

# Odyssey of the Mind

## Team is first from Farmington to attend world's in 10 years

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A musical takeoff of Shakespeare's MacBeth struck a high note with judges — enough for Power Middle School's Odyssey of the Mind team to qualify for this week's World Finals in Knoxville, Tenn.

And so, when the Power team presents "MacTea" Friday, it will be the first finals appearance by a Farmington Public Schools OM team since 1989, when North Farmington High School represented the district.

"I saw early on that I had a really good team," said Nan Cappel, a Power parent and coach of the OM squad. "This is the best team I've ever had."

Making up the roster are Cappel's daughters Ellen and Emily, along with Lauren Allmayer, Karla Stricker and Andrea Tartaglia.

The team advanced to the World Finals on April 17, in Mount Pleasant, finishing first in the Division II Classics Problem, defeating 25 other regional entries. (Division II is for those born on or after July 1, 1984.)

Power's entry features a sarcastic, witty satire of the Boston Tea Party, including a fictitious character called "Sir Humphrey," also known as MacTea.

### Ground rules

The team is required to do the following:

- Create and present the first or final scene of a play, written by members and based on one of Shakespeare's plays;

- Incorporate both a humorous character and original song into the act;

- Select a historic event to serve as the setting;

- Include at least 10 consecutive lines from the Shakespearean scene;

- Present a synopsis of the team's own play.

Power students' performance is accompanied by sound effects and string instruments, and is smotheringly punctuated by the catapulting of spoons with crepe paper attached to them.

While those spoons are flung into space, simulating the dumping of tea into Boston Harbor to protest taxes, some fun and innovating things happen.

First of all "The 1812 Overture" is played. And the catapult doubles as a cymbal; spoons are lodged onto the end of a spoon, and, as each tiny cylinder is fired off, that spoon spins around and clobbers the cymbal.

"They tried tea bags" on the spoons, noted Lauren. "But they didn't go so far."

If the catapulting doesn't win some points, chances are the musical element will.

"When other teams see a cello come on stage, they quake," said Cappel, an eight-year OM coach.

She said a survey of the team members at the beginning of the year helped Cappel decide to

■ "It's a journey from the beginning, when you have a blank sheet of paper, to the end, when you have a finished product. You have a performance to show the public."

Nan Cappel  
—Coach

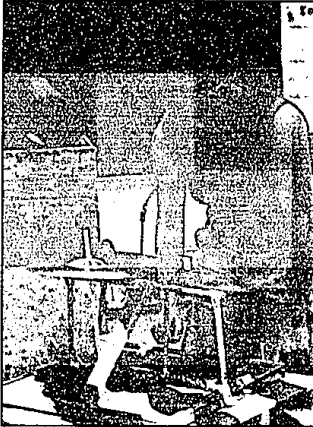
incorporate music into the skit.

"I ask, 'What are you good at?' They're all good at music, either first or second chair in orchestra," said Cappel, coaching her eighth year. "When other teams see a cello come on stage ... they quake."

The musical lineup includes: Lauren Allmayer, clarinet; Ellen Cappel, violin; Emily Cappel, oboe; Karla Stricker, violin; and Andrea Tartaglia, cello. All sing during the performance.

Although OM teams are allowed to spend up to \$100 on supplies for their costumes and portable

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All set: Karla Stricker fires streamers at the climax of the performance.



STAFF PHOTOS BY BILL BARRON

Rehearse: Practice makes perfect for members of the Power Middle School Odyssey of the Mind team, which includes Lauren Allmayer, Ellen Cappel, Karla Stricker, Emily Cappel and Andrea Tartaglia. The team will perform in the world finals.

## Just the facts about Odyssey:

### Facts about Odyssey of the Mind:

What's Odyssey of the Mind is the largest worldwide creative problem-solving competition for children. Each year, five "problems" are delivered for solving by OM participants.

Purpose: OM's mission is to foster the development of creative thinking and problem-solving skills. OM teaches that great minds don't necessarily think alike, that there are no right answers and that creative solutions come from teamwork, cooperation and risk taking.

Who participates: Teams from kindergarten through college. All receive the same problems, with complexity of solutions varying according to age group.

Is OM a school-based program? It can be, but not always. Teams have a coach (who may be a parent, teacher or other interested adult). New Jersey-based OM Association, Inc. also provides curriculum and other support materials for teachers who want to integrate OM's creative problem-solving techniques into daily classroom activities.

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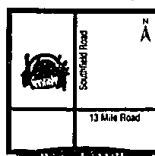
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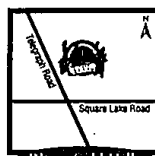
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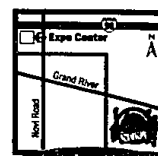
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