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Interpolation Problem by IBM 1620, as Told to Dave Reid

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Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"Editor's Note: The increasingly important role played by computers in our modern world has not passed by the staff of this magazine unnoticed. Indeed, we can even foresee a new use for these mechanical masterminds—the writing of poetry. To prove our point, we bring to your attention part of a simple math problem. But note the view of life it presents, especially in the last ten lines."

Cover Page Footnote

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Step 27 $W=(Z-X(I))/.05$

$A=T(J,I)$

$B=W*(D(1,I-1)+D(1,I))/2.$

$C=W*W*D(2,1-I)/2.$

$P=W*(W*W-1.)*(D(3,I-2)+D(3,I-1))/12.$

$Q=W*W*(W*W-1.)*D(4,I-2)/24.$

$F=W*W*(W*W-1.)*(W*W-4.)*(D(5,I-3)+D(5,I-2))/240.$

$ANS=A+B+C+P+Q+F$

Punch 28, Ans

28 FORMAT (16H INTERPOLATED X=,E14.7)

XJ=J

$TJZ=COS(XJ*ATAN(SQRT(1.-Z*Z)/Z))$

Punch 29, TJZ

29 FORMAT (14H CALCULATED X=,E14.7)

$ERR=100.*(TJZ-ANS)/ANS$

Punch 30, ERR

30 FORMAT (15H PERCENT ERROR=,E14.7)

PAUSE

END