

school times

Chatham challenge champs

ALMOST 1000 students from around the Manning and Great Lakes regions took part in the Science and Engineering Challenge at Taree's Bushland Drive Racecourse.

The Science and Engineering Challenge is an outreach program founded by the University of Newcastle in 2000.

Since then it has grown to involve more than 100 Rotary clubs and 30 universities, reaching over 800 schools and 22,000 students nationwide, with the Taree event being the largest in regional Australia.

The challenge addresses the skills shortage in science and engineering by inspiring young people to study mathematics, physics and chemistry in senior

high school.

It provides students with an exhilarating day where they compete with other school groups in engaging and demanding science and engineering-based activities.

The challenge also gives students an appreciation of what it would be like to work as a scientist or engineer.

One of the organisers of the local challenge, John Walton, wanted to thank the major sponsors of the event who have helped it grow over the years.

"A big thank you has to go to our major sponsors MidCoast Water, Taree and Wingham Race Club, AGL Gloucester and all the local Rotary clubs who run the day," John said.

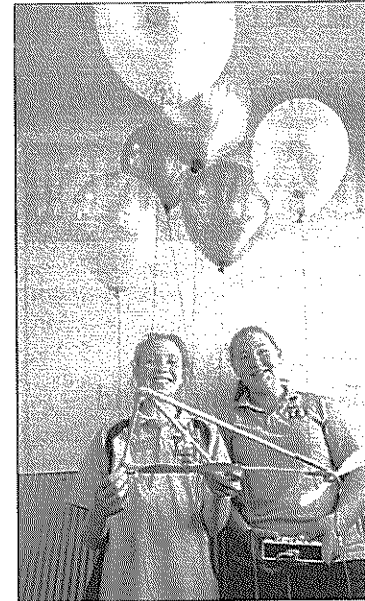
"This was our 10th anniversary

and we started with about 300 students, but it's since tripled in size, it's really great to see."

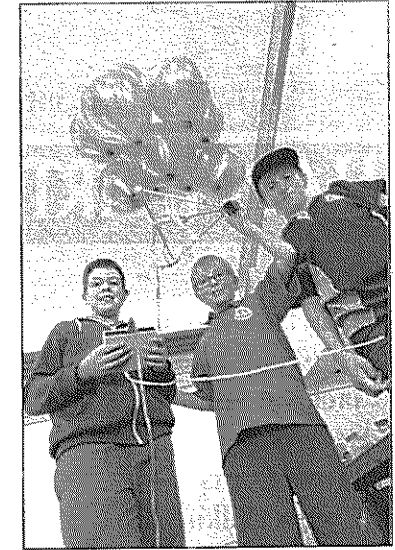
Each event culminates with a bridge-building challenge, the winners of which progress on to the next round of competition.

There is fierce rivalry among local schools for the coveted title of Science and Engineering Challenge Champions and this year, for the first time ever, Chatham High School took out the competition.

The competition has been dominated by Taree High School and Wingham High School throughout the event's history and John said it was great to see Chatham come away with the win.



Kate McWhirter and Georgie Moss from Wingham Public School.



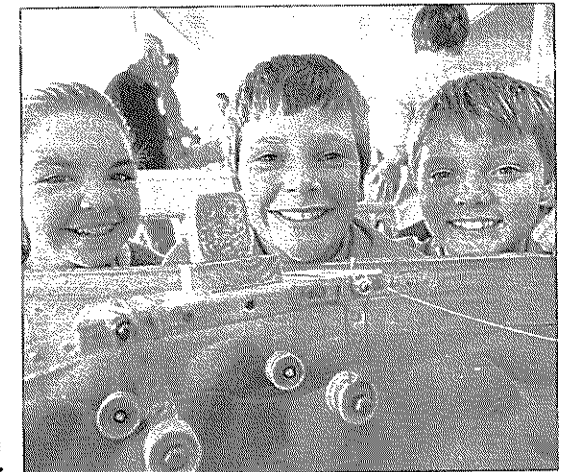
Mitchell Brown, Mitchell Worth and Joshua McCann from Taree West Public School testing their science skills.



Niki Worth and Georgie Locchi of Lansdowne Public School were paired with Mia Emerton and Lara Watts from Moorland Public School for their day at the Science and Engineering Challenge.



Eleanor Ovey, Katie McDonald, Chris Ward and Jed Edmonds of Tinonee Public School, watched on by Harry Barwell of Wingham High School.



Cundletown Public School's Mikalah McDonald, Ashley Clement and Mitchell McCloy eyeing off their handiwork.