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Cisco's Scottish team wins national BCS Computer Programming Competition

Scotland, 8 April, 2002 -- Byte IT, the four man team from Cisco Systems' Scottish operation, has won the 2002 British Computer Society (BCS) Programming Competition against stiff competition from thirty-eight teams drawn from academia and industry. Fourteen teams qualified to compete in the final which is now in its 18th year. The competition provides an unparalleled opportunity to tackle software-engineering tasks in a realistically simulated commercial environment. Competitors are in the age range 18 years and above.

Prizes were presented by BCS Deputy President John Ivinson, who congratulated all the teams on getting through to the final. He said: "Teamwork, skill, and determination to succeed are qualities which are valued highly in the world of systems and applications programming. The BCS Programming Competition offers a realistic platform for professionals, students and academics to compete on equal terms and demonstrate their skills in a public arena."

Graham Brookes, BCS Programming Competition Committee Chairman, said: "The lead in the competition changed hands several times during the event. The basic strength of the competition is teams each seeking to solve as many programming problems as possible within the time, and only having use of a single computer. It elicits not just programming skills but also human and resource management skills."

Competition Chief Judge Giles Chapman praised the winners and said: "Java was used in the competition for the second time, and while C and C++ programming teams still dominated the final this year, the Java teams gave a very strong showing.

I suspect that it won't be long before we have a winning team programming in Java!."

Gordon Rattray, of Cisco's winning Byte IT team, which also included Allan Maloney, David Fletcher and Gavin Camp, said: "We approached the questions in the same way as if they'd been 'real life' problems. Ensuring we really understood the requirements, careful consideration was given to the solution before implementation, with as many test

cases as possible being devised. Each of these factors resulted in the team having a very high first-time success rate for the questions, which undoubtedly helped us win.”

Maggie Morrison, operations director, Scotland and Ireland for Cisco Systems Limited, said: “This outstanding achievement by Scottish teams is a testament to Cisco’s focused approach to problem solving and innovative thinking which continues to ensure its success in the global market.”

The British Computer Society Programming Competition is supported by e-competitions, the UK focus initiative for quality ICT competitions and award schemes that support education and training at all levels, from primary school to the workplace.

E-competitions is led by the e-skills NTO and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and backed by representatives from some of the major IT companies, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the British Computer Society (BCS), and the British Educational Communications Agency (BECTA).

e-competitions sponsor, Microsoft, donated prizes to the winning team. Members of the winning team also each received a BCS shield and a certificate. EDS, sponsor of the BCS Programming Competition 2002, covered all the major competition costs.

Judith Scott, CEO of The British Computer Society and timekeeper for the last few years said: “Being a timekeeper at the Programming Competition has been one of the most enjoyable activities I’ve carried out during my time at the BCS. The enthusiasm of the competitors means that the event is always a lot of fun for everyone concerned.”

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