Srdnlen – UniCA CTF Team

A day @ HACKDAY

Luca Minnei & Lorenzo Pisu

University of Cagliari

CyberChallenge Workshop – July 8, 2025 – Turin, Italy

Lorenzo Pisu

(PhD Student @ UniCa)

CyberChallenge 2019

Luca Minnei

(PhD Student @ UniCa)

CyberChallenge 2019

Sardinia Cyber Camp (Srdnlen CTF Finals)

We are organizing our first onsite
CTF and conference

- **Where : Cagliari**

- **When: 25-26th of September 2025**

HACKDAY Quals

Dream Team

Luca Minnei

FORENSIC

Davide Sechi

CRYPTO

Nicholas Melis

MISC

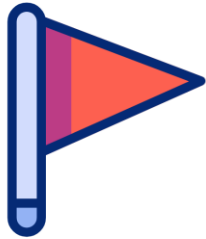**Diego Oliva**

PWN

Lorenzo Pisu

WEB

Matteo Chiesa

PWN

HACKDAY Overview

- French cybersecurity competition for higher-education students
- Comprehends **2 phases**

Qualification

Online qualification stage in teams of 4-6 people. The first 25 teams will qualify for the final.

Finals

Final of the HACDAY challenge, lasting 24 hours and taking place within the ESIEE Paris school.

CTF categories

HARDWARE

CRYPTO

FORENSIC

STEGANO

WEB

REVERSE

PWN

MISC

Jeopardy style

152 teams registered and participated

815 Active users during the qualification phase

33 Different countries

6k flags submissions in 24 hours (approx. 1.4 flags/minute)

HackDay 2025 - Qualifications

Fri, 24 Jan. 2025, 20:00 UTC — Sun, 26 Jan. 2025, 20:00 UTC

On-line

A HackDayCTF event.

Format: Jeopardy

Official URL: https://hackday.fr/

This event's future weight is subject of public voting!

Future weight: 20.29

Rating weight: 20.29

Event organizers
- HackDayCTF

Scoreboard

Place	Team
♕ 1	Squid Proxy Lovers
2	Srdnlen
3	BlackBox

HACKDAY

Congratulation !

Dear team,

You made it, you have been qualified for the final !

Consider this email your official invitation to join us at **ESIEE Paris, France** and be a part of the exciting HackDay Final. **Please read to the end and confirm your attendance**

About the HackDay final

Get ready for the in-person HackDay Final, a 24-hours event **kicking off on Friday, 28 March at 6 p.m** and **wrapping up on Friday, 29 March.**

Join us earlier on Friday, 28 March at 9:30 A.M for technical conferences open to all, featuring presentations by experts, researchers, and more. Your presence is more than welcome!

HACKDAY Finals

- The entire event was held in the **ESIEE Paris engineering school**.

- Before the actual CTF, there **were some talks available** for all the Paris students and for all the teams about cybersecurity topics.

CTF room

- **25 teams** from different parts of the world were put in this room for **24 hours.**
- Each team has its own table for the entire match.

- For all the CTF, we had the admins available in the center of the room
- We got multiple services for eating and drinking during the match.
- Some teams brought pillows and everything necessary to sleep there.

- Not Us 😂
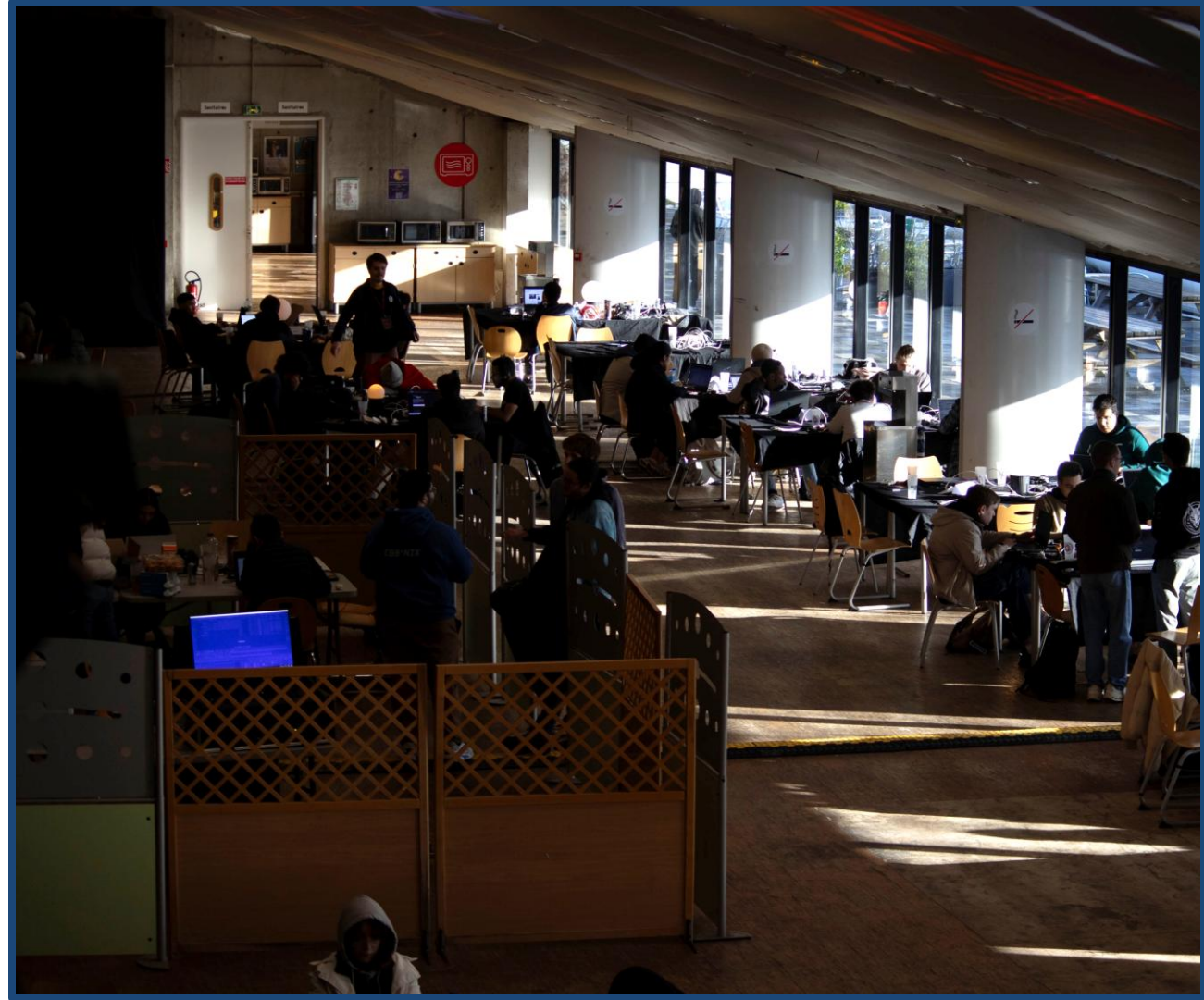
- For every first blood, the whole room got illuminated.
- The robotic voice starts saying First blood made by a team.
- The team that made the first blood had its bulb illuminated in green light, while the others were in red.
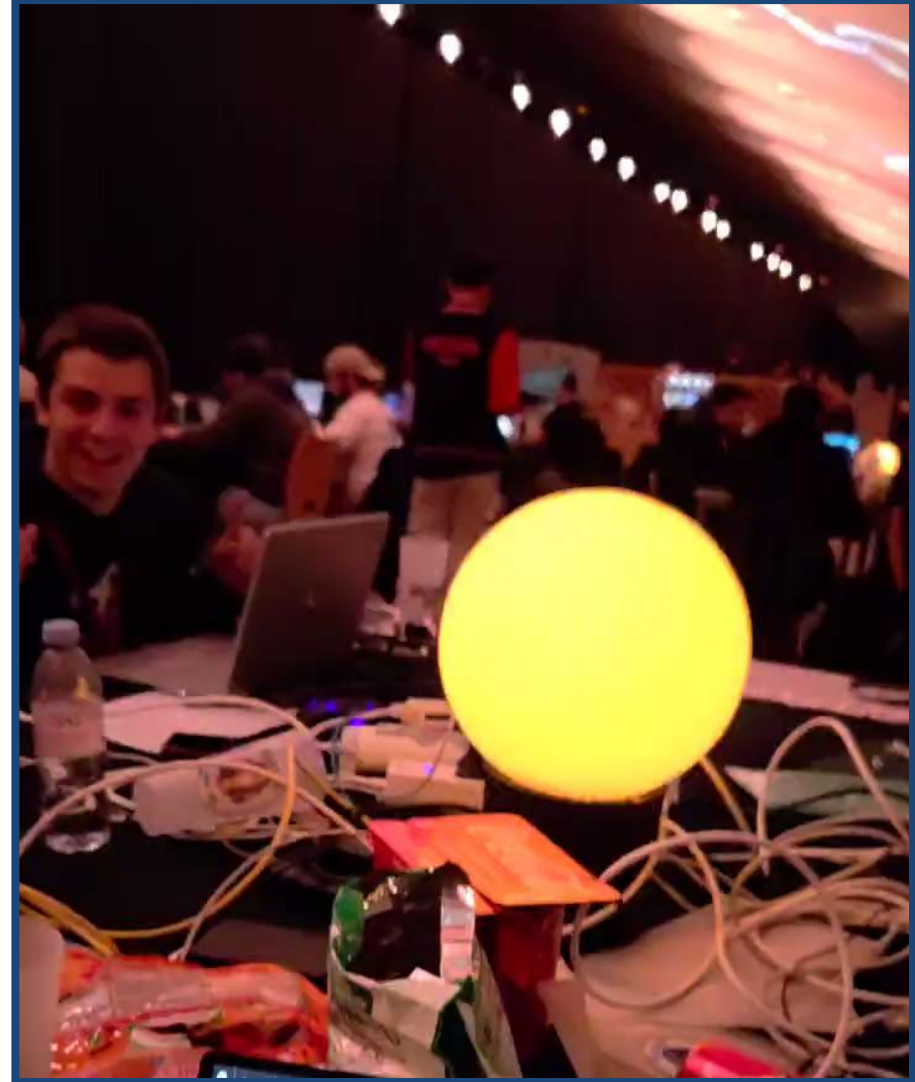
Social Engineering challs

"Amateurs hack systems; professionals hack people."
Bruce Schneier

What is social engineering

The art of manipulating people to divulge confidential information or perform actions that compromise security.

Key Techniques

- **Pretexting**: Invented scenarios to gain trust

- **Baiting**: Offering something enticing in exchange for access

https://www.kaspersky.it/resource-center/definitions/what-is-social-engineering
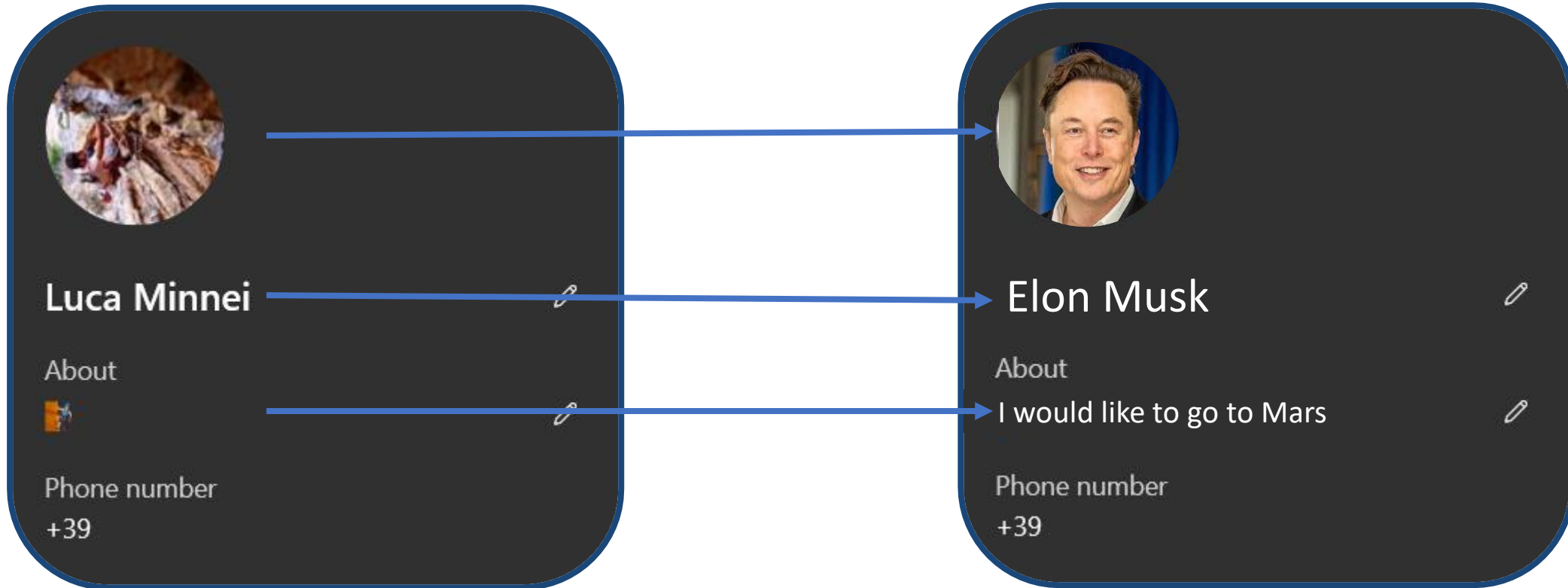
Edgar the lying psychologist

- The first challenge was about Edgar, a famous worldwide psychologist.

- What we have to do is make an appointment for therapy with him.

- The problem is that it accepts only people who are **rich and famous.**

Impersonation

Modify our WhatsApp profile to impersonate a famous person.

Luca Minnei

About

Phone number
+39

Elon Musk

About
I would like to go to Mars

Phone number
+39

It works!!! We managed to take the appointment.

- In the second challenge, we have to discover, during the therapy session, which website Edgar usually uses.

- To solve the challenge, we aimed to **gain his trust** by asking him to show us some **relaxing photos on his computer**. We **noticed a website in the favorites bar** that was the goal of the challenge.
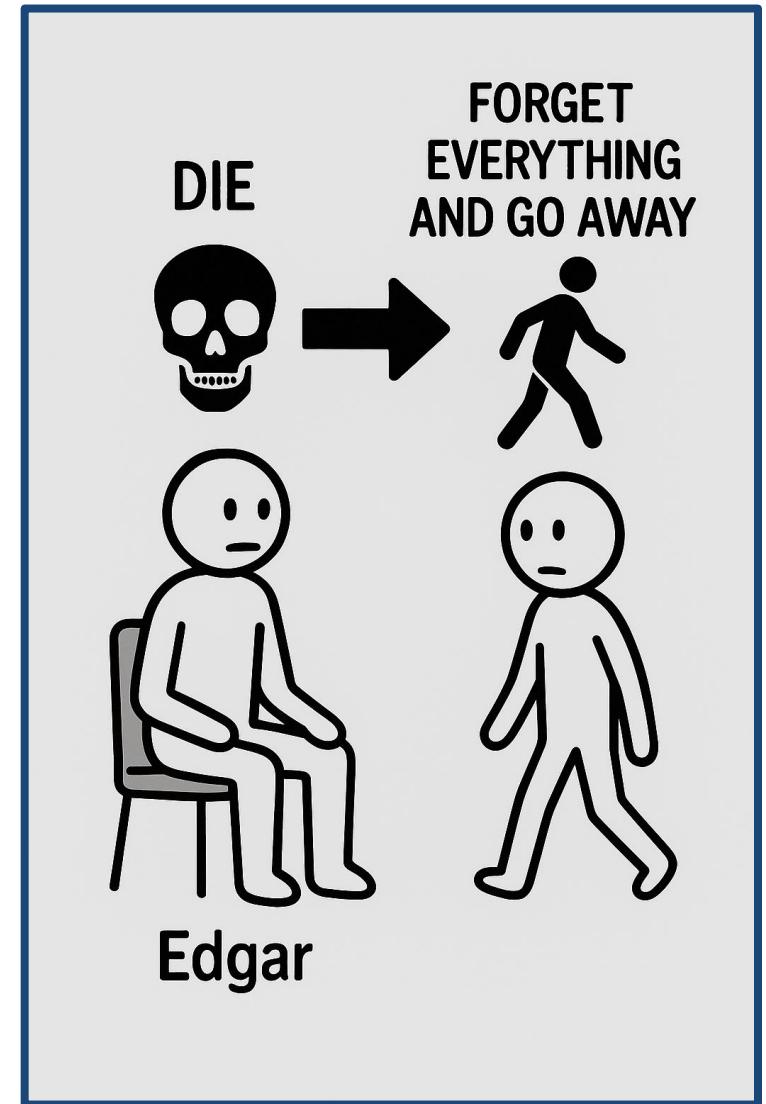
Find out the truth…

For this challenge, we need to organize a meeting with Edgar, whom we have discovered is part of a sect. Our goal is to infiltrate his sect and gather more information.

It seems straightforward, but when we first attempt this, we are discovered, which presents us with a binary decision.
As a result, **we end up dying**, and we **must redo everything from the beginning**.

Find out the truth…

After that, we had just one shot because the CTF was ending, and we needed to make another appointment while impersonating an important figure.

In the end, we discovered that Edgar would find us out anyway. Ultimately, we realized that our **only choice was to forget it**. By doing that, we managed to **solve the challenge.**
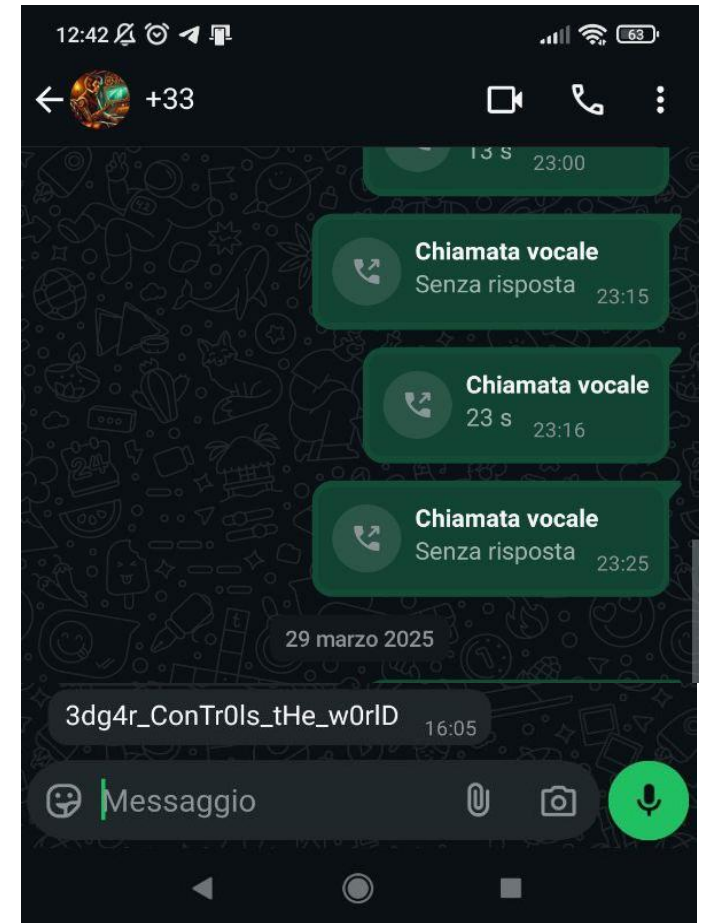
Pros:

- The overall competition was a **good experience**.
- They propose an **intriguing category, "Social Engineering"**, which could be further explored in new CTFs.

Cons:

- Some of the **challenges proposed were unsolvable** due to poor testing, so after reaching one point, they had to give us the flag manually.
- The challenge of **social engineering wasn't 100% deterministic**.

Thanks
for the attention

Thank**s** to all members of the Srdnlen team!