

# It all adds up for young Bruce Fleischer

By BARBARA UNDERWOOD

Two very busy men, A and B, who wish to confer, agree to appear at a designated place on a certain day, but no earlier than noon and no later than 12:15 p.m.

If necessary, A will wait six minutes for B to arrive while B will wait five minutes for A to arrive but neither can stay past 12:15 p.m.

What are the chances that they will meet? Give up?

That was the "easiest" of five questions on Part II of the 1974 Michigan Mathematics Prize Competition, according to two top winners in this year's competition.

Bruce Fleischer, a junior from Southfield, and Robert Zako, a senior from Bloomfield Township, won first- and second-place cash honors in the first competition at an awards program at Western Michigan University last weekend. Both are students at Roper City and Country School in Bloomfield Hills.

THE DUAL honor accounts for two firsts in the 20-year history of the competition.

This is the first time that the same person has placed first two successive years. Fleischer was tied for a sophomore last year when he was a sophomore at Roper.

This also is the first year that the first- and second-place winners have been from the same school.

Two other Roper students placed in the top 40 in the statewide competition this year. John Rising and David Snider, both seniors, won bronze medals.

Having four students place in the top 100 is no record for Roper, however. One year, nine Roper students were among the top 100 in the competition.

IN ADDITION to taking top honors last year, Fleischer won a silver medal in the 1974 competition for placing seventh overall but fourth because of ties for first, second and third places.

Zako tied for third place last year, tied for second place the previous year and earned a silver medal for placing in the top 15 students the year before that. Snider won an honorable mention for placing in the top 100 last year.

No one can account for the continuous streak of math winners at Roper, but "Dave's grandmother says it's special so he has to live up to it," Fleischer said.

Fleischer and Zako think some of the credit goes to "super math people



who have been here in the past... hearing them talk is motivation.

The Michigan Mathematics Prize Competition is only part of the math scene for the two students. Fleischer placed 18th out of 100 students in the USA Math Olympiad last summer. He was invited to participate because of his standing in the Michigan competition.

ZAKO SPENT eight weeks last summer in a National Science Foundation Mathematics program at the University of Chicago. And math is not all they do. Both are members of the reserve hockey team at Roper, both play with school bands and the two are in business together. They design computer programs and will hire out to anyone who needs their services.

Both boys took calculus last year and then did independent study because there was no second year calculus offered. They are taking second-year college calculus this year, according to their teacher, John McConnell.

"I've never had them in a class where they didn't know it all by the time they started the course," McConnell said.

"We're helping John review his calculus," Fleischer quipped.

Part I of the test is given in October each year and consists of 40 multiple choice questions on algebra, geometry and trigonometry.

More than 21,000 students took Part I of the test last fall. Students who score in the top 1,000 are eligible to take Part II of the test.

"A LOT OF it is not just school math," Fleischer said. "It's problem solving and understanding arithmetic."

The test "calls for imagination so everyone will get some score," McConnell explained.

Part II consists of five essay-type questions with no definite right answer," Fleischer said.

Maximum score that can be earned on both parts of the test is 100 points. Part II is scored on a scale of 0-10 for each problem with extra credit possible for ingenuity or generalizations.

Students are not told their total scores but Fleischer and Zako both know they earned 39 points out of 40 on Part I this year. Last year Fleischer earned 40 and Zako 38. Only one student in the state earned 40 this year and three earned 39.

"The only reason we score 38 or 39 (instead of 40) is because we make stupid mistakes," Fleischer said.

## How to get your news in the paper

When you submit information for a news article in the Southfield-Eccentric keep in mind the following pointers. By following these recommendations, you will save delays and avoid errors.

• Be sure you give us the complete information. It's better to submit too much information than too little.

• When an individual's name is to be used in an article, be sure to give us his first and last name. For instance, you and the members of your church may know that Rev. Smith's first name is John, but our other readers may not.

• Be sure that the information is readable. Illegible information is the prime cause of errors in any newspaper.

• Be sure to include your own name and telephone number. If you have accidentally omitted information or if we cannot read your writing, we will still have a means of obtaining it.

• If you plan to submit a photograph with an article, be sure that it is a good one. A sharp, black-and-white "glossy" photograph is best, but even colored pictures will work if they are in focus and have good contrast. Provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope for return of your picture or stop at our office.

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## Grad requirements change

The American studies graduation requirement for students in the Birmingham School District underwent another revision at a recent board of education meeting.

A portion of northeast Southfield is in the Birmingham district.

The board reached a compromise decision which will allow staff members at the two high schools to recommend which courses a student should take to fulfill the requirement.

Students must complete 2 1/2 credits in social studies in order to graduate. One credit is required in American studies and one-half credit in American government. The remaining credit may be selected from a number of other electives.

Courses and credits vary between Seaholm and Groves high schools. Seaholm students may choose courses totaling one credit from a list of 14

courses offered or may pass a proficiency test based on the content of United States history course to meet the one-credit American studies requirement.

Groves students have three options to meet the one-credit requirement: Successfully complete American History 1 and 2; successfully complete a one-semester American History overview and any one of five other one-semester courses; or pass a proficiency test based on American History 1 and 2.

The board also discussed emergency school closing procedures. The procedures will be outlined in a letter to be sent to parents of all students in the district. They cover procedures that will be followed in case of bad weather including tornadoes, and mechanical failures.

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