

STILL IN IOWA!

The mice haven't left Iowa yet because they are having such a good time. Still, they are ready to get back on the road! Iowa is also famous for a great road race, the Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa. Of course, the mice are going the wrong way and the race isn't until July, but they need to start training now!

Challenge: How far can the new vehicle built for the mice go? Can it be improved so it will travel even further?

Set-Up: The appraisers will need to provide some kind of ramp with a runout area to test the new vehicle for the mice. This does not have to be "standard" as long as all teams solving this challenge at the same time use the same "hill." How about a sheet of cardboard leaning against a chair or the wall? Or taping a vinyl tablecloth or plastic bag between a table and a floor? The ramp does need to have a starting line!

Time: Part One: You will have 1 minute to place the passenger (the "mouse") in the vehicle (built during the previous Iowa Instant Challenge) and send them down the ramp from the starting line.

Part Two: The appraisers will have 1 minute to measure the distance the vehicle and its passenger travels from the starting line to its stopping point. Record this length.

Part Three: The team has 3 minutes to re-build the vehicle to try to increase its travel distance using the available materials.

Part Four: Repeat Parts Two and Three until the team runs out of new materials. (They should not run out of new ideas!)

Materials: one small toy mouse (like a cat toy) (the "mouse" rider)
one team-constructed vehicle (from the previous Iowa IC)
a small pile of materials left over from the previous IC

Scoring: 20 points if the original vehicle will travel down the ramp at all
10 points for each attempt by the team to re-build their vehicle
1 point for each inch the final version of the vehicle travels
up to 20 points for positive team work

Special Note: This Instant Challenge is about improving on a good prototype. We hope your team gets the concept! Idea contributed by Judy N. in Iowa. Thanks!