Coaches Conference Schedule
ILSB 101, 116A&B, 118, 201, 230, 233
Sep 27, 2025
Check-in starts at 8:00 am.

Time	116A&B	101	118	201	230	233
8:00-8:30 am	Check-In Begins					
8:30- 9:00 am	Welcome, Opening Session					
9-9:15 am	MD Head Judge Advisor Comments					
9:15-10:15 am	MD Head Referee Robot Game Overview					
10:15-10:30 am	Break					
10:30- 11:25 am	Head Ref Q&A	Project	Judging	Rookie	OPEN	Spike Prime 101
11:25 am - 11:30 pm	Break					
11:30 am - 12:25 pm	Head Ref Q&A; Ref Volunteers	Project	Judging	Rookie	OPEN	Spike Prime 102
12:25-1:25 pm	Bag Lunch with CORE VALUES ACTIVITIES in 116 A&B					
1:25-2:20 pm	Head Ref Q&A; Ref Volunteers	Project	Robot Design	Rookie Q&A	Pybricks 101	Spike Prime 101*
2:20 - 2:30 pm	Break					
2:30 - 3:25 pm	Networking, open Q&A	Volunteering	General Q&A	Rookie Q&A	Pybricks 102	Spike Prime 102*
3:25 - 3:45 pm	Wrap-up					

PROJECT: How to Prepare for the Project

Theresa Jahng (Judge Advisor) and Chirag Sangh (Veteran Coach)

This can be the most important part of your team's work. The project research and presentation will bring together all the elements of the annual challenge. The presentation provides an opportunity to express the results in wildly creative ways. Since it is required to

compete, you might as well get all the facts. This session will give coaches a chance to have a discussion with veteran coaches on how they prepared their teams for the tournament.

JUDGING: What to Expect in Judging

Dave Baran (Maryland Head Judge Advisor) and Jie Zhang (Veteran Coach)

The Maryland FLL Judge Advisors will go over what teams should expect in judging rooms. Topics will include a rough schedule of our qualifiers, what to bring to judging sessions, what happens in each judging session, how awards are selected, and how teams are chosen for advancement to the state championship. New this year: a coach will provide his perspective based on his observations in judging at qualifiers, the State Tournament and an Invitational. Please bring your questions about these and any other topics related to judging and qualifiers.

ROOKIE TEAM: Fundamental Mentor Tips

Glenn Speights (Judge Advisor) and Boyd Fletcher (Veteran Coach)

Everything you need to know as a new coach. Two experienced coaches will take you through best practices on organizing a team, structuring the season, preparing for the competition and day of the competition. Get the 'big picture' and tips about where go for help and support. You will have an opportunity to ask questions about running a team. scheduling, how much you and your other mentors should be involved, getting ready for a tournament and more. Come with questions!

ROBOT DESIGN: How to help your team explore new solutions and share them with others

Jie Zhang (Veteran Coach)

Beyond coding, there are many things to consider in robot design such as the types of wheels, complexity of attachments and strategy when planning missions. Hear from an experienced coach, who will include the choice of code and management of both hardware and software. Learn about additional sources of LEGO parts, how to incorporate gears, the importance of small tiny parts you may overlook, and more. Do you have questions about how your team can learn more about engineering, and also share their strategies and even failures? Bring them! This session is intended for new coaches and coaches with some prior experience.

CORE VALUES: How to Develop Gracious Professionalism

Facilitated Interactive Session.

You've seen the list: Discovery, Innovation, Impact, Inclusion, Teamwork and Fun. What do successful teams do to incorporate all the Core Values so that they are clearly a part of everything they do and not just a list of definitions? Gracious Professionalism is part of the ethos of FIRST, and important to connect to the Core Values FLL Challenge teams prioritize. This session is for any adult planning to interact with team members and help make the season fun for all.

_____

For these Sessions registration is strongly encouraged.

SPIKE PRIME 101 and 102

Ryan Rich (Veteran Coach)

This is a double session, and you are encouraged to bring a laptop and pre-built robot. You may sign up for one or both. If there is high demand this session will repeat in the afternoon. Sign up to confirm your intention to attend and receive updates and the materials to bring.

- Spike Prime 101: Spike Prime Basics. An introduction to the app, the robot, and other resources. Learn some basic coding with the Spike Prime educator bot. This is the place to start if your Spike Prime is still in the box.
- Spike Prime 102: Introduction to the Gyro Sensor, Color Sensor and Robot Attachments. This is a follow-on, or a good option for those who want to guide their team to more sophisticated solutions.

PyBricks 101 and 102: Introduction to Pybricks for FLL Teams

Boyd Fletcher (Veteran Coach)

This is a double session, and you are encouraged to bring a laptop and pre-built robot. You may sign up for one or both, it is recommended that you attend both. Sign up to confirm your intention to attend and receive updates and the materials to bring.

This presentation provides an introduction to Pybricks including both its Python and Visual Programming (Block Coding) modes. Pybricks is a widely used replacement for Lego's Spike Prime application, it provides a richer, more powerful, easier to use, and better documented environment for programming robots. It is widely used by the most competitive FLL teams. Focus will be on the Python version with examples driving, controlling attachments, using the gyroscope, using libraries for common code, and programming the Hub Menu. If you want to follow along with the examples, please go to pybricks.com and install the Pybricks firmware on your robot prior to the class.