OLYMPIAD OMNIBUS

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The 1983 International Mathematical Olympiad was held in Paris in July. The Australian team consisted of Dirk Vertagin (Tasmania) who had attended the 1982 Olympiad as well; Chris Watson (Queensland); Stephen Tyler (N.S.W.); Richard Moore and David Baldwin (South Australia) and Andrew Kepert (Western Australia).

Dirk collected a silver medal for his efforts and Richard and Andrew each scored a bronze medal and the team overall received sufficient points to rank them 19th out of 32 competing countries. This was the third Australian team although it was the 24th Olympiad. It may take some years to foster the mathematical talent revealed by some of the other countries. West Germany had four gold medallists in their team of six students and three of them scored perfect results. Meanwhile we are still seeking the first Australian student to gain a gold medal. Such a person needs more than outstanding skill in mathematical problem solving. It is necessary to have one's work submitted to close scrutiny; one must be prepared to follow problem solving with avid devotion; one needs to correspond with like minded individuals; one needs to acquire a basic set of problem solving skills (such as those proposed in "The Tool Chest", a compendium of problem solving results compiled by Jim Williams and now printed in booklet form by I.B.M.).

State associations are gearing to provide additional help for likely students but of course they need assistance in locating the students. Examinations, such as the Canberra based and I.B.M., are the only likely source of information at this stage so it is vital that any prospective Olympiad contestant enter such examinations. Hopefully schools will encourage their gifted students to attempt these examinations so that their talent has a chance of being recognised and compared with their contempories throughout the country. The point is that unless students who are interested in the opportunity of representing the country at an Olmpiad, participate in such contests and communicate with others, their skills will not be recognised and the opportunity will be lost.

It is disappointing to report that no students attempted the questions posed in the last issue; Olympiad Omnibus 1 and 2. The problems were selected from the Scottish Mathematical Council's "Mathematical Challenge 1977-78". Solutions to these problems appear on pages 14 and 18. There is a new Olympiad problem for you to try on page 26.