



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Includes complete list of teams and schools**

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### **BOTBALL ROBOTICS COMPETITION: ROBOTS THAT DON'T NEED REMOTE CONTROL**

Lowell - March 25, 2009 - The KISS Institute for Practical Robotics announces the New England Botball Educational Robotics Tournament, taking place Saturday, March 28, at University of Massachusetts Lowell, Cumnock Hall. The Botball Tournament is free and open to the public. Seeding Rounds begin at 10 a.m. and double elimination rounds start at approximately 1:30 p.m.

Fifteen Botball teams from around the region will compete. Each team consists of about 5-20 middle and high school students who design, build, program and document a pair of autonomous (no remote control) robots to play in this year's open-ended game. The theme of this year's game is "Alternative Energy".

The Botball Educational Robotics Program engages middle and high school aged students in a team-oriented robotics competition that develops students' science, technology, engineering, computer science and math skills. Home schoolers and community teams are also welcome to participate. In Botball, all the design, coding, and building of robots is done by students, and no machining is necessary.

The New England Botball Program started with a two-day hands on professional development workshop for educators on January 23-24 at MITRE Center in Bedford. At the workshop, teams received their kits of reusable robotics equipment. Each kit will be used for competition and will be kept by the school or team to be integrated into the classroom or extracurricular activities. This ensures that schools will be able to continue to grow their science, math and technology curricula through robotics after the Botball season is over.

NASA has sponsored Botball Robotics for over ten years. NASA uses autonomous robots in space and planetary exploration, which is why they use Botball to reach out to their future workforce and help them get relevant hands-on experience and skills.

Professor Holly Yanco at the University of Massachusetts Lowell and Professor Karl Wurst at Worcester State College have worked together in using Botball to reach out to middle and high school students, helping to prepare and motivate individuals who may one day attend their classes.

KISS Institute for Practical Robotics, an educational non-profit organization, will present 14 Botball Workshops and Tournaments this year - 12 in the United States and 2 based

internationally. All teams who participate in their regional workshop and tournament, regardless of how they place in their competition, are eligible to participate in the International Botball Tournament taking place this summer in Leesburg, VA, during the Global Conference on Educational Robotics on July 1-5, 2009.

Over 6,000 students participate in Botball every year and more than 60,000 have competed over the course of 11 years. In 2009, teams from 23 states and 6 countries will participate in Botball.

For more information about Botball please see: [www.botball.org](http://www.botball.org) or contact: [outreach@kipr.org](mailto:outreach@kipr.org).

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The Botball Program is sponsored in part by: NASA Robotics Alliance Project, Solidworks Corporation, Innovation First Inc., iRobot, and igus, inc.,

### **New England Botball Robotics Teams:**

Ashland High School, Ashland, MA  
Chelmsford High School, Chelmsford, MA  
Greater Lowell Technical High School, Tyngsboro, MA  
Guilmette School, Lawrence, MA  
Haverhill Middle and High School, Haverhill, MA  
Lexington High School, Lexington, MA  
Littleton High School, Littleton, MA  
Littleton Middle School, Littleton, MA  
Malden Catholic High School, Malden, MA  
Merrimack Valley Homeschoolers, Dunstable, MA  
Needham High School, Needham, MA  
Roxbury Latin School, West Roxbury, MA  
The Governor's Academy, Byfield, MA  
Wellesley High School, Wellesley, MA  
West Middle School, Andover, MA