Question #2

Identical balls are launched at the same time with the same velocity from the left front end of the two-track gizmo photographed below. (Because this is a physics problem, there is no friction.) A race of the balls will then ensue. The ball on the flat track clearly proceeds across the track at a constant speed. The ball on the dipped track goes for a while at that same speed, goes faster while it is in the dipped part of the track, then returns to its original speed for the final segment of the track. Note that it also travels further.

What will happen?

- (a) The ball on the straight track will reach the end first.
- (b) The ball on the track with the dip will reach the end first.
- (c) The race will end in a tie.

Click here for Answer #2 after March 6.

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For questions and comments regarding the *Question of the Week* contact Dr. Richard E. Berg by e-mail or using phone number or regular mail address given on the Lecture-Demonstration Home Page.