

IMO TRAINING CAMP

Bill Sands (University of Calgary)

June 24–July 10, 2003

The 2003 IMO Training Camp started on Tuesday June 24 with the arrival in Calgary of the six student Team members and two of the three adult Team members. Also arriving were three Edmonton students chosen, along with three students from the Calgary area, to participate in the Calgary portion of the Camp.

The participants were:

Team members: Robert Barrington Leigh, Olena Bormashenko, David Han, Oleg Ivrii, János Kramár, Jacob Tsimerman;

Adult trainers: Andy Liu (Leader), Richard Hoshino (Deputy Leader), Robert Morewood (Leader Observer), Elena Braverman;

“Local” (Alberta) students: Radoslav Marinov, David Rhee, and Brian Yu from Edmonton; Sarah Sun from Okotoks; and Dennis Cheung and Peter Zhang from Calgary.

Everyone was housed in a dormitory-style Residence on campus, two students to a room, with each Team member paired up with a “local” student. All participants were issued Meal Cards which could be used at various food outlets on campus.

Training began in the morning of June 25, with lectures, problem sets, and not-too-serious contests. Two other Calgary students, Boris Braverman and Hongyi Li, were invited to take part in this training during the day.

Graham Wright arrived in Calgary in the morning of Thursday June 26, and that afternoon he and I made a trip to a nearby shopping mall to scout out the pants that needed to be purchased as part of the Team uniforms. Later we took the students back to the mall to get fitted.

Later that evening, Richard Hoshino arrived, having been delayed by his involvement in the National Camp. In his absence, University of Calgary faculty member Elena Braverman had helped out with the training.

On Friday June 27 was the “Media Day”. The next morning, all Team members and local students checked out of Residence, and were taken on an excursion to the Calgary zoo. This was the last event of the Camp for the “local” students, and in the afternoon the Team members were driven to the BIRS facility in Banff for the remainder of the Training Camp.

BIRS was a wonderful setting for the Camp, drawing rave comments from all participants for its accommodations, its food, and its elk! Also its mountains, with a couple of the Team members in particular making regular trips up Tunnel Mountain (including after dark on occasion, I hear), and even getting most of the way up Mount Rundle one evening, accompanied by Robert Morewood.

Because of the SARS epidemic that was in the news at the time, to be allowed into Japan our Team members all had to obtain a medical certificate stating that they were free of SARS symptoms and had not been at a SARS-infected site for two weeks before leaving Canada. This was arranged

by BIRS, and on July 3 all Team members were examined by the medical staff on hand at the Banff Centre.

Besides the concentrated training that took place at BIRS, the Team was taken on two excursions: on July 3, a cold rainy day, we drove to the Columbia Icefields (where it was snowing) with a stop at Lake Louise on the way back; and on July 7, a beautiful day, we all went on a lengthy hike through Corey Pass and Edith Pass, arriving back at BIRS too late for supper in fact, which required a trip to a local pizza restaurant instead.

On July 5 Robert Morewood left the Camp to spend that night with his family in Vancouver. Andy Liu left the Camp the next morning to fly to Vancouver, and Andy and Robert met up in Vancouver Airport late that morning for the long flight to Tokyo (the site of the IMO) to help prepare the contest. They were out of contact with the rest of the Team until the competition was over. The Team stayed at Banff to continue training under the supervision of Richard Hoshino, and with the help of Elena Braverman, who had joined the Camp in Banff on June 30, and Terry Gannon of the University of Alberta, who was invited to assist with the training starting July 5 as a replacement for Robert and Andy.

The Team left for Japan on the morning of July 10.

Many thanks to:

- The staff and management at BIRS, especially **Andrea Lundquist** and **Robert Moody**, who made our stay there so memorable; also, **Gary Margrave**, the Calgary representative of PIMS, and **Robert Moody**, the BIRS head, were both very supportive of the idea that the IMO Camp should be at BIRS.
- **Elena Braverman** of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics of the University of Calgary, and **Terry Gannon** of the Department of Mathematics of the University of Alberta, who were both Trainers during the IMO Camp.
- **Betty Teare**, Budgets and Administration Manager of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics of the University of Calgary, who helped to arrange the site of the Media Launch, booked the food, and took the pictures at the Media Launch.
- **Greg Harris**, of Media Relations at the University of Calgary, for assistance in setting up and running our successful and enjoyable Media Launch in the Learning Commons on campus.
- **Sylvia Kokts-Poreitis**, who helped meet the IMO Team at Calgary airport on June 24 and drove a couple of them to the University. She also drove Robert Barrington Leigh to a nearby high school so he could write an exam during the Calgary portion of the IMO Camp. Also **Anthony Fink**, Sylvia's husband, who drove to the airport later in the evening of June 24 to pick up Robert Morewood.
- Former IMO Team member (and now University of Calgary student) **Alex Fink**, who helped out during the Calgary part of the IMO Camp.