

Helmbridge Science Challenge

Since inception in 1972, Helmbridge has organized competitions for secondary schools in Lagos. The Helmbridge Science Challenge which has run every year since 1982 is the most popular. Others are the Computer Contest (of which there were two editions 1999 and 2000), the Junior Challenge, as well as a sports competition, the Helmbridge Basketball Contest. The Science Challenge has been so popular and for so long that it has become a tradition in many secondary schools to take part every year to date. It is even such that old students of such schools now undergraduates or already workers, come back to their alma mater to train current students on 'Science Challenge Techniques'.

The schools which have taken part in Helmbridge interschool competitions, especially the Science Challenge are both public and private, examples of which include: Kings College, Lagos, Birch Freeman High School Lagos, Surulere, Maryland Comprehensive Secondary School, Air Force Secondary School Ikeja, Nigerian Navy Secondary School, the International School, University of Lagos, Methodist Boys High School Victoria Island, St. Finbarr's College Akoka, St. Gregory's College Obalende, Surulere Secondary School, Eric Moore High School Surulere, ADRAO International School, Atlantic Hall School, Mayday College, Top Grade Secondary School, Rainbow College for Boys, Ansar U'deen High School Surulere, Gbaja Boys Grammar School, Surulere,

The Science Challenge is a quiz contest, which runs for about nine (9) weeks, during which each school's representatives are tested on Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics and General Knowledge.

At each point of the competition, there is a 'hot seat' occupied by the member of each school's team that is taking questions at the time. Thus, it is the individual abilities of the team member that is being tested. The competition involves making moves on a game board in the X and O format, with the winner required to fill up an uninterrupted line either vertically or horizontally, by answering questions on the subjects represented by the boxes. The task of the opposing team is either to prevent the opponent from having a free run of the lines, or making a complete line itself in order to win.

Each student that comes out to represent his school is usually good in one subject or the other. This way, his strength in one subject is expected to reinforce the varying strengths of the other members of his team. Invariably however, the performance of each member of the team reflects the total strength of their school's academic standards. It is easy to spot students coming from a good school, as well as spotting students from a poor school, even though there are in such schools occasional flashes of brilliance from isolated students.

The ranking of schools in the Helmbridge Science Challenge has the following schools as the top three: Penny International College, Birch Freeman High School, Surulere, Government College and St. Finbarr's. Penny International won the 2005, 2006 and 2007 editions of the Science Challenge. Birch Freeman has won the Science Challenge four times, three of them back-to-back (1995, 1996, 1997); Government College Surulere won it in 1991,

1993 and 1994; while St. Finbarr's won it at least twice.

Penny International college are the current champions of the competition having won the 2011, 2012 and 2013 edition.