

Mathematical Challenge

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Mathematical Challenge This problem-solving competition began in Session 1976-77, following an initiative by the SMC Chairman of the time, Professor E.M. Patterson.

From the beginning, the running of the competition has been overseen by a National Committee which, among other things, selects the problems and provides model solutions. For administrative purposes, Scotland is divided into geographical sections and the entries from a section are handled by volunteers from universities in the appropriate area. Until recently, there were four sections but Section IV, which covered the whole of the former Strathclyde Region and had roughly twice as many secondary schools as the other sections, has been split into two with effect from Session 1998-99.

In 1976-77, there were 5 sets of 5 problems but it soon became clear that this was going a bit over the top. For a while 4 sets of 4 were the norm. Later different sets of problems were provided for S1/2 (Junior), S3/4 (Middle) and S5/6 (Senior), with some overlap between the sets. In 1994-95 the competition was extended to cover the Upper Primary age-group. This led to a huge increase in the number of entries, which has caused administrative difficulties. Fortunately, these seem to have been resolved.

The problems set over the years have been published (along with solutions) in four books. The most recent, "Mathematical Challenges IV", covering 1998-2000, appeared in April 2001. The book costs £8, available from Mr Bill Richardson. For up-to-date information on this year's Mathematical Challenge click ... [here](#).