Contest 6

April 7, 1998

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17 is the product of the roots, so the roots are 17 & 1. *a* is the opposite of the sum of the roots. *a* = -18.

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| 1998 + 1999 - 2000 | = 1997

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The perimeter is 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 2 = 5

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- In a certain two person game, each person, in turn, removes toothpicks from a common pile until the pile is exhausted. The person who takes the last toothpick wins.
- Each turn, a player may take as many toothpicks as he/she wishes, but not more than was taken on the other player's last turn. To begin, the first person may take any number except all of the toothpicks.
- If the starting pile contains a) 301, b) 302, c) 300, d) 304 toothpicks, how many toothpicks must the first player take on the first turn to guarantee a win with perfect subsequent play?

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- What numbers on the starting pile guarantee the second person a win with perfect play?