YPP 2009 Judges Comments

Once again we have been treated to a number of excellent papers from our young practitioners.

There was a wide range of topics from

- production problems via optimal resin moulding and paper production,
- organisational planning via capacity planning, sustainable enterprises and health centre simulation,
- transportation - via ambulance simulation, transportation planning, and container movements,
- health care via childhood vaccination scheduling

The OR approaches in almost every case showed a degree of ground-breaking application even of well-trodden paths.

Significant improvements were reported in techniques developed, solution accuracy and solution times.

Finally, some of the work was open to immediate applicability – which is a significant achievement for a student project.

Many of the papers were prize worthy but using our criteria of Originality, Applicability, Difficulty and Quality of Presentation, 3 papers captured our attention as being above the rest.

We decided for the sake of equity to offer a graduate student prize and 2 undergraduate prizes

The graduate prize goes to Faramroze Engineer, his work in developing a very fast algorithm for child catch-up vaccination scheduling is a splendid example of OR in practice. It tackles the problem of being both rigorous and practical as well as making it accessible. To the user the complexity of the solution algorithm is hidden and they would be forgiven for believing it is easy. The expert OR practitioner knows otherwise and that is its beauty.

The second prize goes to A Phillips for his paper on container positioning. This captured our attention for it's up-staging of a PhD student's research using interesting ideas that resulted in a major advance in the field.

The first prize for undergraduates goes to Lim for his solution of the Trim Loss Problem. We noted both the ingenuity of the approach and the immediate applicability of the results and its benchmarling with reality.

John George