a construction set. At first glance, both photos look exactly the same. But only at first glance. In fact, we have changed a few things in the photo on the right. Can you find the faults? Are there seven, eight or even nine? Take a really good look, it's definitely worth your while! All correct entries take part in the draw for a PROFI Technical Revolutions construction set. Send the answer by 30 November under "Puzzle" to: info@fischertechnik.de or fischertechnik GmbH, Weinhalde 14 - 18, 72178 Waldachtal, Germany. Don't forget your name and address! We guarantee that the construction sets will be delivered before Christmas. Good luck. Employees of the fischer group and their families cannot take part. The judges' decision is final.

Winners of the Inventor Quiz

The solution for the Inventor Quiz in Fan Club News 01/2010 was "Invention". Max from Hude (Austria) won first prize, a PROFI Technical Revolutions construction set and an annual subscription to the Science Illustrated magazine. Lukas from Lenningen-Hochwang, Ursula from Geilenkirchen, Mr. Eichhorn from Stralsund and Birgit from H6chstadt all won an annual subscription to the Science Illustrated magazine.

Who can make the best Christmas card?

Are you already counting the days till Christmas? Have you sent the fischertechnik Christmas list to Father Christmas? But there's more to Christmas than just that! Make your best Christmas card and sent it by 30 November to fischertechnik GmbH, Weinhalde 14 - 18, 72178 Waldachtal, Germany, stating "Christmas card". The five best Christmas cards will win a ROBO LT Beginner Lab construction set and four surprise prizes. It goes without saying that the prizes will be delivered in good time before Christmas.

Page 7

No. 37 - Collector's item: swing boat fan club model

Here's a swing boat to bring you all the fun of the fair. The lights on the swing flash in rhythm. The XS motor is operated with two end buttons on the ROBO LT controller. The illustrated example program can be used to get the swing going. Tickets to go on the swing boat can be purchased at the ticket booth. To make up this model, you need the COMPUTING ROBO LT Beginner Lab and ADVANCED Universal 11 construction sets. Have fun!

Program

Circuit diagram