

Computer team wins regional competition

by J.C. Smith
CENTRAL FLORIDA FUTURE

A team of UCF students won a regional computer programming competition Oct. 27 and will compete for the national title in March.

The UCF computer programming team beat 50 colleges and universities to win the Southeast Regional Programming Contest for the second year in a row.

The competition, sponsored by the Association for Computing Machinery, was held at Auburn University.

The four UCF students solved nine out of 10 problems they were given. The second-place team, Florida International University, solved six of the problems.

Dr. Ali Orooji, the team's faculty adviser, said the difference between scores is usually closer.

"We not only won, we dominated," he said.

Team member Chris Gouge, a junior majoring in electrical engineering, said, "About 20 minutes before the

contest was over, we got excited because we knew we were going to win."

The other team members are: Robert Franceschini, Peter Popovich and Mark Schnitzius.

The University of Florida placed third and Florida State University finished fourth. Other competitors included Auburn, Clemson, Duke, Georgia Tech, Mississippi and Vanderbilt.

The UCF and FIU teams will compete with 22 other regional winners and runners-up from across the country in March in San Antonio, Texas.

Orooji said the team has a chance to do well in the finals.

"I wouldn't be surprised to see them in the top five," he said.

However, Gouge seems even more optimistic.

"I think we have a pretty good chance of winning," he said.

A second team from UCF placed 14th in the contest.

"We have a very good second team," Orooji said. "They would have done

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- Dr. Ali Orooji,
Team Adviser

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better if it wasn't for lack of experience."

Robert Cargill, Bill Horan, Matt Lavoie and Glenn Martin make up the second team. Rick Duggan is the alternate. All nine programmers were chosen at a local contest in September.

Dr. John Leeson and former team members David Van Brackle and Joe Apple create practice problems.

Orooji said the teams practiced for eight hours every

Saturday for the last two months. Practices were similar to the actual competition.

Each team of four was given one computer and six hours to solve eight to 12 math, algorithmic and simulation problems.

"They have to share the computer," Orooji said. "That's a major strategy we work on during practices."

Gouge said the team's victory will bring more recognition to UCF and help graduates find better jobs.

"By making UCF look better, it makes our degrees more valuable," he said.