

The 59th William Lowell Putnam Mathematical Competition
Saturday, December 5, 1998

A-1 A right circular cone has base of radius 1 and height 3. A cube is inscribed in the cone so that one face of the cube is contained in the base of the cone. What is the side-length of the cube?

A-2 Let s be any arc of the unit circle lying entirely in the first quadrant. Let A be the area of the region lying below s and above the x -axis and let B be the area of the region lying to the right of the y -axis and to the left of s . Prove that $A + B$ depends only on the arc length, and not on the position, of s .

A-3 Let f be a real function on the real line with continuous third derivative. Prove that there exists a point a such that

$$f(a) \cdot f'(a) \cdot f''(a) \cdot f'''(a) \geq 0.$$

A-4 Let $A_1 = 0$ and $A_2 = 1$. For $n > 2$, the number A_n is defined by concatenating the decimal expansions of A_{n-1} and A_{n-2} from left to right. For example $A_3 = A_2A_1 = 10$, $A_4 = A_3A_2 = 101$, $A_5 = A_4A_3 = 10110$, and so forth. Determine all n such that 11 divides A_n .

A-5 Let \mathcal{F} be a finite collection of open discs in \mathbb{R}^2 whose union contains a set $E \subseteq \mathbb{R}^2$. Show that there is a pairwise disjoint subcollection D_1, \dots, D_n in \mathcal{F} such that

$$E \subseteq \cup_{j=1}^n 3D_j.$$

Here, if D is the disc of radius r and center P , then $3D$ is the disc of radius $3r$ and center P .

A-6 Let A, B, C denote distinct points with integer coordinates in \mathbb{R}^2 . Prove that if

$$(|AB| + |BC|)^2 < 8 \cdot [ABC] + 1$$

then A, B, C are three vertices of a square. Here $|XY|$ is the length of segment XY and $[ABC]$ is the area of triangle ABC .

B-1 Find the minimum value of

$$\frac{(x + 1/x)^6 - (x^6 + 1/x^6) - 2}{(x + 1/x)^3 + (x^3 + 1/x^3)}$$

for $x > 0$.

B-2 Given a point (a, b) with $0 < b < a$, determine the minimum perimeter of a triangle with one vertex at (a, b) , one on the x -axis, and one on the line $y = x$. You may assume that a triangle of minimum perimeter exists.

B-3 Let H be the unit hemisphere $\{(x, y, z) : x^2 + y^2 + z^2 = 1, z \geq 0\}$, C the unit circle $\{(x, y, 0) : x^2 + y^2 = 1\}$, and P the regular pentagon inscribed in C . Determine the surface area of that portion of H lying over the planar region inside P , and write your answer in the form $A \sin \alpha + B \cos \beta$, where A, B, α, β are real numbers.

B-4 Find necessary and sufficient conditions on positive integers m and n so that

$$\sum_{i=0}^{mn-1} (-1)^{\lfloor i/m \rfloor + \lfloor i/n \rfloor} = 0.$$

B-5 Let N be the positive integer with 1998 decimal digits, all of them 1; that is,

$$N = 1111 \dots 11.$$

Find the thousandth digit after the decimal point of \sqrt{N} .

B-6 Prove that, for any integers a, b, c , there exists a positive integer n such that $\sqrt{n^3 + an^2 + bn + c}$ is not an integer.