

# Speed, accuracy important in UNL mousetrap races

By Jim Berryman

Defending champion Gary Aurand reclaimed his title in the college division of the fifth annual Pi Tau Sigma Mousetrap Car Race Friday in the Nebraska Union. In the high school division, Randy Page and Jeff Baehr of Adams won first place honors.

Aurand, who set a mousetrap race record last year with a score of 6.9 seconds finished with an 8-second score. The Pi Tau Sigma car took second place. The college division had four entrants.

Scoring in the mousetrap race is tabulated according to the car's time and accuracy. The tiny car, powered by the snap of a mousetrap, must travel as close to three meters as possible. The car is timed and penalized for every centimeter under the three-meter mark and doubly penalized if the car goes past the three-meter mark. The lowest score wins.

Although he failed to better last year's record time, Aurand said he was pleased with the outcome.

"I'm very happy and I feel that I got a good run," Aurand said.

A 19-year-old sophomore chemical engineering major from Chapman, Aurand said his older brother got him interested in the event.

"It sounded interesting from my brother, so I decided to give it a try," he said. His brother is now a mechanical engineer in Indianapolis, Ind.

Aurand used the same car Friday as he did in last year's record-breaking run. And although Aurand built the car in only two nights, many days of

planning went into the finished product.

"It's something I enjoy doing," he said. "It's kind of a challenge."

However, veteran mousetrap racer Aurand's 8-second score was not the best of the day. Page and Baehr racked up a score of 7 seconds to take top honors in the high school division. Brian Anders of Grand Island Northwest finished second with a score of 11 seconds, while Brad Schulz of Beemer was third with 37 seconds. Approximately 12 high school students participated in the event.

Baehr and Page were also happy with their run, which went exactly three meters in seven seconds.

"We worked on the car for five days, so it really makes us feel good that we won first place, and even got the best score," Page, a high school senior, said.

Science teacher Bud Wingate's class project got the two winners interested in the event, Baehr, a high school junior, said.

"We've been studying a lot of this in Mr. Wingate's class, and we applied what we learned to his project," he said.

Even though both said many people may not understand the logic of a mousetrap race, they said they were proud to be a part of the day's events.

"Hey, we're getting out of school for a day," Page said.

The mousetrap race, which is held to help promote Engineering Week and UNL, was a success, said Chairman Mitchell Ferrill, even though more people were expected to participate in the high school division. About 200 people watched the event, he said.

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