



The contest winners (left to right), Marcus Kramer, '95, Chris Ward, '95, and Sumer Johal, '95, posing with their entry Dizzy Devil. This is the third year in a row that a freshman team walked away with the top prize, a king-size LEGO kit.



Enthusiastic students revel as Earl! wins another round. Semi-finalist Earl! was built by Stephen Chamberlin, '93, Lenny Granowetter, '93, and Matthew Olsen, '93.

ed, referring to the swap sessions for electronic gear that are a regular feature in the amateur radio community. Servita was pretty sure an H-P 15C would go for a lot more at the MIT police auction. "After all," he said, "we're in a room full of nerds."

Make that a room half-full of nerds. The other half—mostly members of the MIT office staff—had come to look at the jewelry.

The auction started promptly at 1 p.m., with a row of bicycles, most with rusted chains, bent handlebars, and flat tires. The jewelry went on the block at 1:30.

One of rings looked genuine: a diamond in an antique gold setting accompanied by two sapphires. Tareq Hoque, '88, a graduate student at the Sloan School, bought it for \$85. "It's a gift for my girlfriend," said Hoque, who estimated its value at \$200. "It was definitely worth a lot more than I paid for it," he said later.

It was nearly 2:30 by the time the officers running the auction got around to the calculators. By then, only the diehard junk collectors were left. And the engineers.

The CPs had decided to hold the H-Ps for last, and the Radio Shack went for a dollar. Then another Radio Shack went for a dollar. Three Casio calculators, grouped, sold for five. Soon people noticed that one student was buying a lot of calculators. "I'm going to give one to my professor, put some of them in the lab, and hand out others at exams," said Kenneth Zemach, '91, a graduate student in mechanical engineering. For an investment of \$30, Zemach had acquired eight calculators.

By contrast, most of the H-Ps went for around \$20 each. The students who lost out on the bidding for the H-Ps went to "Mr. Calculator," a.k.a. Ken Zemach, and prevailed on him to sell part of his collection for \$5 to \$10 apiece.

When the Macintosh came on the block, most of the spectators groaned. Who could possibly want it? Two people did, it turned out, and the unit sold for \$125. The Cromemco was last to go. By then it was 4:30, and the officers didn't even bother collecting the 25-cent winning bid.

In total, the auction brought in \$2,864. Friedman didn't find a Lisp Machine, but he did walk away with an H-P 22S 1. It cost him \$41, however, after a bidding war with this reporter. □

—SIMSON GARFINKEL, '87 (The author is an editor at NextWorld magazine.)

biomedical engineering and third in civil. Ocean engineering was not listed.

U.S. News particularly cites MIT for a new program in environmental engineering education and research, for innovative courses to teach engineers how to deal with regulatory trends, and for the increases in students studying both management and engineering. □

MIT Police Auction: Jewelry, Calculators, but No LISP Machine

Question: What do a broken ski rack, an imitation diamond ring, and a handful of Hewlett-Packard calculators have in common? Answer: they were all items on the block at the second MIT

Campus Police auction held early in spring.

The doors opened at 12:05, revealing five tables of loot. There were gold rings, bracelets, digital watches, and calculators—even a slide rule. Most of the serious connoisseurs seemed disappointed with the pickings. "I'm looking for a modem—9600 baud—and possibly a LISP Machine," said Noah Friedman, a staff member of the Free Software Foundation. But the only two computers there were a five-year-old Macintosh Plus (with a single megabyte of RAM) and an antique 8080 Cromemco.

"I wouldn't pay more than \$20 for the Mac," said Phil Servita, a computer programmer from Medford. What he really wanted was one of the H-P calculators. There were 10 of them, shuffled in among a bunch of Casios, Radio Shacks, and Sharps. "I'm interested in one of the 15Cs. At a ham fest, it would go for \$10 or \$15," he estimat-