Team NULL at Northumbria University. From left to right: Cosmin Bianu, Wen Jun Lee, Matthew Chambers, Ryan Milner and Joe Cockcroft.

Nov 25, 2019 15:10 GMT

Students through to cyber-crime competition final

A team of Northumbria University Computing students have qualified to compete in the Cyber Crime Cup 2019 final today, which is organised by British Computer Society.

Ryan Milner, Wen Jun Lee, Cosmin Bianu, Joe Cockcroft and Matthew Chambers are all part of team NULL at Northumbria University.

The students range from first to final years and all study on Northumbria's Computer Networks and Cyber Security BSc (Hons) and Computer Science BSc (Hons) degree programmes.

The Cyber Crime Cup final is being held today (25 November) in the Etihad Stadium, Manchester and is the world's first ever cyber security competition to be played on stage in front of a live audience.

The competition includes live commentary and incremental challenges, with teams competing in a 'capture the flag' format.

Spectators will be given insight into what happens when a live server website and database get hacked, and how to quickly detect the attack and stop it.

Having come in second place during the first round of the competition out of 22 other universities, Northumbria University's student hacking team is one of the best in UK.

During the first round they competed in a variety of challenges, demonstrating their skills in code injection and passwords detection, standing them in good stead for the final.

PhD student, Neera Jeyamohan, who has been mentoring the group said: "We're currently in the dark about what the final of the competition may consist of, however, we're doing all we can to prepare for whatever we might face on the day.

"All five of our team members were in the top ten player list during the preliminary round so we're feeling confident going into the final."

If successful during the final round, the Northumbria University team of five will each win £200 and a new Blackphone PRIVY, as well as sharing the five foot tall silver trophy.

But the experience they have gained is just as valuable as any prizes, as team member Ryan Milner explains: "The competition has allowed us to test our ethical hacking skills and improve them as we go.

"We will also be able to meet industry leaders and boost our networking skills, with experts in ethical hacking and penetration testing attending the final."

The students have been preparing for the competition through a mentoring programme, offered through Northumbria University's Cyber Clinic, which was founded by Dr Biju Issac of Computer and Information Sciences in 2018. Dr Issac is the programme leader of the Computer Networks and Cybersecurity course and Neera helps to lead the clinic under Dr Issac's supervision.

The clinic runs weekly ethical hacking training sessions which teach students to access vulnerabilities of computer and information systems by cloning the intent and actions of malicious hackers.

The training initiative aims to improve the penetration testing skills of cyber security students and features guest speakers, as well as opportunities to share skills and experiences, which will prepare them to be cybersecurity experts with hands-on experience.

The clinic is based at the University's state-of-the-art £7m Computer and Information Sciences building, which opened for teaching September 2018 and is home to 1,200 students and 85 academics.

The design of the building was based on feedback from staff and students and features a mixture of research and specialist teaching spaces.

The Computer and Information Sciences building is a low carbon and sustainable 'Smart Building', completed with a specialised Building Management System, including all its heating, cooling and ventilation, enabling it to run itself both efficiently and sustainably.

It also serves as home to the department's activities as a founder member of the £40m Institute of Coding, helping Northumbria play a leading role in giving the UK an edge in the global digital economy.

If you would like to find out more about the Cyber Crime Cup, please visit https://www.bcs.org/events-home/cyber-crime-2019/cyber-crime-2019-esport/

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focused, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

If you have a media enquiry please contact our Media and Communications team at media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk or call 0191 227 4604.

Contacts

Rik Kendall
Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences
rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk
07923 382339

Andrea Slowey
Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences
andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk
07708 509436

Rachael Barwick
Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk
07377422415

James Fox
Press Contact
Student Communications Manager
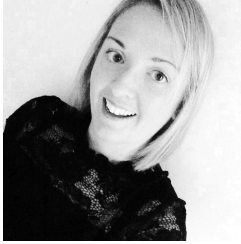james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk

Kelly Elliott
Press Contact
PR and Media Officer
kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk

Gemma Brown
Press Contact
PR and Media Officer
gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk