

# IDEERS Newsletter

An \*EPSRC funded project by the University of Bristol's Earthquake Engineering Research Centre for  
Introducing and Demonstrating Earthquake Engineering Research in Schools

Issue 4

August 2001

## Bristol Schools Pilot IDEERS



This year, 5 Bristol secondary schools have been piloting IDEERS before it is launched to

### Judging the Displays

run nationally this September. In April, 110 children between 11 and 14 brought model buildings and displays about earthquake engineering to the EERC

### Models Being Shaken

for the competition final. They had taken on the challenge to make models of earthquake resistant buildings using MDF board, paper, string and glue, and brought them to be tested to destruction on the shaking-table.

After being welcomed by Prof. Joe McGeehan, the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, their displays were judged. The judges spent time talking to the children, and were impressed by their understanding and the content and style of their displays. Then,



### Judging the displays

models were tested on the shaking-table in two shifts. While half the children were in the laboratory watching their models being destroyed, the others were being entertained by EERC members, enjoying challenges using paper and drinking straws to build structures to perform various functions.

A competitive and noisy atmosphere developed in the laboratory as children saw their competitors'



### Finalists enjoying the action

models collapsing. First, models experienced small earthquakes, and then increasingly larger ones. Prizes were awarded for the "best-designed" model, that is the lightest one that resisted a specified earthquake, and the "most-efficient" model. An efficiency-ratio was defined to identify that, calculated as the ratio of the size of the biggest earthquake each model withstood to its mass.

\*Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

The University sponsored the days' events, so the Vice Chancellor, Sir John Kingman, presented the prizes. Everyone enjoyed the day, including children, teachers, the judges and visiting journalists.

## BGS Support the IDEERS Web-site

The IDEERS web-site is now complete with sections on The Competition, Earthquakes, Shaken Societies, Resistant Buildings and Research@ Bristol.

IDEERS has been fortunate to have the support of Alice Walker, Head of Earthquake Seismology at the British Geological Survey (BGS). BGS have kindly allowed the use of some very attractive pictures from "EARTHQUAKES - our trembling planet", one of their publications, authored by Susanna van Rose and Roger Musson, and provided seismicity maps, seismograms and other pictures. Also, Alice has reviewed the content of the Earthquake pages to check that it had not become misleading through over simplification.



## IDEERS goes Eastern

IDEERS has been attracting attention in the UK and abroad. In July, the EERC ran a week's IDEERS workshop for 16 to 18 year old Japanese and British students as part of Japan 2001, a nation-wide initiative to strengthen UK-Japan relationships ([www.japan2001.net](http://www.japan2001.net)). The British Council have invited IDEERS to Taiwan to run as a high profile event to attract attention to their annual British Education Exhibition in October. This gives EERC researchers the opportunity to discuss collaborative projects with Taiwanese researchers, as they will be using a shaking-table in a research centre in Taipei.

In the UK, the CITB in the Northwest are keen to have a two day IDEERS workshop for teachers to encourage them to run the project in their schools.

**For further details on the IDEERS project visit the web-site at [www.ideers.bris.ac.uk](http://www.ideers.bris.ac.uk) or contact:**

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The Science Museum, in London, have shown interest in running an interactive exhibition for a week, and Science Year, a DfES initiative, wants to promote IDEERS following the GIANT JUMP, its launch in September ([www.scienceyear.com](http://www.scienceyear.com)).