

Mechanics Felt the Pressure as the Clock Wound Down

By LISA HUYNH

(July 22, 2003) Under scorching heat and humid air, nine teams of mechanics took "working under pressure" to a whole new level, Saturday, at the 2003 MTA Bus Rodeo.

Arthur Winston Division 5 mechanics Andrew Warren, Jr., Rommel Vargas and Frank Forde epitomized what fierce competition is all about, taking home top honors with an impressive 775 points.

"I was very excited when we won," says Division 5 Maintenance Manager Alex Di'Nuzzo. "We've taken second and third place in previous years, but never first. We finally did it this year."

Gateway Division 10's Alan Wong, Doug Creveling and David Klinkenborg, walked away with second place again this year with a score of 730.

South Bay Division 18's Javier Soria, Mina Ros and Luke Logan - last year's first place winner - placed third with 665 points. The team also won an award for a perfect score on the A/C (air-conditioning) module event.

'Sometimes you win....'

"Last year everything went well for us and we won," says Javier Soria, Division 3 team captain. "Unfortunately, we didn't get the engine running this time. Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose."

North Los Angeles Division 3 placed fourth, but took home an award for scoring the highest points in the ABS brake board portion, getting 250 out of a possible 350.

"We placed fifth in 2002, but were hoping to take first this year," Division 3 team member Jose Gomez said as he anxiously waited for the final tally.

With an addition to the written test, ASB brake board, bus inspection and engine test, the A/C module event was thrown into the mix to stir things up.

"Although we added the A/C portion to this year's rodeo, it will not be calculated into the final team score," said Senior Equipment Maintenance Instructor Steve Mullaly. "We're preparing them for the national competition because A/C will be tabulated into the final score."

Equipment Maintenance Instructor Walt Graham has been involved with the Rodeo



Above, Division 3's Tim Wong, Jose Gomez and Chris Hurtado try to correctly diagnose seven defects on the ABS brake board. Below, Division 18's Javier Soria and Mina Ros have ten minutes to find seven defects and get the engine started.



since 1994. "I think the Rodeo is one of the best things MTA has to offer because of the integrity. MTA can use this as a measuring stick to see how well its people are doing."

Other teams participating in the Rodeo included Divisions 1, 2, 6, 8 and the Regional Rebuild Center.

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