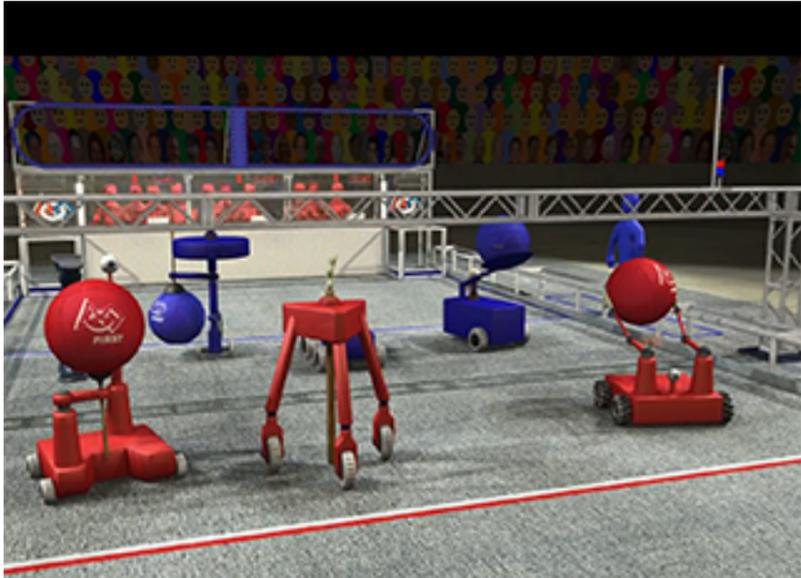


## FIRST AERIAL ASSIST 2014 Robotics Game Unveiled

FIRST



**MANCHESTER, NH** — Inventor and [FIRST](#) [1] Founder [Dean Kamen](#) [2] launched the 2014 [FIRST Robotics Competition \(FRC\)](#) [3] season January 4, 2014, with the Kickoff of a new robotics game called [AERIAL ASSIST](#) [4] before a crowd of 400 people at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, NH, hometown of *FIRST* Headquarters. Nearly 70,000 high-school students on more than 2,700 teams in 92 cities around the globe joined the [2014 Kickoff](#) [5] via live NASA-TV broadcast and webcast.

“The students who participate in the *FIRST* Robotics Competition are not only building robots; they are building character, self-respect, and relationships with their peers,” said Dean Kamen, president of DEKA Research & Development and *FIRST* Founder, adding, “Winning the game is fun, but the importance of *FIRST* is that you’ll get much more out of it than you put in, and it’s going to change the rest of your life.”

The 2014 game, [AERIAL ASSIST](#) [6], is played by two Alliances of three teams each. Alliances compete by trying to score as many balls in goals as possible during a two-minute and 30-second match. Additional points are earned by robots working together to score goals, and by throwing and catching balls over a truss suspended just over five feet above the floor as they move the ball down the field.

“The *FIRST* Robotics Competition develops 21<sup>st</sup> century thinkers, 21<sup>st</sup> century workers, and people who will be able to lead in the innovation economy,” remarked Maggie Hassan, New Hampshire Governor, before directly addressing the student participants in the audience at Southern New Hampshire University. “We know that our competitiveness as a state, and as a country in this global economy is going to depend on how well you all can develop as the future problem-solvers we need, and the skills you learn in this competition are critical to our success moving forward.”

At the Kickoff, FRC teams were shown the AERIAL ASSIST playing field and received a Kit of Parts made up of motors, batteries, a control system, a PC, and a mix of automation components and only limited instructions. Working with adult Mentors, students have six weeks to design, build, program, and test their robots to meet the season’s engineering challenge. Once these young inventors build a robot, their teams will participate in one or more of the 98 Regional and District competitions that measure the effectiveness of each robot, the power of collaboration, and the determination of students.

“I love *FIRST*. It’s about much more than cultivating your interests in science, technology, engineering, and math,” said Senator for New Hampshire Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.). “It’s also about developing important skills in leadership and teamwork. We need to make sure we have programs like *FIRST* in every school district to ensure a bright future for each student, as well as for America.”

Sponsored by NASA and Needham, Massachusetts-based PTC, the 2014 *FIRST* Robotics Competition Kickoff event is an opportunity for teams from all over the world to come together as a community to share in the excitement of seeing the new game unveiled. Teams at local Kickoffs in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Mexico, and the U.S. watched the proceedings via NASA-TV and were offered workshops and a chance to meet other teams.

“Through *FIRST*, you’re engaged in a neck-and-neck technology race with us professionals,” said Jim Heppelmann, President and Chief Executive Officer of PTC. “Think of what that experience means; the jobs you can get, the careers you can develop, the problems you’ll solve, the money you’ll make, and the fun you’re going to have. What a special program and special opportunity *FIRST* is. The 6,000 employees of PTC are proud to sponsor this event and proud to be a Strategic Partner of *FIRST*.”

“This is more than a game. This experience highlights what you will do in your careers,” said John M. Grunsfeld, Associate Administrator for the Science Mission Directorate at NASA Headquarters. “Experience in this competition is similar in many ways to how we design, build, and test NASA robots.”

To find *FIRST* Robotics Competition events and/or teams in your area, visit <http://www.usfirst.org/whats-going-on> [7].

### About *FIRST*

Accomplished inventor [Dean Kamen](#) [2] founded [FIRST](#) [8](For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) in 1989 to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people. Based in Manchester, NH, *FIRST* designs accessible, innovative programs to build self-confidence, knowledge, and life skills while motivating young people to pursue opportunities in science, technology, and engineering. With support from over 200 of the Fortune 500 companies and more than \$18 million in college scholarships, the not-for-profit organization hosts the [FIRST Robotics Competition](#) [3] (FRC) for students in Grades 9-12; [FIRSTTech Challenge](#) [9] (FTC) for Grades 7-12; [FIRSTLEGO League](#) [10] (FLL) for Grades 4-8; and [Junior FIRSTLEGO League](#) [11] (Jr.FLL) for Grades K-3. [Gracious Professionalism](#) [12] is a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community. To learn more about *FIRST*, visit [www.usfirst.org](http://www.usfirst.org) [8].

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**Links:**

- [1] <http://www.usfirst.org>
- [2] <http://www.usfirst.org/aboutus/bio/dean-l-kamen>
- [3] <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc>
- [4] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f5zWzICG5to&feature=c4-overview&list=UUHA7zyPRS3VPDvl4ehss-zw>
- [5] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWb248RSafo&feature=youtu.be>
- [6] [http://www.usfirst.org/sites/default/files/uploadedFiles/About\\_Us/Media\\_Center/FRC\\_Assets/2014\\_FRC\\_Game\\_1page.pdf](http://www.usfirst.org/sites/default/files/uploadedFiles/About_Us/Media_Center/FRC_Assets/2014_FRC_Game_1page.pdf)
- [7] <http://www.usfirst.org/whats-going-on>
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