

math NEWS

Volume 80, Issue 2

Wednesday, May 19, 1999

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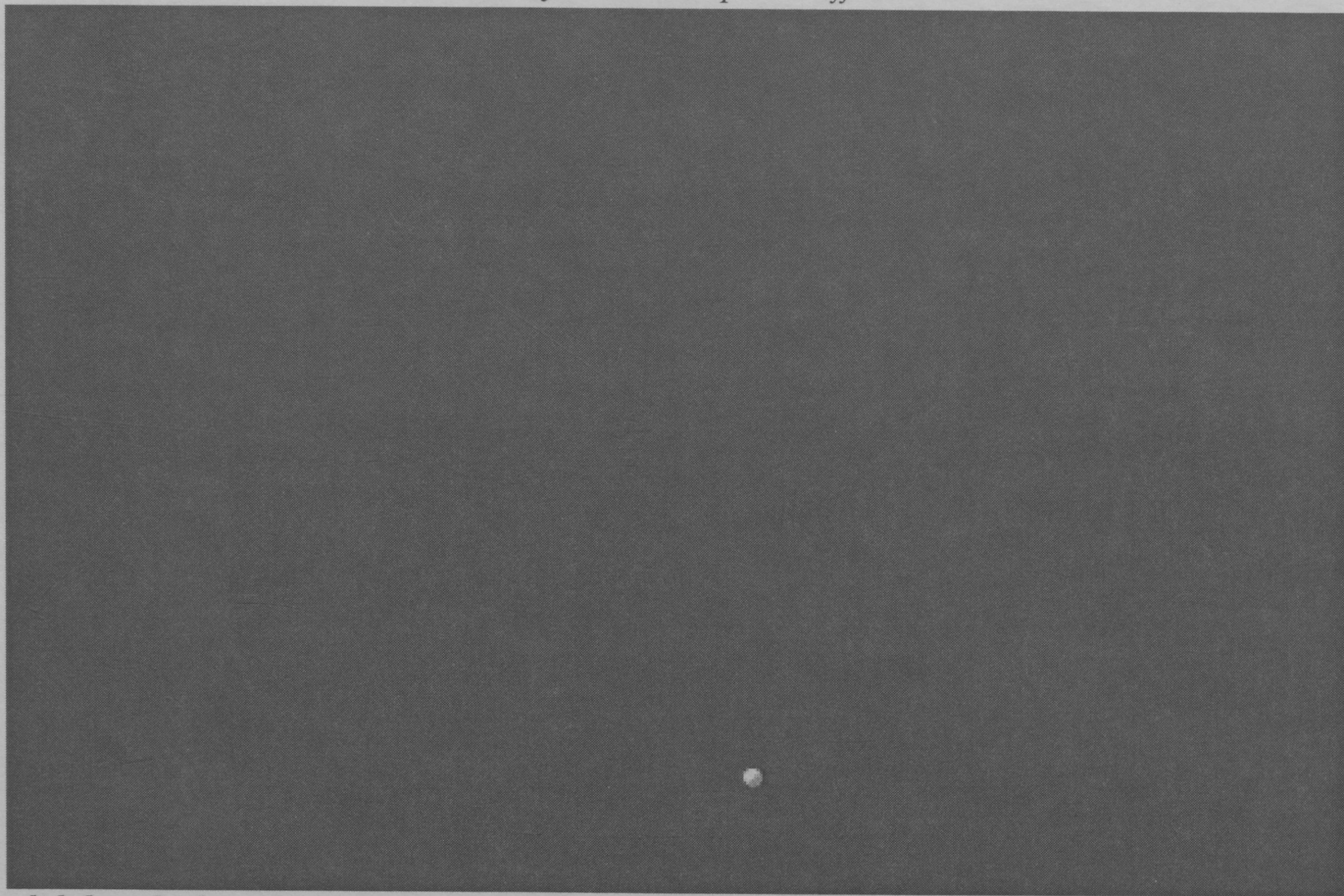
*It is a dark time for the mathies.
Their plan to attract members of the
opposite sex with their varied
mathematical skills had failed miserably.*

*In a plot remarkably similar to "Revenge
of the Nerds", three courageous young
mathies ventured forth in a
desperate attempt to find shelter from the
inundating media orgy about Star Wars*

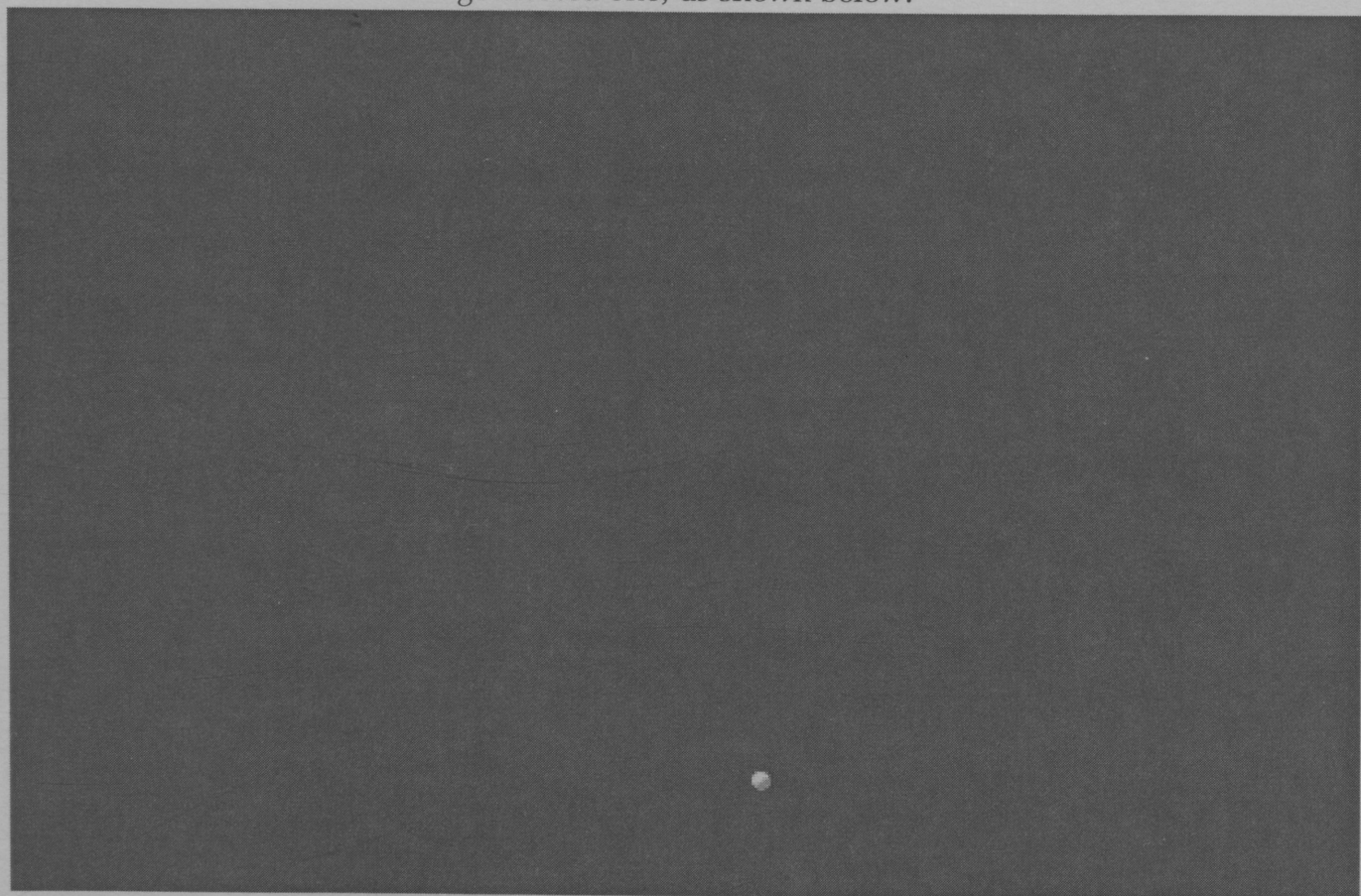
They didn't find it here.

Inside The Phantom Menace

How they did those special effects?



How did they do those fantastic special effects? Computers! First, they film all live-action against a blue screen, such as the golf ball above. Then they use computers to replace the real golf ball with a computer generated one, as shown below:



And finally, they use computers to fill in the rest of the frame! Here's the finished frame:



*mast*HEAD

This week's guest editor: Yoda

So, publication of *mathNEWS* this is? Editor I am? Mmmmm. The need to summon me here I do not understand. Star Wars expert they seek? Master of the Force they need? Hmph. Decisions they have trouble making. Do or do not! Trying they are.

Hmmmm. Further instructions they did not give me. But Math and Computing building this is, so speak to you about computers I will. Hard to type correctly on them it can be: broken the grammar checkers are. Try to correct my sentences they do! Depend on computers you should not. Full of bugs and viruses they are. Y2K compliant is your computer, hmmmm? So certain are you? Learn the ways of the Force you must! Depend on electronics you must not. More physical exertion you should also get — much staring at screens, bad for your eyes

this is. But an exception movie screens are. Heehee. "Phantom Menace" have you seen?? Go! Learn the ways of the Force. Discover much you will. But the Dark Side you must not be diverted to! Alluring it may be yet evil you will become.

Tired of this I am. Listing of people who helped out with issue I would now include, but given to me this list has not been. What? *mast*HEAD question you require? Strong I am with the Force but not that strong! Good this is not... much help these people need, hmmmm? Well, check articles for contributors you may. To those who know what they do, thanks goes. To Marion at Graphic Services thanks also goes. Finished I am. Enjoy issue now you should.

Yoda

*look*AHEAD

Theatres

May 20, 1999

December 14, 1999

People start lining up for Episode 2. George Lucas passes \$1 trillion in revenue and becomes the richest man in the free world, even before Episode 2 comes out, which will just make him more money, I mean, why doesn't he just own a printing press instead of ILM. I hope the story in Episode 2 doesn't suck as much as the one for Episode 1. Episode 3??

May 25, 2005

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Stuck-up, half-witted, scruffy-looking nerf-herders: Matt Walsh, Richard Bilson, Greg Taylor, Chadwick Severn

Minutes of the Empire

Meeting No. 1763

Date: Long time ago

A special meeting of the Empire was held in Committee Room 3 of the Darth Star commencing at 12:40 p.m. last Saturday.

In attendance was Emperor (Chair), D. Vader.

Emperor was in the Chair.

The Emperor moved that the fleet be sent to the far side of Endor, where it will stay until called for.

The Emperor called for a vote on the motion. The Emperor voted in favour of the motion, with nobody opposed. The motion therefore carried on a 1-0 vote.

D. Vader was excused from the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:42 p.m.

Meeting No. 1764

Date: Long time ago

A special meeting of the Empire was held in Committee Room 3 of the Darth Star commencing at 5:30 p.m. last Saturday.

In attendance was Emperor (Chair), D. Vader.

Emperor was in the Chair.

The Empire was informed that the following individual wished to speak to the Empire concerning this matter:

D. Vader

The Empire received the foregoing deputation, that L. Skywalker is with a small rebel force has penetrated the shield and have landed on the forest moon.

The Emperor asked the deputant if his feelings on this matter were clear.

The deputant confirmed that his feelings were clear.

The Emperor moved that D. Vader go to the moon and wait for L. Skywalker.

D. Vader wanted to verify with the chair that L. Skywalker will come to him.

The Emperor confirmed that this occurrence is on the agenda for Meeting No. 1765.

The Emperor called for a vote on the motion. The Emperor voted in favour of the motion, with nobody opposed. The motion therefore carried on a 1-0 vote.

D. Vader was excused from the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Meeting No. 1765

Date: Long time ago

A special meeting of the Empire was held in Committee Room 3 of the Darth Star commencing at 7:03 p.m. last Saturday.

In attendance was Emperor (Chair), D. Vader, L. Skywalker, Guards

Emperor was in the Chair.

The Emperor welcomed L. Skywalker and moved that his handcuffs be removed and the guards leave the room.

The Emperor called for a vote on the motion. The Emperor voted in favour of the motion, with nobody opposed. The motion therefore carried on a 1-0 vote.

The Emperor expressed his interest in finishing L. Skywalker's training.

L. Skywalker moved that the Emperor is mistaken.

The Emperor amended the motion to say that it is L. Skywalker that is mistaken about a great many things.

The Emperor called for a vote on the motion. The Emperor voted in favour of the motion, with nobody opposed. The motion therefore carried on a 1-0 vote.

L. Skywalker moved that the Emperor's overconfidence is his

weakness.

The Emperor amended the motion to say that L. Skywalker's weakness is his faith in friends.

The Emperor called for a vote on the motion. The Emperor voted in favour of the motion, with nobody opposed. The motion therefore carried on a 1-0 vote.

The Emperor then revealed that it was he who allowed the rebel force access to the moon. The Emperor then produced a report showing how the deflector will be quite operational when the rebel fleet arrives.

The Emperor moved that L. Skywalker witness the final destruction of the alliance and the end of his insignificant rebellion.

The Emperor then amended the motion to include a procurement authorization for the lightsaber next to him, if L. Skywalker wanted it.

The Emperor called for a vote on the motion. The Emperor voted in favour of the motion, with L. Skywalker opposed. The motion therefore lost on a tie vote.

The Emperor then referred to a graph showing how at each passing moment L. Skywalker becomes his servant even more.

The Emperor then pointed out that the meeting was progressing according to the agenda that he foresaw.

The Emperor then moved that L. Skywalker witness the firepower of the fully armed and operational battlestation.

The Emperor called for a vote on the motion. The Emperor voted in favour of the motion, with L. Skywalker opposed. The motion therefore carried since the Emperor had control of the button marked "Fire".

After the destruction of the medical frigate, the Emperor brought forward his previous motion regarding striking him down with all of L. Skywalker's hatred and completing his journey towards the dark side.

The Emperor called for a vote on the motion. The Emperor and L. Skywalker voted in favour of the motion, with nobody opposed. The motion therefore carried 2-0.

At this point, D. Vader interjected that L. Skywalker should face him and not the Chair. Subsequently, L. Skywalker and D. Vader agreed to a motion that the meeting be adjourned so that the participants can discuss a matter in-camera.

L. Skywalker hid underneath the stairs while D. Vader continued his deputation, revealing a secret staff report that stated that P. Leia is also a Skywalker and would make a good candidate for future meetings of the Empire.

L. Skywalker disagreed with the deputation and chopped off D. Vader's mechanical hand.

The Emperor commented on the record that he was pleased at the progression of the agenda, and moved that L. Skywalker replace D. Vader as Vice-Chair.

The Emperor called for a vote on the motion. The Emperor voted in favour of the motion, with L. Skywalker opposed. The motion therefore lost on a tie vote.

The Emperor moved that L. Skywalker die.

The Emperor called for a vote on the motion. The Emperor voted in favour of the motion, with L. Skywalker and D. Vader opposed. The motion therefore lost 2-1.

D. Vader moved that the position of Chair be reconsidered.

D. Vader called for a vote on the motion. D. Vader and L. Skywalker voted in favour of the motion, with nobody opposed. The Emperor was not present to vote on the foregoing motion. The motion therefore carried 2-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Official Minute Taker Of All Empire Business: CAS

News Flash: George Lucas Announces "The Phantom Menace: Special Edition"

As every bipedal, sentient being on the planet knows, the release of the highly anticipated Star Wars: Episode I, titled "The Phantom Menace" is imminent. But in a surprise move which has confused the industry, yesterday George Lucas called a press conference to announce the pending "The Phantom Menace: Special Edition", due to hit theatres in September of 1999. The exact release date is unknown, but eager fans are told to expect an exciting trailer for it to be released with "The Phantom Menace".

"I feel that 'Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace', while an excellent movie, has not quite achieved the vision I had in mind for the Star Wars saga. Over the next 4 months, I and ILM will work on enhancing the original film, adding new elements which will delight fans and enthrall everyone," George Lucas commented.

Our confidential source at Industrial Light & Magic painted a different picture of the situation. "Mr. Lucas decided to put a computer generated shot into every scene in the movie, without telling us. We've been working 15-hour days, 7 days a week, for the last 16 months, and we've finished 30 minutes of the movie! For crying out loud, he wanted a CG teapot in the background of the torrid love scene! Does he think we have teapot models just lying around?"

According to him, Lucas recently popped in for a surprise visit at ILM. Everyone had assumed he was on vacation since shooting completed, but he suddenly showed up one day to get a progress update on the movie. "Mr. Lucas was very disappointed, to say the least," said our informant. Enraged, Lucas instantly fired everyone in his immediate line of sight, and went on a rampage during which he trashed two computers, frightened one of the janitors, and wrote the next page of his Episode II script.

"That's when he came to his decision to do the Special Edition. He intends to release a select 30 minutes of the movie in theatres on May 19, then present the full thing September, when

he expects us to be finished." Asked his opinion of this new deadline, he paled and stammered, "I-I suppose it's theoretically possible. We're feeling very optimistic. Our suicide rate is dropping, and not just due to attrition."

Our source, who requested that he remain nameless, is Fred Hasting, 39. He is vice-assistant to the artist in charge of the red pixels in shot 387 of Act II for the movie. He has 6 kids all nearing college age and a recently deceased wife. We all pray for his mother, who will be requiring yet another brutally expensive operation in two months to stave off a slow and agonizing death.

When confronted with this new information, and questioned about the reliability of the informant, George Lucas said, "What's that name again? Thanks. This particular employee is unreliable at best. As a matter of fact, I shall be firing him tomorrow."

When pressed, he admitted certain details were valid. "The new movie will indeed be 30 minutes long. However, there really isn't all that much happening at this period of the saga. Frankly, filling 30 minutes was pretty hard. There will, however, be 5 minutes of bloopers following the movie. One of the hairdressers had his hand cut off by an errant light sabre; Jar Jar's ears kept knocking over props; and Darth Maul, in particular, had a lot of trouble keeping a straight face during filming. It's quite funny."

He also revealed that moviegoers will be receiving a short pamphlet with their tickets, outlining many of the characters that may not be properly introduced and explaining a couple of the larger continuity jumps. "I feel this joining of the two mediums, print and video, is the next step in the era of movie making. Never before has this been tried, and I expect that this will become a standard in all movies of the future."

More information about "The Phantom Menace: Special Edition" can be found at www.specialedition.com, or you can e-mail George Lucas at his personal e-mail address, glucas@hotmail.com.

Derek "Crawling Insignificant Lackey of the Sith" Kisman

Death Star vs. Math Building

Death Star

- Large and grey geometric shape
- Controlled by Darth Vader
- Has a room where people are tortured.
- Not a lot of female stormtroopers
- Contains a lot of advanced computers
- Can destroy a planet
- Bagels are free
- Can be destroyed by firing a blaster into the ventilation shaft.

Math Building

- Large and grey geometric shape
- Controlled by the J. Alan George
- Has a Real Time lab.
- Not a lot of female CS geeks
- Contains a lot of computers running Unix
- Can destroy souls
- Bagels are 50 cents
- Has anyone seen a ventilation shaft?

Review of "Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace"

Ok, so you've lived with the hype for months. You've bought the collectibles; you've read the book; you've listened to the soundtrack; you've bought the underwear; you've watched the music video; you've gotten a Jar Jar tattoo; you've been waiting in line since 1983; you've reconquered an African nation just so you can name your daughter Queen Amidala; you've provided 80% of the funding for Reagan's "Star Wars" project, thinking it had something to do with the movie. And now you are just about to see "The Phantom Menace" for the first time. Your entire life's purpose has been only to extend your measly existence to this day.

And now you, the slaving drooling lobotomized drone that you are, are reading this review to reassure yourself that your fevered anticipation has not been in vain. Unfortunately, though it tears my heart to say it, I must give my honest opinion: the movie is terrible. The writing is awful, the special effects have all been done before (and far better, too), and I must say, I simply don't find myself caring about any of the characters. George Lucas has failed spectacularly, and will be left to wallow for the rest of his life in the notoriety he has justly earned. Let us hope this overblown "B" Movie will serve as a solemn reminder to all the future generations of directors who wish to spew out cinematic filth like so much undigested potato soup.

I can assure you that the acting is simply awful, the plot is incredibly cliched and childish, and the dialogue will have you wincing in your seat. As for the vaunted special effects, nothing is the tiniest bit revolutionary; I think even the light sabres look ugly. It is so easy to tell they are computer-generated, which for me utterly ruins the effect. The music lacks the beauty, clarity, and memorability of even a howling dog. I for one cannot remember a single piece, and I don't think I want to. In fact, I can't point to any single portion of the movie that irked me most, since I haven't yet seen the film. In fact, I don't intend to. That's right; I hate this movie so much I'm not even going. Be warned.

Out of five stars, I'm giving it zero. May the minions of Satan devour your soul if you even think of seeing this movie. Please, in the name of all that's good, kill anyone misguided enough to want to see it; it's only merciful. Better that than the alternative.

By the way, as a side note to my fellow Star Wars fans: we're having a convention at the Kitchener Community Centre on the 26th. Come on down and share your hobby with everyone. I'll be giving a seminal lecture on various collectibles you may not know about; I'll be the one in the Chewbacca suit. Hope you can attend!

Derek "I've Taken the Hypocritic Oath" Kisman

World History According to Duct Tape

When George Lucas first came up with the idea for Star Wars he wasn't sure what to use as the "great power" in the universe. He knew it had to be something almighty, something with great powers for good... but at the same time it had to be something that could be used for evil purposes too.

Well, old George was thinking about this one day when his bookshelf collapsed. He called in his "man about the house" to do something about it and lo-and-behold the fellow pulled out a roll of duct tape, re-enforced the shelf and set all the books to rights. Later on that day George saw the man again, this time duct taping the kitchen cupboards closed, "as a prank" he said.

Now George knew what to do. Create "The Force"... I mean, think about it. Duct tape and the Force are exactly the same. They both have a light side and a dark side and they hold the universe together. The only difference is it's a lot nicer to say "May the force be with you", than "May you be covered in duct tape".

And that's where George Lucas got the idea for "The Force".

John Milne

Yoda's Alternative Party

Vote for him, you must

As the Ontario Election campaign heats up, a new party, which has until now been biding its time in the background, is suddenly coming forward to announce that indeed, Yoda himself IS vying for the leadership of the province. The Yoda Alternative Party (YAP) has gained immediate popularity: a full 75% of people said they would vote for Yoda this June 3rd, in a recent poll taken outside movie theatres in downtown Toronto. (Another 8% were for Liberal, 7% for PCs, 3% for the NDP and the others, when pressed, simply stated "let the wookie win".)

YAP promises tax cuts that will not affect provincial debt, more gun and lightsabre control, and better education for the youth with added emphasis on basic grammar skills. Asked why he was running, Yoda stated, "Strong leadership you need, yes? Into the next millenium your premier governs, hmmm? Seeing Death Star, dyslexic Jedi utters Rats, perhaps? Much you must learn..."

The other parties are preparing to counter this new arrival with their usual tactics. They will claim that YAP does not care enough about housing conditions, associates with people whose families have a history of planetary destruction, and also that their mysterious guiding 'Force' is nothing but mass times acceleration. Premier Harris had this additional comment to make: "Would you really want to vote for anyone who had worked as an editor for *mathNEWS*?"

Greg "hologrami" Taylor

And now the answer to the Zen Question You've All Been Asking

What IS the sound of one hand clapping?

Han Solo!

[Filler you call this? Needs much work it does. — YodaEd]

mathNEWSquiz #2

The Squiz Strikes Back

Hello to everyone out there in Mathie Land! Welcome to the Squiz Special Edition! That's right—to honour the release of Star Wars Episode 1, this Squiz will test your knowledge of the phenomenon that started it all: the Star Wars Trilogy! There are 20 questions below, all of which are based on events and people that are in, or referred to in, the Trilogy. The set-up is the same as before: you get the most questions right, and you win a prize!! So, without further ado, let's take you now to a long time ago, in that galaxy far away/ldots

A New Hope

1. What was the name of Princess Leia's diplomatic vessel?
2. On what body was the Rebel Base located?
3. In "TIE Figher," what does TIE stand for?
4. Who commands the Death Star to blow up Alderaan?
5. About how wide is the exhaust port that the Rebels must hit in order to destroy the Death Star?
6. Princess Leia's father and Obi-wan Kenobi fought together during which battle?
7. What is the name of the city where Luke and Obi-wan first find Han Solo and Chewbacca?

The Empire Strikes Back

1. According to C-3PO, what are the odds of successfully navigating an asteroid field?
2. What famous puppetmaster is the "Force" behind Yoda?
3. How did Han Solo come to own the Millenium Falcon?
4. Where does Luke go to find Yoda?
5. To what planet did the Rebels go to seek refuge after destroying the Death Star?
6. While on that planet, the Rebels use a race of native animals as pack animals. What is the breed of animal used by the Rebels?

Return of the Jedi

1. Where is the shield generator for the incomplete Death Star located?
2. What does Jabba the Hutt attempt to do with Luke, Han, and Chewbacca?
3. What beast does Luke face, and eventually defeat, inside Jabba's palace?
4. Name the Rebel fleet commander that leads the Alliance's assault on the incomplete Death Star.
5. Name the alien race that helps Han Solo's commando squad deactivate the energy shield around the Death Star.
6. What happens to Boba Fett during the battle with Jabba's Sail Barge?
7. What colour do the members of the Imperial Royal Guard wear?

Well, there you have it. Good luck to all of you. You can submit solutions to the Squiz in one of 2 ways: you can either drop them off in the /bb, or you can e-mail them to me at cjm McGuire@undergrad.math.uwaterloo.ca. May the Force be with you!

Chris "Mr. Subliminal (cuter than Darth Vader)" McGuire

Spermatikos Logos #2

From the Phantom Menace, With Indifference (or, Live in Chicago, it's Star Wars)

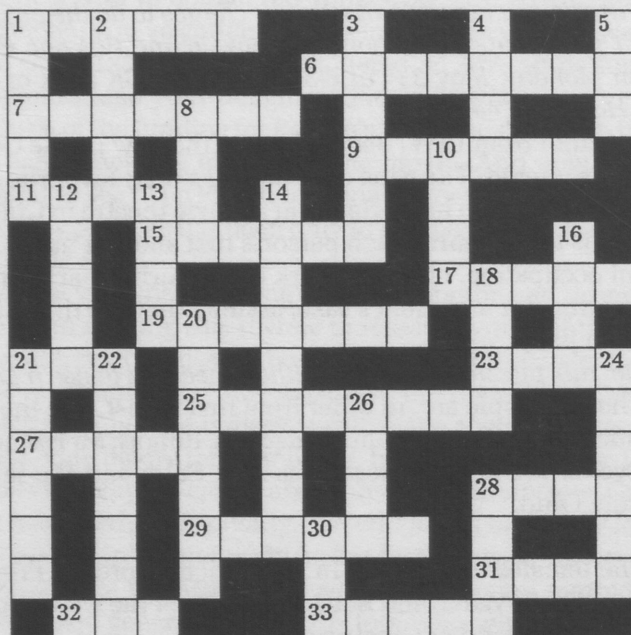
[Hey everyone. We've got a guest Logos author in this week. Don't worry; you haven't missed your chance to do the puzzle in Issue 1 yet. Solutions for both that puzzle and this one will be due on Monday, May 31st at 6:30 in the BLACK BOX or by e-mail. Have fun! — ΣEd]

Six alumni from U(W) decided to see the new movie George Lucas has offered. The gang dressed up as their favourite characters, and lined up in single file at a movie theatre in Chicago. Your job is to determine each person's first and last name, their current occupation, city they work in, favourite character, and order in line (for argument's sake, assume they are the only six people in line).

(Note: this puzzle is solvable without needing to use a grid.)

1. The six people are, in order from first to last, are: the statistician; the woman from Springfield, Illinois; Mr Frontenac; Yvette; the person dressed as Han Solo; and the lawyer from Ohio.
2. The females dressed as (in no particular order), Princess Leia, Darth Vader, and Boba Fett. None of the women came from Cleveland or Cincinnati.
3. Mr Scott was in line ahead of Pierre Lambert.
4. Neither Lily nor Suzanne was a secretary, but both of them hailed from Illinois.
5. Lily LeCroix is not from Chicago.
6. Tony and the secretary came from the same state.
7. The lawyer, who wasn't dressed as Luke Skywalker, had a good practice in a city known for its fictitious radio station, WKRP.
8. Zachariah and the person who was last in line both came from the same state. Neither of them has the last name Scott or Arnold.
9. Neither the woman from Albany nor the accountant is Boba Fett.
10. Mrs Deschamplain is a secretary, but she was not dressed as Darth Vader.
11. The person from Buffalo (who was dressed up as Han Solo) is not the engineer (who was male).

John "the pseudo-expert" Swan
(Leader of the Etoile D'eath)



Grid Clues (Star Wars)

Across

1. ____ Binks
6. Anakin's homeworld
7. Sand People mounts
9. "It's the ship that made the ____ run in less than 12 par-secs!"
11. System where garbage (and the Millennium Falcon) is dumped
15. Last of the Grand Admirals
17. Manufacturer of the X-Wings
19. ____ IV, Leia's starship
21. Precedes Espa or Eisley
23. Small, one-pilot repulsorlift vehicle
25. Blaster fodder?
27. Maul, Sidious, or Vader
28. A sandcrawler denizen
29. 28-Down's actor
31. Flightless bird
32. 8-Down's primary export?
33. Battle where Death Star go bye-bye

Down

1. ____ the Hutt
2. Star Wars: Special Edition creature
3. Commander of Death Star #1
4. With 18-Down, Gungan ruler
5. ____ Kenobi
8. Echo Base planet
10. Anakin's mother
12. Gungan home
13. Walker
14. Location of rebel HQ, according to Leia
16. Wisest of the Muppets?
18. See 4-Down
20. ____ Daniels, C-3PO's voice
21. Crix ____
22. Pit of Carkoon inhabitant
24. Amidala's head of security
26. Peko ____
28. Qui-Gon ____
30. Location of Bespin's cities

gridCOMMENTS

Derek here, temporary GridMaster. Unfortunately, I have been encased in solid Carbonite for failing to return a library book, so don't expect too many *gridWORDS* from me this term. But I couldn't pass up the opportunity to throw together a Star Wars puzzle for my millions of slaving, mindlessly devoted fans, now, could I?

Anyway, here it is. Solutions can be submitted in the usual place (Black Box on the 3rd floor). The clues range from easy (most people should get them) to ridiculously difficult; anyone who completes the entire thing has my respect for at least 20 seconds. Remember, you don't need to finish to submit a solution! Submit!! SUBMIT DAMN YOU OR I'LL KILL YOU AND EVERYONE YOU'VE EVER MET!!!

By the way, you'll probably find it helpful to watch *The Phantom Menace* before trying this *gridWORD*.

Derek "I'd Like to See the Force
Solve THIS!" Kisman

Limited Edition Star Wars Collectable Merchandise

Stomp the E-Woks

Each E-Wok is exquisitely detailed, with cute, whimsical expressions! Watch their expressions change as you throw them into the "blender" or the "stomper". Hours of fun! \$63.99

Working Light Sabre

Laser pointers are banned, so get the next best thing! Ages 3 and up. \$999.95

Darth Vader Doll & Puffer

Help Darth soothe his persistant asthma while he combats the rebels. 6" high. \$3.99

The George Lucas Calculator

Lets you do math like George Lucas! With the new Roman Numeral mode you can see that I occurs after VI, with IV as the equivalent to 1. Fun for the whole classroom. \$IV.X