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PLEASE DISTRIBUTE THIS TO OTHER TEAM MEMBERS!

NOTE: Team updates will continue after the 2/18 robot ship date.

FIRST will provide rules updates and other important information to teams via the FIRST web site at:

http://www.usfirst.org/robotics/2003/docs.htm

Please check the team updates portion of the web site on a regular basis to insure that your team does not miss critical information about the 2003 FIRST Robotics Competition. FIRST recommends assigning at least one team member the duty of keeping up to date on all team updates. This person or group should be responsible for distributing information contained in team updates to the appropriate team members.

QUESTIONS?

MESSAGE BOARD
In order to post questions on our message board at:

http://jive.ilearning.com/index.jsp

- **You <u>must</u> reference the particular section of the manual you are questioning or your question will not be answered. This will help us give you the most accurate answer possible.**
- **Limit each message board submittal to ask only 1 question at a time.   This will allow us to categorize your question and will enhance our ability to respond in a timely manner.**
- **<u>Please state your inquiry as a question. Some submittals have been lengthy and we have had a great deal of trouble trying to find the question buried within.</u>**
- **Do <u>not</u> reply to posted messages. FIRST is the only official source for answers. Your replies to posted questions slow down the moderating of this forum. Replies other than from FIRST will be deleted.**

<u>AUTODESK, INC.</u>
For all inquiries, please e-mail:

first.entries@autodesk.com

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A SPECIAL MESSAGE TO OUR TEAMS

FIRST has begun to receive questions about plans for the regional events and Houston championship should an act of war or terrorism occur in the next months. We are concerned for the safety and security of citizens facing these threats anywhere in the world, and, in particular, for all our men and women in the military.

While we recognize the impact these acts would have, we also understand the best course of action at this time is to continue to move forward with the existing plans. Therefore, FIRST is continuing to follow those plans and do all that is necessary to deliver superb regional and championship events for all the teams. We are not considering cancellations, extensions, or refunds. We do recognize the right and responsibility of each individual to judge how best to proceed. In the meantime, we'll continue to work toward a great season of Regional events and the Championship.

THE GAME

SCORING
We will attempt to take the mystery out of scoring the containers and stacks in the next update, hopefully with pictures. Imagine how the referees feel about scoring?

THE ROBOT

WHAT CAN I MAKE AFTER MY ROBOT SHIPS +WHAT CAN I FABRICATE BETWEEN EVENTS?
The next update will discuss this issue.

ROBOT INSPECTION SHEET
The robot inspection sheet for 2003 will be available soon.

ROBOT INSPECTIONS
More coming in a future issue.

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KIT OF PARTS

MISSING OR BROKEN
For any missing parts or broken parts, please contact us at:

frcparts@usfirst.org

BUSSMANN 120A. BREAKERS
The Terminal Supply Co in Troy, Michigan has some inventory of the Bussmann 120Amp breakers, and will sell them directly to FIRST teams. The Bussman part number is 185120F. To order by telephone, call 1 800-989-9632, ext. 153.

FIELD / CORRECTIONS

There may be no tapelines on the field as shown in the original field layout drawing included in your manual. Depending on the quality of the carpet seaming, tape may not be necessary. If seams separate, then 2" red and 2" blue gaffers tape will be used.

AUTODESK

AUTODESK VISUALIZATION AWARD - SUBMISSION INFORMATION
Please to go http://support.discreet.com as a technical resource for 3ds max. To reiterate here are some more 3ds max tips:

1. Create the original animation and render it out as a series of sequentially number 640x480 Targa files, e.g., Targ0000.tga, Targ0001.tga, Targ0002.tga and Targ0899.tga.

If necessary, use the Network Rendering feature to help shorten the rendering time. This is covered in the 3ds max Reference Manual and essentially consists of installing 3ds max on several other computers that have a network connection to the master. These other computers can be accessed by the master copy of 3ds max and harnessed to help with the rendering... even without getting licensed!

2. The next step can be accomplished with the Video Post function, but here we offer here a parallel procedure for those not familiar with Video Post.

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Clear the scene from 3ds max and select the Targa file sequence as a background image environment. The steps are covered in the Ref Manual about how to choose an environment background from a bitmap. The sequence of files is something that 3ds max calls an Image File List (IFL) file and that's pretty easy too, once you've done it. The environment Browse window has a checkmark for an option called Sequence. So you choose Targ0000.tga, check the Sequence option, and 3ds max automatically assumes you wish Targ0000.tga and all the other Targ*.tga files after that.

3. The last step is to render the Animation file. Before you render the entire animation for submission to Autodesk, use these individual targa files to do some preliminary quality tests. You will quickly see the results of experimenting with different codecs, different compression amounts, etc. This can be a test of, say 50 - 100 frames, to see how the compression settings are going to work out. Testing this way is quicker than rendering the geometry each time for each test. This method only needs 3ds max (or Adobe Premiere, etc.) to convert previously rendered images to an animation file since there's no geometry in this cleared-off scene.

ADMINISTRATIVE/MATERIAL HANDLING/SHIPPING

There are none for this update.