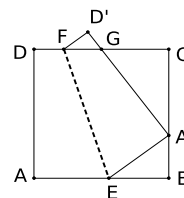


## 32<sup>nd</sup> Indian National Mathematical Olympiad-2017

### Problems and Solutions

1. In the given figure,  $ABCD$  is a square paper. It is folded along  $EF$  such that  $A$  goes to a point  $A' \neq C, B$  on the side  $BC$  and  $D$  goes to  $D'$ . The line  $A'D'$  cuts  $CD$  in  $G$ . Show that the inradius of the triangle  $GCA'$  is the sum of the inradii of the triangles  $GD'F$  and  $A'BE$ .



**Solution:** Observe that the triangles  $GCA'$  and  $A'BE$  are similar to the triangle  $GD'F$ . If  $GF = u$ ,  $GD' = v$  and  $D'F = w$ , then we have

$$A'G = pu, CG = pv, A'C = pw, \quad A'E = qu, BE = qw, A'B = qv.$$

If  $r$  is the inradius of  $\triangle GD'F$ , then  $pr$  and  $qr$  are respectively the inradii of triangles  $GCA'$  and  $A'BE$ . We have to show that  $pr = r + qr$ . We also observe that

$$AE = EA', \quad DF = FD'.$$

Therefore

$$pw + qv = qw + qu = w + u + pv = v + pu.$$

The last two equalities give  $(p-1)(u-v) = w$ . The first two equalities give  $(p-q)w = q(u-v)$ . Hence

$$\frac{p-q}{q} = \frac{u-v}{w} = \frac{1}{p-1}.$$

This simplifies to  $p(p-q-1) = 0$ . Since  $p \neq 0$ , we get  $p = q+1$ . This implies that  $pr = qr + r$ .

2. Suppose  $n \geq 0$  is an integer and all the roots of  $x^3 + \alpha x + 4 - (2 \times 2016^n) = 0$  are integers. Find all possible values of  $\alpha$ .

**Solution 1:** Let  $u, v, w$  be the roots of  $x^3 + \alpha x + 4 - (2 \times 2016^n) = 0$ . Then  $u + v + w = 0$  and  $uvw = -4 + (2 \times 2016^n)$ . Therefore we obtain

$$uv(u+v) = 4 - (2 \times 2016^n).$$

Suppose  $n \geq 1$ . Then we see that  $uv(u+v) \equiv 4 \pmod{2016^n}$ . Therefore  $uv(u+v) \equiv 1 \pmod{3}$  and  $uv(u+v) \equiv 1 \pmod{9}$ . This implies that  $u \equiv 2 \pmod{3}$  and  $v \equiv 2 \pmod{3}$ . This shows that modulo 9 the pair  $(u, v)$  could be any one of the following:

$$(2, 2), (2, 5), (2, 8), (5, 2), (5, 5), (5, 8), (8, 2), (8, 5), (8, 8).$$

In each case it is easy to check that  $uv(u+v) \not\equiv 4 \pmod{9}$ . Hence  $n = 0$  and  $uv(u+v) = 2$ . It follows that  $(u, v) = (1, 1), (1, -2)$  or  $(-2, 1)$ . Thus

$$\alpha = uv + vw + wu = uv - (u+v)^2 = -3$$

for every pair  $(u, v)$ .

**Solution 2:** Let  $a, b, c \in \mathbb{Z}$  be the roots of the given equation for some  $n \in \mathbb{N}_0$ . By Vieta Theorem, we know that

$$a + b + c = 0$$

$$ab + bc + ca = \alpha$$

$$abc = 2 \times 2016^n - 4$$

If possible, let us have  $n \geq 1$ . Since  $7|2016$ , we have that

$$7|abc + 4 \implies 7|3(abc + 4) \implies 7|3abc + 12 \implies 7|3abc + 5$$

Since we have  $a + b + c = 0$ , we get that  $3abc = a^3 + b^3 + c^3$ . Substituting this in the earlier expression, we get that

$$a^3 + b^3 + c^3 + 5 \equiv 0 \pmod{7}$$

Consider below, a table calculating the residues of cubes modulo 7.

|       |   |   |   |    |   |    |    |
|-------|---|---|---|----|---|----|----|
| $x$   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3  | 4 | 5  | 6  |
| $x^3$ | 0 | 1 | 1 | -1 | 1 | -1 | -1 |

Hence, we know that if  $x \in \mathbb{N}$ , then we have  $x^3 \equiv 0, 1, -1 \pmod{7}$ . Since  $a^3 + b^3 + c^3 \equiv 2 \pmod{7}$ , we see that we must have one of the numbers divisible by 7 and the other two numbers, when cubed, must leave 1 as remainder modulo 7. Without of generality, let us assume that

$$a \equiv 0 \pmod{7}, \quad b^3, c^3 \equiv 1 \pmod{7}$$

Hence, we have  $b, c \equiv 1, 2, 4 \pmod{7}$ . We will consider all possible values of  $b + c$  modulo 7. Since the expression is symmetric in  $b, c$ , modulo 7, we will consider  $b \leq c$ .

|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $b$     | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| $c$     | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| $b + c$ | 2 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 1 |

We see that, in all the above cases, we get  $7 \nmid b + c$ . But this is a contradiction, since  $7|a + b + c$  and  $7|a$  together imply that  $7|b + c$ . Hence, we cannot have  $n \geq 1$ . Hence, the only possible value is  $n = 0$ . Substituting this value in the original equation, the equation becomes

$$x^3 + \alpha x + 2 = 0$$

Solving the equations  $a + b + c = 0$  and  $abc = -2$  in integers, we see that the only possible solutions  $(a, b, c)$  are permutations of  $(1, 1, -2)$ . In case of any permutation,  $\alpha = -3$ . Substituting this value of  $\alpha$  back in the equation, we see that we indeed, get integer roots. Hence, the only possible value for  $\alpha$  is  $-3$ .

3. Find the number of triples  $(x, a, b)$  where  $x$  is a real number and  $a, b$  belong to the set  $\{1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9\}$  such that

$$x^2 - a\{x\} + b = 0,$$

where  $\{x\}$  denotes the fractional part of the real number  $x$ . (For example  $\{1.1\} = 0.1 = \{-0.9\}$ .)

**Solution:** Let us write  $x = n + f$  where  $n = [x]$  and  $f = \{x\}$ . Then

$$f^2 + (2n - a)f + n^2 + b = 0. \quad (1)$$

Observe that the product of the roots of (1) is  $n^2 + b \geq 1$ . If this equation has to have a solution  $0 \leq f < 1$ , the larger root of (1) is greater 1. We conclude that the equation (1) has a real root less than 1 only if  $P(1) < 0$  where  $P(y) = y^2 + (2n - a)y + n^2 + b$ . This gives

$$1 + 2n - a + n^2 + b < 0.$$

Therefore we have  $(n + 1)^2 + b < a$ . If  $n \geq 2$ , then  $(n + 1)^2 + b \geq 10 > a$ . Hence  $n \leq 1$ . If  $n \leq -4$ , then again  $(n + 1)^2 + b \geq 10 > a$ . Thus we have the range for  $n$ :  $-3, -2, -1, 0, 1$ .

If  $n = -3$  or  $n = 1$ , we have  $(n + 1)^2 = 4$ . Thus we must have  $4 + b < a$ . If  $a = 9$ , we must have  $b = 4, 3, 2, 1$  giving 4 values. For  $a = 8$ , we must have  $b = 3, 2, 1$  giving 3 values. Similarly, for  $a = 7$  we get 2 values of  $b$  and  $a = 6$  leads to 1 value of  $b$ . In each case we get a real value of  $f < 1$  and this leads to a solution for  $x$ . Thus we get totally  $2(4 + 3 + 2 + 1) = 20$  values of the triple  $(x, a, b)$ .

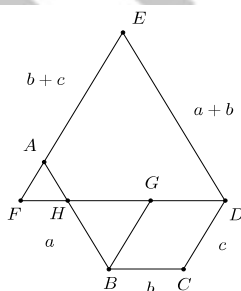
For  $n = -2$  and  $n = 0$ , we have  $(n + 1)^2 = 1$ . Hence we require  $1 + b < a$ . We again count pairs  $(a, b)$  such that  $a - b > 1$ . For  $a = 9$ , we get 7 values of  $b$ ; for  $a = 8$  we get 6 values of  $b$  and so on. Thus we get  $2(7 + 6 + 5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1) = 56$  values for the triple  $(x, a, b)$ .

Suppose  $n = -1$  so that  $(n + 1)^2 = 0$ . In this case we require  $b < a$ . We get  $8 + 7 + 6 + 5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 36$  values for the triple  $(x, a, b)$ .

Thus the total number of triples  $(x, a, b)$  is  $20 + 56 + 36 = 112$ .

4. Let  $ABCDE$  be a convex pentagon in which  $\angle A = \angle B = \angle C = \angle D = 120^\circ$  and whose side lengths are 5 consecutive integers in some order. Find all possible values of  $AB + BC + CD$ .

**Solution 1:** Let  $AB = a$ ,  $BC = b$ , and  $CD = c$ . By symmetry, we may assume that  $c < a$ . We show that  $DE = a + b$  and  $EA = b + c$ .



Draw a line parallel to  $BC$  through  $D$ . Extend  $EA$  to meet this line at  $F$ . Draw a line parallel to  $CD$  through  $B$  and let it intersect  $DF$  in  $G$ . Let  $AB$  intersect  $DF$  in  $H$ . We have  $\angle FDE = 60^\circ$  and  $\angle E = 60^\circ$ . Hence  $EFD$  is an equilateral triangle. Similarly  $AFH$  and  $BGH$  are also equilateral triangles. Hence  $HG = GB = c$ . Moreover,  $DG = b$ . Therefore  $HD = b + c$ . But  $HD = AE$  since  $FH = FA$  and  $FD = FE$ . Also  $AH = a - BH = a - BG = a - c$ . Hence  $ED = EF = EA + AF = b + c + AH = (b + c) + (a - c) = b + a$ .

We have five possibilities:

- (1)  $b < c < a < b + c < a + b$ ;

- (2)  $c < b < a < b + c < a + b$ ;
- (3)  $c < a < b < b + c < a + b$ ;
- (4)  $b < c < b + c < a < a + b$ ;
- (5)  $c < b < b + c < a < a + b$ .

In (1), we see that  $c < a < b + c$  are three consecutive integers provided  $b = 2$ . Hence we get  $c = 3$  and  $a = 4$ . In this case  $b + c = 5$  and  $a + b = 6$  so that we have five consecutive integers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 as side lengths. In (2),  $b < a < b + c$  form three consecutive integers only when  $c = 2$ . Hence  $b = 3$ ,  $a = 4$ . But then  $b + c = 5$  and  $a + b = 7$ . Thus the side lengths are 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 which are not consecutive integers. In case (3),  $b < b + c$  are two consecutive integers so that  $c = 1$ . Hence  $a = 2$  and  $b = 3$ . We get  $b + c = 4$  and  $a + b = 5$  so that the consecutive integers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 form the side lengths. In case (4), we have  $c < b + c$  as two consecutive integers and hence  $b = 1$ . Therefore  $c = 2$ ,  $b + c = 3$ ,  $a = 4$  and  $a + b = 5$  which is admissible. Finally, in case (5) we have  $b < b + c$  as two consecutive integers, so that  $c = 1$ . Thus  $b = 2$ ,  $b + c = 3$ ,  $a = 4$  and  $a + b = 6$ . We do not get consecutive integers.

Therefore the only possibilities are  $(a, b, c) = (4, 2, 3)$ ,  $(2, 3, 1)$  and  $(4, 1, 2)$ . This shows that  $a + b + c = 9, 6$  or  $7$ . Thus there are three possible sums  $AB + BC + CA$ , namely, 6, 7 or 9.

**Solution 2:** As in the earlier solution,  $ED = d = a + b$  and  $EA = e = b + c$ . Let the sides be  $x - 2, x - 1, x, x + 1, x + 2$ . Then  $x \geq 3$ . We also have  $x + 2 \geq x - 1 + x - 2$  so that  $x \leq 5$ . Thus  $x = 3, 4$  or  $5$ . If  $x = 5$ , the sides are  $\{3, 4, 5, 6, 7\}$  and here we do not have two pairs which add to a number in the set. Hence  $x = 3$  or  $4$  and we get the sets as  $\{1, 2, 3, 4, 5\}$  or  $\{2, 3, 4, 5, 6\}$ . With the set  $\{1, 2, 3, 4, 5\}$  we get

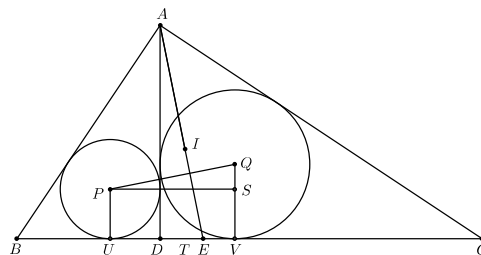
$$(a, b, c, d, e) = (2, 3, 1, 5, 4), (4, 1, 2, 5, 3).$$

From the set  $\{2, 3, 4, 5, 6\}$ , we get  $(a, b, c, d, e) = (4, 2, 3, 6, 5)$ . Thus we see that  $a + b + c = 6, 7$  or  $9$ .

**Solution 3:** We use the same notations and we get  $d = a + b$  and  $e = b + c$ . If  $a \geq 5$ , we see that  $d - b \geq 5$ . But the maximum difference in a set of 5 consecutive integers is 4. Hence  $a \leq 4$ . Similarly, we see  $b \leq 4$  and  $c \leq 4$ . Thus we see that  $a + b + c \leq 2 + 3 + 4 = 9$ . But  $a + b + c \geq 1 + 2 + 3 = 6$ . It follows that  $a + b + c = 6, 7, 8$  or  $9$ . If we take  $(a, b, c, d, e) = (1, 3, 2, 4, 5)$ , we get  $a + b + c = 6$ . Similarly,  $(a, b, c, d, e) = (2, 1, 4, 3, 5)$  gives  $a + b + c = 7$ . For  $a + b + c = 8$ , the only we we can get  $1 + 3 + 4 = 8$ . Here we cannot accommodate 2 and consecutiveness is lost. For 9, we can have  $(a, b, c, d, e) = (3, 2, 4, 5, 6)$  and  $a + b + c = 9$ .

5. Let  $ABC$  be a triangle with  $\angle A = 90^\circ$  and  $AB < AC$ . Let  $AD$  be the altitude from  $A$  on to  $BC$ . Let  $P, Q$  and  $I$  denote respectively the incentres of triangles  $ABD$ ,  $ACD$  and  $ABC$ . Prove that  $AI$  is perpendicular to  $PQ$  and  $AI = PQ$ .

**Solution:** Draw  $PS \parallel BC$  and  $QS \parallel AD$ . Then  $PSQ$  is a right-angled triangle with  $\angle PSQ = 90^\circ$ . Observe that  $PS = r_1 + r_2$  and  $SQ = r_2 - r_1$ , where  $r_1$  and  $r_2$  are the inradii of triangles  $ABD$  and  $ACD$ , respectively. We observe that triangles  $DAB$  and  $DCA$  are similar to triangle  $ACB$ .



Hence

$$r_1 = \frac{c}{a}r, \quad r_2 = \frac{b}{a}r,$$

where  $r$  is the inradius of triangle  $ABC$ . Thus we get

$$\frac{PS}{SQ} = \frac{r_2 + r_1}{r_2 - r_1} = \frac{b + c}{b - c}.$$

On the otherhand  $AD = h = bc/a$ . We also have  $BE = ca/(b + c)$  and

$$BD^2 = c^2 - h^2 = c^2 - \frac{b^2c^2}{a^2} = \frac{c^4}{a^2}.$$

Hence  $BD = c^2/a$ . Therefore

$$DE = BE - BD = \frac{ca}{b + c} - \frac{c^2}{a} = \frac{cb(b - c)}{a(b + c)}.$$

Thus we get

$$\frac{AD}{DE} = \frac{b + c}{b - c} = \frac{PS}{SQ}.$$

Since  $\angle ADE = 90^\circ = \angle PSQ$ , we conclude that  $\triangle ADE \sim \triangle PSQ$ . Since  $AD \perp PS$ , it follows that  $AE \perp PQ$ .

We also observe that

$$PQ^2 = PS^2 + SQ^2 = (r_2 + r_1)^2 + (r_2 - r_1)^2 = 2(r_1^2 + r_2^2).$$

However

$$r_1^2 + r_2^2 = \frac{c^2 + b^2}{a^2}r^2 = r^2.$$

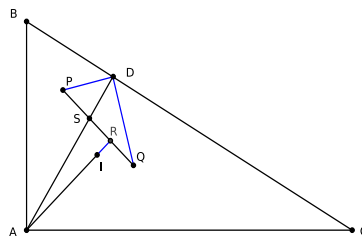
Hence  $PQ = \sqrt{2}r$ . We also observe that  $AI = r \operatorname{cosec}(A/2) = r \operatorname{cosec}(45^\circ) = \sqrt{2}r$ . Thus  $PQ = AI$ .

**Solution 2:** In the figure, we have made the construction as mentioned in the hint. Since  $P, Q$  are the incentres of  $\triangle ABD, \triangle ACD$ ,  $DP, DQ$  are the internal angle bisectors of  $\angle ADB, \angle ADC$  respectively. Since  $AD$  is the altitude on the hypotenuse  $BC$  in  $\triangle ABC$ , we have that  $\angle PDQ = 45^\circ + 45^\circ = 90^\circ$ . It also implies that

$$\triangle ABC \sim \triangle DBA \sim \triangle DAC$$

This implies that all corresponding length in the above mentioned triangles have the same ratio.





In particular,

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{AI}{BC} &= \frac{DP}{AB} = \frac{DQ}{AC} \\ \Rightarrow \frac{AI^2}{BC^2} &= \frac{DP^2}{AB^2} = \frac{DQ^2}{AC^2} = \frac{DP^2 + DQ^2}{AB^2 + AC^2} \\ \Rightarrow \frac{AI^2}{BC^2} &= \frac{PQ^2}{BC^2}, \text{ by Pythagoras Theorem in } \triangle ABC, \triangle PDQ \\ \Rightarrow AI &= PQ \end{aligned}$$

as required.

For the second, part, we note that from the above relations, we have  $\triangle ABC \sim \triangle DPQ$ . Let us take  $\angle ACB = \theta$ . Then, we get

$$\begin{aligned} \angle PSD &= 180^\circ - (\angle SPD + \angle SDP) \\ &= 180^\circ - (90^\circ - \theta + 45^\circ) \\ &= 45^\circ + \theta \end{aligned}$$

This gives us that

$$\begin{aligned} \angle ARS &= 180^\circ - (\angle ASR + \angle SAR) \\ &= 180^\circ - (\angle PSD + \angle SAC - \angle IAC) \\ &= 180^\circ - (45^\circ + \theta + 90^\circ - \theta - 45^\circ) \\ &= 90^\circ \end{aligned}$$

as required. Hence, we get that  $AI = PQ$  and  $AI \perp PQ$ .

**Solution 3:** We know that the angle bisector of  $\angle B$  passes through  $P, I$  which implies that  $B, P, I$  are collinear. Similarly,  $C, Q, I$  are also collinear. Since  $I$  is the incentre of  $\triangle ABC$ , we know that

$$\angle PIQ = \angle BIC = 90^\circ + \frac{\angle A}{2} = 135^\circ$$

Join  $AP, AQ$ . We know that  $\angle BAP = \frac{1}{2}\angle BAD = \frac{1}{2}\angle C$ . Also,  $\angle ABP = \frac{1}{2}\angle B$ . Hence by Exterior Angle Theorem in  $\triangle ABP$ , we get that

$$\angle API = \angle ABP + \angle BAP = \frac{1}{2}(\angle B + \angle C) = 45^\circ$$

Similarly in  $\triangle ADC$ , we get that  $\angle AQI = 45^\circ$ . Also, we have

$$\angle PAI = \angle BAI - \angle BAP = 45^\circ - \frac{\angle C}{2} = \frac{\angle B}{2}$$

Similarly, we get  $\angle QAI = \frac{\angle C}{2}$ .

Now applying Sine Rule in  $\triangle API$ , we get

$$\frac{IP}{\sin \angle PAI} = \frac{AI}{\sin \angle API} \Rightarrow IP = \sqrt{2}AI \sin \frac{B}{2}$$

Similarly, applying Sine Rule in  $\triangle AQI$ , we get

$$\frac{IQ}{\sin \angle PAI} = \frac{AI}{\sin \angle AQI} \Rightarrow IQ = \sqrt{2}AI \sin \frac{C}{2}$$

Applying Cosine Rule in  $\triangle PIQ$  gives us that

$$\begin{aligned} PQ^2 &= IP^2 + IQ^2 - 2 \cdot IP \cdot IQ \cos \angle PIQ \\ &= 2AI^2 \left( \sin^2 \frac{B}{2} + \sin^2 \frac{C}{2} + \sqrt{2} \sin \frac{B}{2} \sin \frac{C}{2} \right) \end{aligned}$$

We will prove that  $\left( \sin^2 \frac{B}{2} + \sin^2 \frac{C}{2} + \sqrt{2} \sin \frac{B}{2} \sin \frac{C}{2} \right) = \frac{1}{2}$ . In any  $\triangle XYZ$ , we have that

$$\sum_{cyc} \sin^2 \frac{X}{2} = 1 - 2 \prod \sin \frac{X}{2}$$

Using this in  $\triangle ABC$ , and using the fact that  $\angle A = 90^\circ$ , we get

$$\begin{aligned} \sin^2 \frac{A}{2} + \sin^2 \frac{B}{2} + \sin^2 \frac{C}{2} &= 1 - 2 \sin \frac{A}{2} \sin \frac{B}{2} \sin \frac{C}{2} \\ \Rightarrow \frac{1}{2} + \sin^2 \frac{B}{2} + \sin^2 \frac{C}{2} &= 1 - \sqrt{2} \sin \frac{B}{2} \sin \frac{C}{2} \\ \Rightarrow \left( \sin^2 \frac{B}{2} + \sin^2 \frac{C}{2} + \sqrt{2} \sin \frac{B}{2} \sin \frac{C}{2} \right) &= \frac{1}{2} \end{aligned}$$

which was to be proved. Hence we get  $PQ = AI$ .

The second part of the problem can be obtained by angle-chasing as outlined in Solution 2.

**Solution 4:** Observe that  $\angle APB = \angle AQC = 135^\circ$ . Thus  $\angle API = \angle AQI = 45^\circ$  (since  $B - P - I$  and  $C - Q - I$ ). Note  $\angle PAQ = 1/2\angle A = 45^\circ$ . Let  $X = BI \cap AQ$  and  $Y = CI \cap AP$ . Therefore  $\angle AXP = 180 - \angle API - \angle PAQ = 90^\circ$ . Similarly  $\angle AYQ = 90^\circ$ . Hence  $I$  is the orthocentre of triangle  $PAQ$ . Therefore  $AI$  is perpendicular to  $PQ$ . Also  $AI = 2R_{PAQ} \cos 45^\circ = 2R_{PAQ} \sin 45^\circ = PQ$ .

6. Let  $n \geq 1$  be an integer and consider the sum

$$x = \sum_{k \geq 0} \binom{n}{2k} 2^{n-2k} 3^k = \binom{n}{0} 2^n + \binom{n}{2} 2^{n-2} \cdot 3 + \binom{n}{4} 2^{n-4} \cdot 3^2 + \dots$$

Show that  $2x - 1, 2x, 2x + 1$  form the sides of a triangle whose area and inradius are also integers.

**Solution:** Consider the binomial expansion of  $(2 + \sqrt{3})^n$ . It is easy to check that

$$(2 + \sqrt{3})^n = x + y\sqrt{3},$$

where  $y$  is also an integer. We also have

$$(2 - \sqrt{3})^n = x - y\sqrt{3}.$$

Multiplying these two relations, we obtain  $x^2 - 3y^2 = 1$ .

Since all the terms of the expansion of  $(2 + \sqrt{3})^n$  are positive, we see that

$$2x = (2 + \sqrt{3})^n + (2 - \sqrt{3})^n = 2 \left( 2^n + \binom{n}{2} 2^{n-2} \cdot 3 + \dots \right) \geq 4.$$

Thus  $x \geq 2$ . Hence  $2x + 1 < 2x + (2x - 1)$  and therefore  $2x - 1, 2x, 2x + 1$  are the sides of a triangle. By Heron's formula we have

$$\Delta^2 = 3x(x+1)(x-1) = 3x^2(x^2 - 1) = 9x^2y^2.$$

Hence  $\Delta = 3xy$  which is an integer. Finally, its inradius is

$$\frac{\text{area}}{\text{perimeter}} = \frac{3xy}{3x} = y,$$

which is also an integer.

**Solution 2:** We will first show that the numbers  $2x_n - 1, 2x_n, 2x_n + 1$  form the sides of a triangle. To show that, it suffices to prove that  $2x_n - 1 + 2x_n > 2x_n + 1$ . If possible, let the converse hold. Then, we see that we must have  $4x_n - 1 \leq 2x_n + 1$ , which implies that  $x_n \leq 1$ . But we see that even for the smallest value of  $n = 1$ , we have that  $x_n > 1$ . Hence, the numbers are indeed sides of a triangle.

Let  $\Delta_n, r_n, s_n$  denote respectively, the area, inradius and semiperimeter of the triangle with sides  $2x_n - 1, 2x_n, 2x_n + 1$ . By Heron's Formula for the area of a triangle, we see that

$$\Delta_n = \sqrt{3x_n(x_n - 1)x_n(x_n + 1)} = x_n \sqrt{3(x_n^2 - 1)}$$

If possible, let  $\Delta_n$  be an integer for all  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ . We see that due to the presence of the first term  $\binom{n}{0} 2^n$ , we have  $3 \nmid x_n, \forall n \in \mathbb{N}$ . Hence, we get that  $3 \mid x_n^2 - 1$ . Hence, we can write  $x_n^2 - 1$  as  $3m$  for some  $m \in \mathbb{N}$ . Then, we can also write

$$\Delta_n = 3x_n \sqrt{m}$$

Note that we have assumed that  $\Delta_n$  is an integer. Hence, we see that we must have  $m$  to be a perfect square. Consequently, we get that

$$r_n = \frac{\Delta_n}{s_n} = \frac{\Delta_n}{3x_n} = \sqrt{m} \in \mathbb{Z}$$



Hence, it only remains to show that  $\Delta_n \in \mathbb{Z}$ ,  $\forall n \in \mathbb{N}$ . In other words, it suffices to show that  $3(x_n^2 - 1)$  is a perfect square for all  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ .

We see that we can write  $x_n$  as

$$\begin{aligned} x_n &= \frac{1}{2} \left( 2 \sum_{k \geq 0} \binom{n}{2k} 2^{n-2k} 3^k \right) \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \left( (2 + \sqrt{3})^n + (2 - \sqrt{3})^n \right) \\ 3x_n^2 - 3 &= \frac{3}{4} \left( (2 + \sqrt{3})^{2n} + (2 - \sqrt{3})^{2n} + 2(2 + \sqrt{3})^n (2 - \sqrt{3})^n \right) - 3 \\ &= \frac{3}{4} \left( (2 + \sqrt{3})^{2n} + (2 - \sqrt{3})^{2n} - 2(2 + \sqrt{3})^n (2 - \sqrt{3})^n \right) \\ &= \left( \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} \left( (2 + \sqrt{3})^n - (2 - \sqrt{3})^n \right) \right)^2 \end{aligned}$$

We are left to show that the quantity obtained in the above equation is an integer. But we see that if we define

$$a_n = \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} \left( (2 + \sqrt{3})^n - (2 - \sqrt{3})^n \right), \quad \forall n \in \mathbb{N}$$

the sequence  $\langle a_k \rangle_{k=1}^{\infty}$  thus obtained is exactly the solution for the recursion given by

$$a_{n+2} = 4a_{n+1} - a_n, \quad \forall n \in \mathbb{N}, \quad a_1 = 3, a_2 = 12$$

Hence, clearly, each  $a_n$  is obviously an integer, thus completing the proof.

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