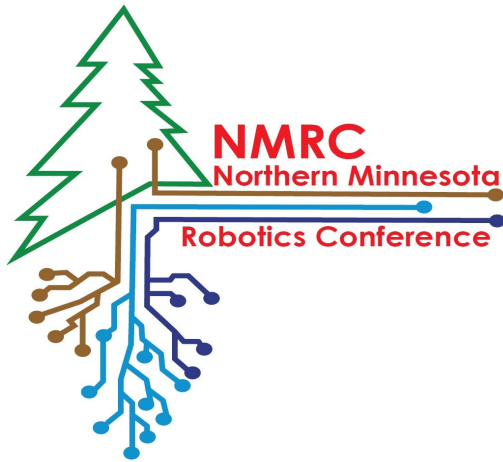


Northern Minnesota Robotics Conference



NMRConference.org

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Bemidji, MN (April 19th, 2022) - The Northern Minnesota Robotics Conference (NMRC) purchases a robotics competition field to be deployed across Northern Minnesota and Eastern North Dakota.

There are many different challenges that HS Robotics teams in our region face annually. One of the largest of these is geographic isolation compared to their peers in central Minnesota. The NMRC covers more than 35,000 square miles and stretches from Hatton, ND to Grand Marais. We have members as far north as International Falls and we dip as far south as Upsala.

For the vast majority of our teams access to a fully functional robotics field other than during competition is virtually nonexistent. Until recently there was only one FIRST robotics competition field in Minnesota, that a team could possibly get access to year round. There are now 5 fields in Minnesota that can potentially be used by teams. However there are only two fields north of the Twin Cities and one of those is based in Duluth.

This leaves one field for the rest of northern MN to provide opportunities to teams across our vast region. For the past eight years the Nevis HS team has worked diligently to help area teams by giving them access to their robotics field throughout the season. They have hosted both kick off events and scrimmages prior to the competition portion of each FRC (FIRST Robotics Competition) season. This allows teams to get on the field for the first time in almost nine months. They have also transported, set up, and run this field for teams to practice on during large scale regional robotics competitions in both Duluth and Grand Forks. The large-scale event in Duluth has had as many as 124 teams from around the world in attendance in recent years.

The charitable work that team 3102 has done to help teams around them over the years has been exceptional. However as with any group resources can be limited and there is only so much time, talent, and energy to go around. With this in mind the Tech-No-Tigers from Nevis HS and the NMRC have finalized an agreement that will continue this legacy of support. Beyond that our joint goal is that our work grows in order to help more students each and every year.

With generous financial support from our partner Sourcewell, which is a cooperative purchasing organization based in Staples, the NMRC has been able to purchase this competition field. The acquisition of this field now places the responsibility upon the NMRC and its 29 member teams as a whole rather than any one team to continue the legacy that has been started by team 3102.

This field's first task under NMRC ownership was to support the "Great Northern Regional" robotics competition that was held in Grand Forks, ND at the Alerus Center March 23-26. This event hosted 49 teams from across Minnesota and North Dakota who came to compete. The field was set up for teams to test their robots mechanisms as well as having space to practice. This field was available to teams throughout the entirety of the event.

Ultimately however the NMRC's goal is to not only support these historical efforts but to potentially expand upon them. This means moving the field around to several different communities throughout the NMRC network during the season if a suitable space can be secured for its set-up. Preparations are already being made for the field to make first time stops in Alexandria for the NMRC Championship event & Brainerd in the coming season. These events travel to a new location each year since 2017, to expose communities who may be unfamiliar with this sport of the mind).

Beyond this there are discussions with groups such as the STEM Alliance of Fargo Moorhead and members of the Central Minnesota Robotic Hub (CMNRH) about special summer event showcases that potentially have a desire to utilize the field or its components. These types of events are crucial to sparking the interest in our youth about topics like engineering, coding, machining, and more.

If you would like more information about this NMRC project or other general information please visit our website at NMRCConference.org or contact is via email at nmrconference@gmail.com

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jesse Frost", with a stylized, flowing script.

Jesse Frost
President
Northern Minnesota Robotics Conference

Images: NMRC Field set up @ the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, ND

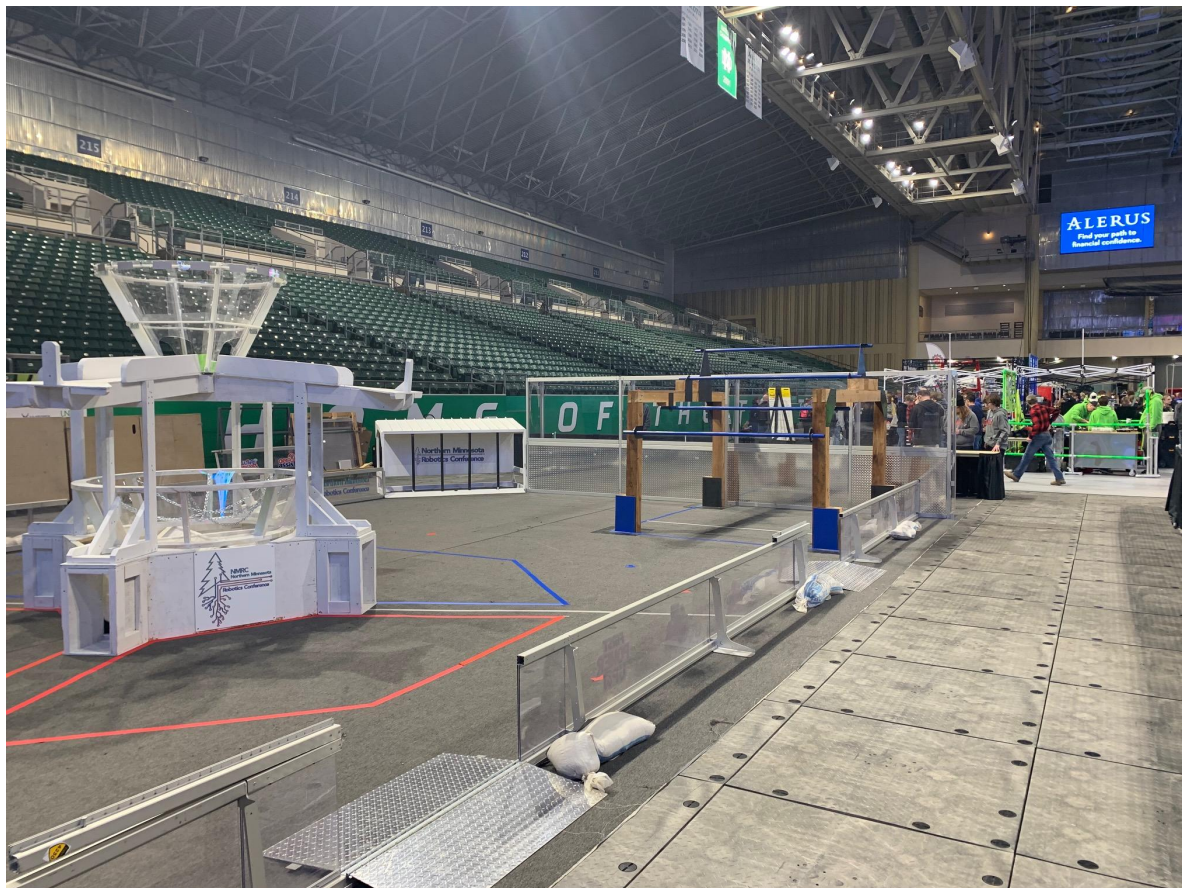


Image: Team 4480 "UC-Botics" from Upsala, MN using the practice field @ Grand Forks, ND

