

THE THUNDER BOLT

AN UPDATE FROM FRC 7166



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REBUILT Reactions

"Compared to the other games I've experienced with FIRST, it seems more challenging. I'm really excited to see the gameplay." He added that this season feels more strategic than previous ones." - Oliver, senior (*Awards and Electrical*)

UPCOMING EVENTS

* Open House

February 28, 2026

Tour our workshop and get a close-up view of our robot! From 10am-12pm at 8008 Woodbury Rd.

* FIM Mt. Pleasant Event

March 7-8, 2026

Cheer on your Robotics team as they compete!
1155 S Elizabeth St, Mt. Pleasant, MI

* FIM Mason Event

March 28-29, 2026

Cheer and give spirit to your Robotics team as they compete!
1001 S. Barnes, Mason, MI



Meet Red Thunder

Who are we? We are Red Thunder Robotics, based in Laingsburg Community Schools in Michigan.

Team 7166 was founded in 2017 as a high school extracurricular program. As interest and passion for robotics grew, our program expanded into our elementary schools, leading to the creation of seven additional teams in 2022. By the fall of 2022, our high school team averaged about 15 students. Now, in 2026, our program has nearly 30 dedicated students supported by eight committed mentors who guide and inspire us.

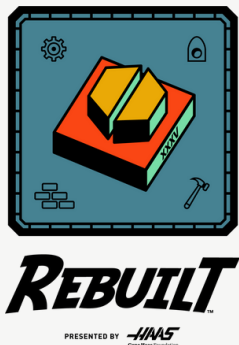
Our team gives back to our community by serving dinners alongside our local Lions Club, hosting STEM nights and summer camps to introduce children to robotics, and mentoring nearby teams to help them grow and succeed.

Our Kickoff

The official kickoff of REBUILT began Jan. 10th, 2026! Over 3,000 teams across the globe tuned in to the live broadcast. Kickoff is one of the most exciting events of the robotics season, as it reveals the long awaited game and sets the direction for teams planning upon the upcoming weeks ahead.

FRC Teams 10629 (Bath) and 5234 (Ovid-Elsie), joined us for workshops, watching the 2026 Game Reveal, and digging into the game manual.



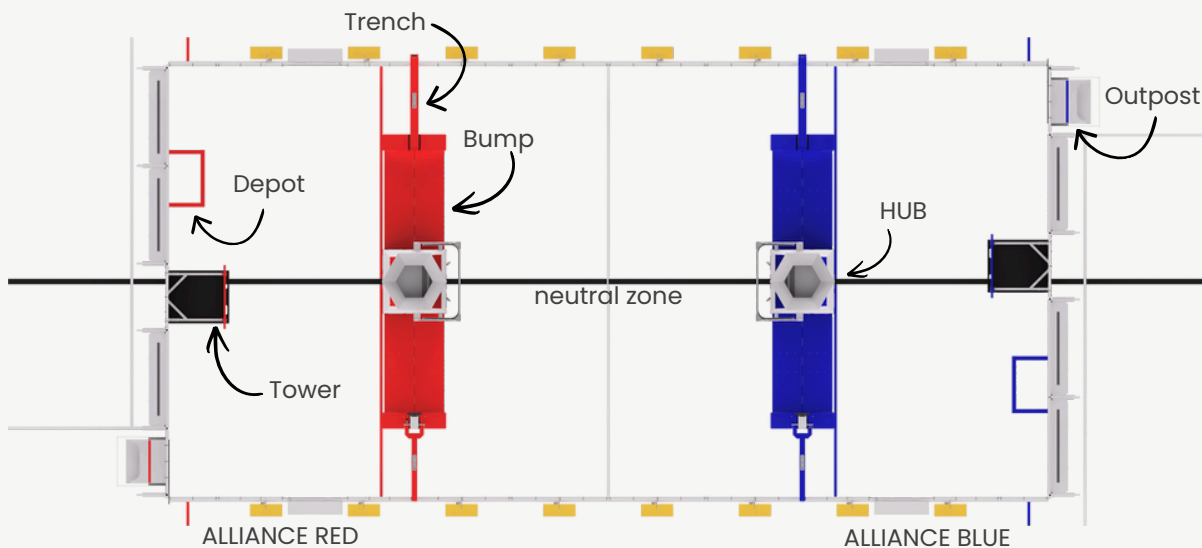


Game animation

About the Game

This 2026 season of REBUILT is a homage to games of the past with names and features from previous FRC games. Teams must engineer robots to score game pieces, called **Fuel**, into an active **Hub** which alternates between active and inactive times. During endgame, robots are challenged to climb **Towers** which extend up to three levels.

The REBUILT field features a unique layout with a **Neutral Zone** at the center where hundreds of **Fuel** are placed for robots to collect and score into their alliance specific **Hub**. Additional Fuel are located at each alliance's **Depots**, positioned at the ends of the field. Robots also can obtain Fuel from **Human Players** stationed the **Outpost** on the outer edge. On either side of each Hub, there are terrain challenges called **Bumps** which robots can cross to reach the neutral zone or the opposing alliance's zone. Bumps are triangular shaped obstacles which can cause robots to "beach" themselves if not crossed properly. Alternatively, robots can drive under the **Trench**, which runs alongside the bumps and provides a different route to get across the field.



Fuel

This is the 2026 REBUILT season's game piece: **Fuel**, a 5.91" diameter solid foam core ball. Robots can pre-load up to 8 Fuel pieces and can hold an unlimited quantity once the match begins. Each Fuel is worth one point when their alliance specific **Hub** is in its **Active Shift**. In AUTO, teams have up to 20 seconds for their autonomously coded robots to collect and score FUEL while climbing the **First Rung** of the **Tower** for additional points. In TELEOP, when the drive team manually controls the robot, teams can collect and score as much Fuel as possible into the active Hub while playing defense and other strategic maneuvers during their 25-second **Inactive** periods.

7166 helps Girl Scouts obtain their robotics patch

On Wednesday, January 14, members from Red Thunder Robotics and our FTC teams worked together to help local Girl Scouts earn their robotics patch. Our districts robotics teams set up various activities

including a step-by-step drawing tutorial in a coding form, a lesson on how to code and use AI, then we let Girl Scouts have an opportunity to drive 4 different robots from our FTC teams.



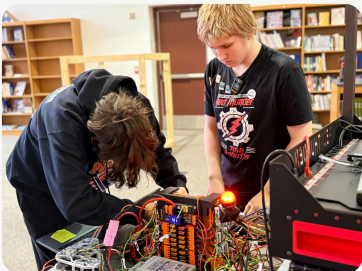
This Week in Pictures



Learning Lab students use calipers to verify if they have the correct axle.



Students work together to construct wooden prototypes.



FRC team 7202 was struggling with their swerve code, so they visited our coders for guidance and troubleshooting.



Prototyping intake mechanisms.



Leadership Seminar, July 2025

Leadership Seminar

Our yearly Leadership Seminar is a program hosted each summer by to teach students how to handle difficult or uncomfortable conversations with peers, assign tasks and follow up to ensure progress, understand their team's purpose and goals, develop strategic plans for upcoming seasons, recognize signs of peer burnout and anxiety, and apply different leadership styles effectively in real-world situations.

In the last 2 years, we have trained more than 80 students and shared our leadership resources with over 10 FRC teams.

FRC Tees

Thank you [FRC Tees](#) for their quality workmanship and prompt customer service! We love our 2026 team shirts!