

A panicked Matthew tries to find some help on the packaging.

saying, a few times, "Monkey goes where?"

I'm not making this up.

Jeff. One minute flat. Only screamed once. And that was, IS THIS A CRAYON?

Mariève. About a minute and a half. She assembled hers twice, after being asked to verify with instructions and diagram, whether or not things looked right.

Matthew.

Contests are stressful, aren't they? And, I dunno, unfair in a way, no? There are always winners.

And then there is a loser.

I suppose one could say that the toy selected could make or break how the competitor finished. I can see how one could say that maybe one person's construction was more sophisticated and delicate than, say, the next person's (like Jeff's, Mariève's, and Stephan's).

Unless you got, say, just as an example, A TRAIN.

Not even a whole train. The locomotive. The easily recognizable, familiar (am I being too cruel?), very common engine powered by, say,

steam, diesel, or electricity. The thing used for pulling trains.

What were Matthew's words? (Let's see, I really want to get this right, um, oh yes —) His words were, THERE'S AN EXTRA PIECE!

(Repeat this a few times and sound kinda stressed and you'll be approaching his state at, oh, around six minutes in.)

True, he did have stickers, and no one else did. And true, he did, it would turn out, have to put the stickers ON the plastic pieces FIRST, before you snapped them together.

And I think there was also one sticker left over.

Unstuck.

Let's let the competitors use their own words to describe what they put together, shall we?

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Mariève: Flowerpod — home/forcefield for miniature plastic yellow figurine — flower twirls. (Her toy did have great colours. Pink, yellow, green and blue.)

Jeff: Dog on wheels that wags

its tail when you push it. Or Rollerdog.

Stephan: Minstrel-bug on a leaf — (he then has serious complaints about the wording in the instructions, which I don't repeat here because I think he's right) — this thing sets back the civil rights movement several decades. (And remember, Stephan had two toys.) Caveman scrubbing hairy dinosaur. The caveman does not look happy.

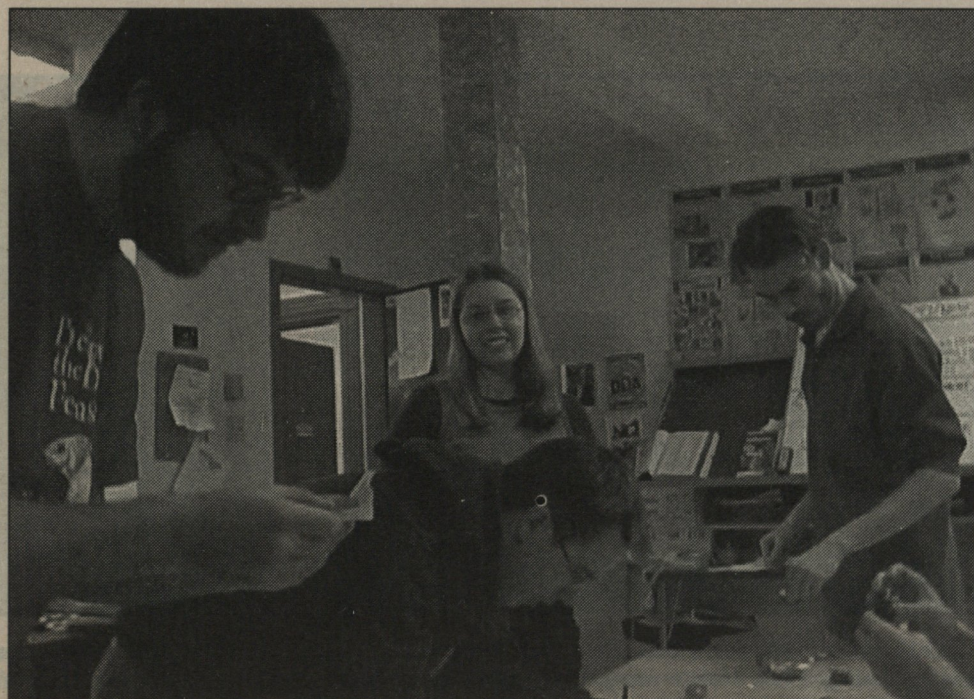
And before we get to Matthew's words, I have to say what terrific sports the *Cadre* persons are. To say nothing of their writing, photography, general very hard work all this year. I am always impressed by their willingness to put themselves into the paper, their willingness to produce something for the entire student body and for the institution that is UPEI, and for their willingness to give us a paper every week (more or less). Universities that have newspapers are lucky to have them. And long may this one live.

That above stuff said, Matthew's words were: Fucking train. Stickers. Goddammit.

Words to live by?

I dunno.

But I did laugh. And so did most (if not all) of the participants. Not a bad way to spend a very brief part of a March afternoon. Maybe that was the prize.



The toys are checked for accuracy.



The finished surprises.