

Cincinnati Spring Open 2008

In early May of 2008, canadianCUBING's lead organizer Dave Campbell decided he wanted to attend the Cincinnati Open on May 31st, 2008. "Basically, I was looking to go to a competition where I was not organizing it and could concentrate on just being a competitor" said Dave. "It had been almost a year since I had gotten to do that, not since the US Open in 2007. So I asked the community if anyone wanted to come with me, since I was driving and had the extra room in the car". Responding to the offer was Bill Li, Jack Moseley, Eric Limeback and Emile Compion.

Cincinnati's Eve



The team of five drove down to Cincinnati, Ohio on the Friday before the competition, May 30th. Apart from the familiar clicking of cubes, the misplacement of various items (cubies included) under the seats of the VW Golf, watching the odometer go from 9999 to 10,000, an extended tour of the customs office at the border, and an hour long detour; the drive down was very relaxing and relatively uneventful.

Competition organizer, Jim Mertens, and his family were kind enough to let us stay the weekend in their home, feed us several meals and made us feel right at home, for which we are eternally grateful. We arrived at the Mertens' home after around 9 hours of driving. The night we arrived consisted of a house tour, a local concert/fair and an intense cubing session, with the five of us sitting in a circle in Jim's basement racing various events while Jim had left to pick up Bob Burton from the air port.

Side Events (Magic, Master Magic, Clock and 4x4x4 Blindfolded)

These events were not announced with the first set of planned events, but were requested by some competitors in the weeks before the competition. Only first place earned a medal for these events.

Bob Burton (previous Magic world record holder) won the Magic event with an average of 1.47 seconds. Eric Limeback took 2nd place, behind 1st by a mere 0.05 seconds with an average of 1.52 seconds, which would have earned him first place at Canada's most recent cubing competition, canadianCUBING Classic 2008. Team member, Bill Li, finished 3rd, tying his best official average of 2.21 seconds and setting a new personal best single of 1.78 seconds.

The Master Magic event saw only four competitors – Bob Burton and the Hughey family (Mike and his daughters Marie and Rebecca). Bob expectedly won with an average of 3.92 seconds. Rebecca Hughey placed 2nd, beating her Dad by over half a second with a very impressive average of 5.03 seconds. Mike Hughey placed 3rd with an average of 5.79 seconds.

The Clock event saw only three competitors; even so, all three competitors solved the puzzle very quickly. Bob Burton won with a mean of 16.73 seconds, and Brad Davis placed 2nd with an average of 27.48 seconds. Matt Rudnicki placed 3rd, with a DNF average. Since clock is still a "mean of 3" event, every solve counts, and poor Matt was unfortunate enough to DNF one of his solves. It should be noted that Matt actually had the fastest solve (12.72 seconds) out of all three competitors that day. He may very well have won the event if it weren't for his one DNF.



The 4x4x4 Blindfolded event was a very impressive one to watch, with only two people making attempts. Mike Hughey began his first attempt before any other events of the competition had begun. We were all amazed to see him pull down his blindfold and begin solving after about five minutes of memorization. His first attempt was a DNF by a few misplaced edge pieces. However, his second attempt was successful, giving him first place in the event with a time of 12 minutes 52 seconds. Eric Limeback was the other competitor, and the first Canadian to officially solve a 4x4x4 blindfolded. Similar to Mike, Eric's first attempt was also a DNF, but his second attempt was a successful solve of 23 minutes 49.00 seconds, giving him the Canadian National Record for 4x4x4 BLD.

2x2x2

The 2x2x2 event tied with the 4x4x4 event as the second most competitors, behind only the 3x3x3, with 17 participants, seven of whom achieved averages of under 10 seconds. Emile Compion came in 1st place with an average of 7.04 seconds. His fastest single time of 5.36 seconds was a new African Record. Eric Limeback came in 2nd, only 0.09 seconds behind Emile with an average of 7.13 seconds. Jack Moseley placed 3rd with an average of 8.39 seconds. Jack also had the fastest single solve of the competition with a very impressive time of 4.33 seconds.

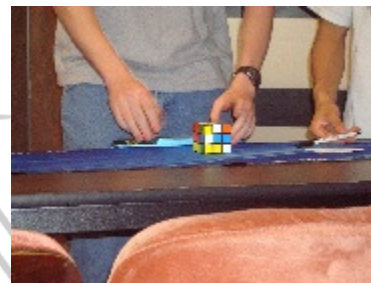


3x3x3 Blindfolded

This event only saw eight competitors, but six of them had successful solves. Eric Limeback won the event with a new Canadian National Record of 1 minute 22.22 seconds. Eric had high hopes of setting a new NR at the competition, and the canadianCUBING team is very proud of his achievement. Mike Hughey placed 2nd with a fastest time of 2 minutes 14.47 seconds. Mike was the only blindsolver at the competition to complete all three of his solves successfully. Bob Burton, taking home yet another medal, placed 3rd in the event with a time of 4 minutes 25.68 seconds.

3x3x3

The first round of the 3x3x3 event saw a total of 35 competitors. Of those competitors an impressive 22 cubers achieved an average of under 40 seconds, 13 under 30 seconds and eight achieved sub 20 second averages. Eric Limeback finished the first round in 1st place with an average of 13.85 seconds, Mike Stewart finished 2nd with an average of 15.64 seconds and Jack Moseley finished 3rd with an average of 15.77seconds. Notably, Bill Li (of the canadianCUBING team) set his best official average placing him 5th in the first round of the event behind our own Dave Campbell who sat in 4th place.



The second and final round of the 3x3x3 speed solve event consisted of all those cubers who achieved an average of 40 seconds or faster. Eric Limeback won overall with an average of 13.38 seconds and obtained an incredible single solve time of 9.55. The sub-10 put Eric 4th in the world, just behind our own Harris Chan, and actually tied Ron van Bruchem's previous World Record time. Jack Moseley placed 2nd with an average of 16.14 seconds and Mike Stewart placed 3rd with an average of 16.79 seconds. All of us from the canadianCUBING team placed within the top 10 cubers of the event.

4x4x4



The 4x4x4 implemented the combined average approach, as most competitions do for big cubes. The cut off time to complete the average was 2 minutes. There were a total of 17 participants, seven of whom achieved averages of under 2 minutes. This event saw the same three Canadians on the winner's podiums, but in a different order, as the 2x2 event. Jack Moseley came in 1st place with an average of 1 minute 11.73 seconds, Eric Limeback followed closely in 2nd with an average of 1 minute 12.94 seconds; and Emile Compion (pseudo-Canadian) placed 3rd with an average of 1 minute 27.30 seconds.

5x5x5

The 5x5x5 event also used the combined average approach with a 3 minute cut off time. The event, much like our own southern Ontario competitions, saw the least number of cubers out of the NxNxN speedsolve events, with only 11 competitors. Although considering the overall turnout for this competition, 11 cubers is actually a high percentage of the available participants. Four cubers achieved a time of under three minutes within their first two solves and were allowed to complete the average.

Again we see the same three Canadian finalists as in the 2x2x2 and 4x4x4 events winning the event. Emile Compion was on fire that day and placed 1st with a new African record average of 2 minutes 8.29 seconds and African record for single solve with a time of 2 minutes 0.68 seconds. Jack Moseley placed 2nd with a new personal best average of 2 minutes 21.73 seconds and Eric Limeback placed 3rd, also setting a new personal best average of 2 minutes 49.06 seconds. Notably, Mike Hughey was the only other competitor that achieved times fast enough to complete all five solves.

3x3x3 One-Handed

There were only 11 competitors in this event but some very fast times were set nonetheless. Of the 11 competitors, seven achieved averages of under 40 seconds, and the top three were all sub-30. Eric Limeback won the event with a very impressive average of 27.34 seconds putting him 4th on the list as fastest Canadians on this event. Jack Moseley came in 2nd with an average of 29.13 seconds and competition organizer Jim Mertens was close behind in 3rd with an average of 29.69 seconds. We joked with Dave that the only reason he placed 4th instead of 1st was because of his aching wrist from the grueling drive down to Cincinnati. "No, no. I have no excuse", said Dave. "Sometimes you do well, sometimes you don't. Eric is getting so fast now that he can beat me even if I perform well. Kudos to him."

Notable Performances



The canadianCUBING team came home proudly sporting 11 medals (although there were in fact 14 medals in the car) of the total 21 medals that were handed out on the competition day. Most of us set personal best times in at least one of our events; including Eric Limeback's new Canadian national records for 3x3x3 BLD and 4x4x4 BLD.

Notable American performances included that of first-time competitor Dakota Harris, who received a certificate in recognition of his very impressive 3x3x3 times as a new competitor. The majority of cubers at the Cincinnati Spring Open 2008 were competing for the first time, so this was no small achievement.

Also, Rebecca Hughey became one of the youngest competitors to have ever officially solved a 4x4x4 cube.

In Conclusion

All in all the competition was a whole lot of fun. The whole experience of traveling to another country, let alone city, with a group of friends, staying at the Mertens' home and meeting a lot of new people made the trip a very memorable one in deed. It was great to see Dave a little less busy at a competition than he usually is at the Canadian competitions. Again, we can't thank the entire Mertens family enough for their generosity. Let's hope we do it again soon.

