



The idea of initiating international olympiads in informatics for school students was proposed to the 24th General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris by the Bulgarian delegate Professor Sendov in October 1987. This plan was included into the Fifth Main Program of UNESCO for the biennium 1988-1989 (Section 05 215). In May 1989, UNESCO initiated and sponsored the first International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI). (Quoted from the IOI'89 and IOI'92 Report).

The IOI is one of five international science olympiads. The primary goal of the IOI is to stimulate interest in informatics (computing science) and information technology. Another important



The gold medalists of 2005... and <http://ioinformatics.org>

goal is to bring together exceptionally talented pupils from various countries and to have them share scientific and cultural experiences.

The IOI is organized annually in and by one of the participating countries. Each participating country typically sends a delegation of four pupils and two accompanying adults. The pupils compete individually and try to maximize their score by solving a set of informatics problems during two

competition days. The problems have been algorithmic programming problems to be solved on a personal computer. Cultural and recreational events are organized on the remaining days.



IOI'2006 International Organizing Committee

Past International Olympiad in Informatics'

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| 1989 - Pravetz, Bulgaria - May 16-19 | 1998 - Setubal, Portugal - September 5-12 |
| 1990 - Minsk, Belarussian Republic, Soviet Union - July 15-21 | 1999 - Antalya-Belek, Turkey - October 9-16 |
| 1991 - Athens, Greece - May 19-25 | 2000 - Beijing, China - September 23-30 |
| 1992 - Bonn, Germany - July 11-21 | 2001 - Tampere, Finland - July 14-21 |
| 1993 - Mendoza, Argentina - October 16-25 | 2002 - Yong-In, Korean Republic - August 18-25 |
| 1994 - Haninge, Sweden - July 3-10 | 2003 - Kenosha, Wisconsin, USA - August 16-23 |
| 1995 - Eindhoven, The Netherlands - June/July 26-3 | 2004 - Athens, Greece - September 11-18 |
| 1996 - Veszprem, Hungary - July/August 25-2 | 2005 - Nowy Sacz, Poland - August 18-25 |
| 1997 - Cape Town, South Africa - November/December 30-7 | 2006 - Merida, Yucatan, Mexico - August 13-20 |
| | 2007 - Zagreb, Croatia - August 15-22 |
| | 2008 - Cairo, Egypt - August 16-23 |

The first seven years

Continued from p. 5

There Plovdivians took part in the preparation of the team: Kosta Garov, Ogi, and me. This is how history was made: there was an accumulation through the years, so when the international competitions came about, we were ready for them.

This high speed at which things unfold in our field, still offers a number of advantages. During the first



Pavel Azalov and Asen Rahnev in Prof. Pavel Azalov's home in Pennsylvania

seven years, for example, the Mathematical School in Plovdiv had special classes enrolling students from all over Bulgaria. Most of the top performers pursued their higher education at the University of Plovdiv, where some of them remained to pursue their careers. The team who is currently preparing the competition tasks for the XXI IOI is made up only of former IOI medalists: these 6 people have won 12 medals altogether.