Frequently Asked Questions (F.A.Q.): release 1 - 12.20.1999

Some answers are already given in the rules. However, regarding the questions received, we consider it is important to emphasize them again.
Other points clarify the rules. We advise you to read them attentively.

Vocabulary explanation:
Robot: we call robot the part which carries the opponent's beacon (none inclusive the MNP).
MNP: we call MNP (Mobile or Non Mobile Piece), the part which does not carry the opponent's beacon, which is mobile or not, and which dimensions do not exceed a box of 15 cm x 15 cm x 15 cm side.

Q: Where can we find the rules and the F.A.Q. on the internet site ?
Both can be found on two sites (ANSTJ and VM Productions):
- http://anstj.mime.univ-paris8.fr
- http://www.robotik.com

Q: Who is allowed to take part to this European Robotics Contest ?
It is aimed at students from engineering schools, universities or private scientific clubs.

Q: When and where will it take place ?
The French Cup will start from the ***31 of May to the 3 of June 2000***. After this contest, the third finalists will compete for the European Robotics Contest (EUROBOT) against the European's teams on the ***4 of June 2000.***
European's teams can arrive between the ***1 and the 3 of June 2000***.
Both competitions will take place at La Ferté-Bernard, a city of Sarthe (France).

Q: What are the welcoming conditions (accommodation, meal...) ?
The organisers will take charge of 5 members for each team (hotel and meals); it concerns arrival on Thursday morning and departure on Sunday (after the competition). Arrivals and departures out of those dates will be at the members' charge.

Q: Can we exchange with other members of teams on the web site ?
There are either a talking's forum: **http://anstj.mime.univ-paris8.fr/robotique/FORUM/forum.html**, or an IRC channel: **#robot on IRCnet (every Friday at 22.30 p.m.).**
On both, most of the message are in French, but feel free to translate it in English.

Q: Who must we contact for any questions (technical, logistic, and so on) ?

Refereeing committee
Mrs Samia Aït-Mansour
Tel: +33 1 69 02 76 14
E-mail: sam@anstj.mime.univ-paris8.fr

Registration, organisation of your stay, general information
Mrs Véronique Raoul
Tel: +33 1 69 02 76 18
E-mail: vr@anstj.mime.univ-paris8.fr

Our address
ANSTJ - Groupe Robotique-Informatique
16 place Jacques Brel
F91130 Ris-Orangis
Fax: +33 1 69 43 21 43

Moreover, we plan to visit the teams between January and April 2000.

Q: How and where can we get balloons ?
We will send sample to European teams at the beginning of 2000.
If you want to get more samples, here is the address of our official suppliers:

ABARELLA
Service Commercial - Mr RICHARD
48 Rue Blaise Pascal - F94400 Vitry-Sur-Seine
Fax: + 33 1 46 81 63 72

You have to send a fax (no phone) or a letter to this enterprise, and precise the number of balloons you want (100 multiples) and don't forget to precise the balloons' references (dark blue and dark yellow).

Q: What is the border's thickness ?
It is 22 mm with a margin error of 1 mm.
The outside part of the area's border is designed for our advertisers' mark for this contest, that is to say our stickers' sponsors. Moreover, the robots should not damage the border in case of hanging on it.

Q: Does the border follow the mounds' relief ?
Yes it does.

Q: What is the robot's size at the beginning of the match ?
At the beginning, the robot must not exceed a cylinder of 40 cm diameter and 30 cm high.

Q: What are the locations for mobile's balloons ?
The centre of each base (of mobile's balloons) is located at 40 cm from the centre of the playing area (see Appendix 1 of the rules).

Q: Is the base of the octagon (for mobile's balloons) regular ?
Yes it is.

Q: Must the robot and/or the MNP leave the starting area ?
The robot and/or an MNP must leave the starting area during the match, but can come on it after.
If the robot or an MNP does not leave the starting area, the team concerned will be sanctioned in giving a burst balloon to its opponent.
Be careful, in case of non-leaving the starting area (both the MNP and the robot), the team concerned will be withdrawn for this match and will moreover give a burst balloon for its adversary.

Q: What is the diameter size for the starting area's circle ?
The circle is 40 cm diameter.

Q: At the end of a match or in case of any problem, should MNP be stopped by the emergency button of the robot or should it have its own emergency button ?
Both possibilities are allowed.

Q: Can the robot climb on its MNP (or those of its adversary) ?
It can only climb on its own MNP, provided the totality does not exceed the dimensions of a cylinder (considered as lying on the floor) of 50 cm diameter and 40 cm high.
Be careful, except for accidental unforeseen meeting, the robot must not have a strategy which consists in climbing on its adversary's MNP.

Q: Can we use thermal engines ?
No you cannot. It is forbidden for security reasons (on the stands or during matches).

Q: Must our robot have the maximum size allowed ?
No you are not obliged to. Remember that the robot could have difficulties to get through specifical places of the playing area.

Q: Is compressed air allowed to burst balloons ?
No it is not. We do not allow jets of compressed air to burst balloons because of the danger it represents for people (around the playing field and in the stands).

Q: Do you authorise lasers to locate and burst balloons ?
Yes we do, provided its maximum power is limited to **1 mW** according to the French's legislation, so as not to be dangerous for people around the playing field.

Q: Will organisers manage problems of interferences, in allocating a frequency to each team ?
No we will not. We suggest teams to manage those eventual problems before matches in exchanging the frequencies used by each others.

Q: Can we use double face sellotape in order to hold something on the playing area ?
No you cannot.

Q: Should a robot have to set its own beacons itself ?
No it should not. Beacons are set before the match by a member of each team.

Q: Does an MNP obey the same rules as robots or not ?
Yes it does. An MNP can cross the pit, the mounds, and can burst balloons. An MNP must not damage the playing area, and must not be dangerous for the opponent and so on.

Q: Can an MNP burst balloons ?
Yes it can.

Q: Can a robot move mobiles balloons ?
Yes it can, but its beacons must always be at 42 cm high.

Q: How will be sanctioned robots which size during a match will exceed the authorised dimensions ?
A robot which will not respect the authorised dimensions will be withdrawn by the referee.

Q: Can the emergency stop switch exceed the maximum dimensions of the robot so that it could be easily accessible ?
No it cannot.

Q: Can a robot go out of the playing area's limits ?
No it cannot. It can eventually hang to the border provided it will not go out of the playing area completely and will not damage the border.

Q: Can an MNP which dimensions are less than 15 cm x 15 cm x 15 cm side throw others MNP included in 15 cm x 15 cm x 15 cm side boxes ?
Yes it can.

Q: Are MNP and/or robot which are in contact considered as one and only one robot ?
No they do not if they both touch themselves for a while. But they must not be linked physically (cable, Velcro, Sellotape, magnet and so on).

Q: While a robot is putting down an MNP, is this part accounted as an extension of the robot ?
No it does not if it has just been put down. But if the MNP is wedged or linked to the robot, its dimensions will be add to the total size of the robot.

Q: Can robots fly ?
Yes they can, but they must respect maximum dimensions (which correspond to the dimensions of robot considered lying on the playing floor). Be careful, the on-board beacon must always be at the same height : 42 cm, except while crossing the pit, climbing the mounds or on the starting area.

Q: Can the mast supporting the opponent beacon contain other sensors different from those which are necessary to beacons detection ?
No it cannot.

Q: Can a robot go down the pit ?
Yes it can. In this case only, the on-board beacon can be at less than 42 cm high.

Q: What is the starting direction of robots at the beginning of a match ?
Teams can choose the starting direction they want.

Q: Can we imagine a defensive strategy which consists in pushing a little the opposite robot ?
Yes you can. But be careful not to act violently. If the referee judges the action too violent and that it can damage the opposite robot, he can declared the robot withdrawn.

Q: If accidentally a robot gets hit with a point (meants to burst balloons for instance) is it considered as an aggression ?
No it is not, in case of involuntary action. But it can be sanctioned if the referee considers the action as an aggression.

Q: Is it possible to homologate several kinds of MNP in order to choose one according to the match to play ?
Yes you can.

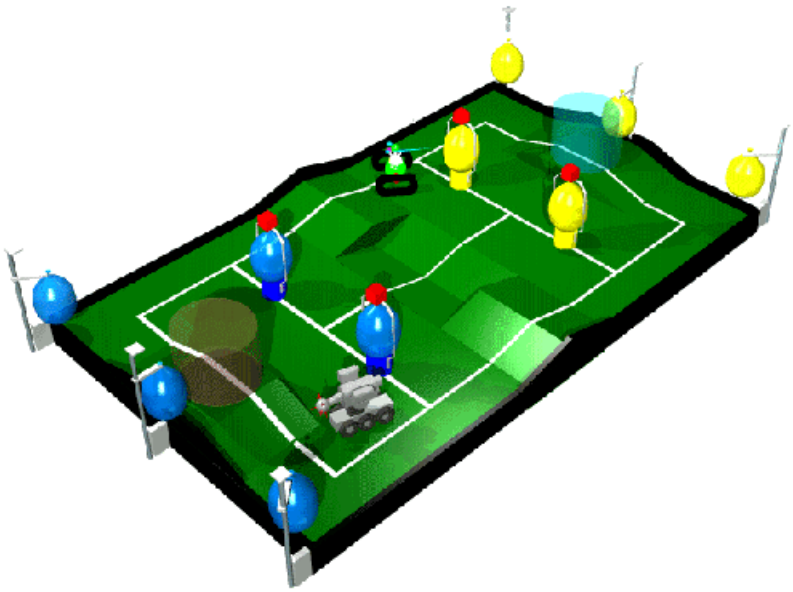
Q: Does the white line which separates the playing field in two parts (lengthways) continue until the starting area ?
No it does not (See drawing on Appendix).

Q: What do you call projectile ?
Any object thrown or ejected and which does not get its own system of propulsion.

Q: Can we draw balloons on our robot sides ?
No you cannot. Any object which form and colour intended to lure the adversary is not allowed.

Appendix - The drawings

1. The playing area: the white lines



2. The motionless balloons: the back view