

SIXTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL
WILLIAM LOWELL PUTNAM MATHEMATICAL COMPETITION

Saturday, December 2, 2006

Examination A

Problem A1

Find the volume of the region of points (x, y, z) such that

$$(x^2 + y^2 + z^2 + 8)^2 \leq 36(x^2 + y^2).$$

Problem A2

Alice and Bob play a game in which they take turns removing stones from a heap that initially has n stones. The number of stones removed at each turn must be one less than a prime number. The winner is the player who takes the last stone. Alice plays first. Prove that there are infinitely many n such that Bob has a winning strategy. (For example, if $n = 17$, then Alice might take 6 leaving 11; then Bob might take 1 leaving 10; then Alice can take the remaining stones to win.)

Problem A3

Let $1, 2, 3, \dots, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012, 2016, \dots$ be a sequence defined by $x_k = k$ for $k = 1, 2, \dots, 2006$ and $x_{k+1} = x_k + x_{k-2005}$ for $k \geq 2006$. Show that the sequence has 2005 consecutive terms each divisible by 2006.

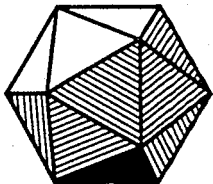
Problem A4

Let $S = \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ for some integer $n > 1$. Say a permutation π of S has a local maximum at $k \in S$ if

- (i) $\pi(k) > \pi(k+1)$ for $k = 1$
- (ii) $\pi(k-1) < \pi(k)$ and $\pi(k) > \pi(k+1)$ for $1 < k < n$
- (iii) $\pi(k-1) < \pi(k)$ for $k = n$

(For example, if $n = 5$ and π takes values at 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 of 2, 1, 4, 5, 3, then π has a local maximum of 2 at $k = 1$, and a local maximum of 5 at $k = 4$.)

What is the average number of local maxima of a permutation of S , averaging over all permutations of S ?



SIXTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL
WILLIAM LOWELL PUTNAM MATHEMATICAL COMPETITION

Saturday, December 2, 2006

Problem A5

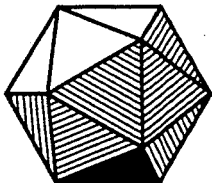
Let n be a positive odd integer and let θ be a real number such that θ/π is irrational. Set $a_k = \tan(\theta + k\pi/n)$, $k = 1, 2, \dots, n$. Prove that

$$\frac{a_1 + a_2 + \cdots + a_n}{a_1 a_2 \cdots a_n}$$

is an integer, and determine its value.

Problem A6

Four points are chosen uniformly and independently at random in the interior of a given circle. Find the probability that they are the vertices of a convex quadrilateral.



SIXTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL
WILLIAM LOWELL PUTNAM MATHEMATICAL COMPETITION

Saturday, December 2, 2006

Examination B

Problem B1

Show that the curve $x^3 + 3xy + y^3 = 1$ contains only one set of three distinct points, A , B , and C , which are the vertices of an equilateral triangle, and find its area.

Problem B2

Prove that, for every set $X = \{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n\}$ of n real numbers, there exists a non-empty subset S of X and an integer m such that

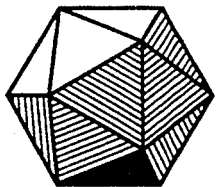
$$\left| m + \sum_{s \in S} s \right| \leq \frac{1}{n+1}.$$

Problem B3

Let S be a finite set of points in the plane. A linear partition of S is an unordered pair $\{A, B\}$ of subsets of S such that $A \cup B = S$, $A \cap B = \emptyset$, and A and B lie on opposite sides of some straight line disjoint from S (A or B may be empty). Let L_S be the number of linear partitions of S . For each positive integer n , find the maximum of L_S over all sets S of n points.

Problem B4

Let Z denote the set of points in \mathbb{R}^n whose coordinates are 0 or 1. (Thus Z has 2^n elements, which are the vertices of a unit hypercube in \mathbb{R}^n .) Given a vector subspace V of \mathbb{R}^n , let $Z(V)$ denote the number of members of Z that lie in V . Let k be given, $0 \leq k \leq n$. Find the maximum, over all vector subspaces $V \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ of dimension k , of the number of points in $V \cap Z$.



SIXTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL
WILLIAM LOWELL PUTNAM MATHEMATICAL COMPETITION

Saturday, December 2, 2006

Examination B

Problem B5

For each continuous function $f : [0, 1] \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$, let $I(f) = \int_0^1 x^2 f(x) dx$

and $J(f) = \int_0^1 x(f(x))^2 dx$. Find the maximum value of $I(f) - J(f)$ over all such functions f .

Problem B6

Let k be an integer greater than 1. Suppose $a_0 > 0$, and define

$$a_{n+1} = a_n + \frac{1}{\sqrt[k]{a_n}}$$

for $n \geq 0$. Evaluate

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{a_n^{k+1}}{n^k}.$$