13th Annual ACM Symposium on Computational Geometry Minutes of the Business Meeting, June 5, 1997, Nice, France

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The annual business meeting for the 13th Annual ACM Symposium on Computational Geometry (SoCG) took place in the main lecture hall of the Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen on Thursday evening, June 5, 1997. Joe Mitchell, as the Chair of the out-going Computational Geometry Steering Committee, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Chee Yap, as Secretary of the out-going committee, served as scribe.

1 Report on SoCG'97

1.1 Conference Chair: Jean-Daniel Boissonnat

The first item on the agenda was the report from the 1997 conference chair, Jean-Daniel Boissonnat. He began by answering a deep question that all participants have been pondering ever since the conference began: he explained the significance of the beautiful murals gracing the walls of the lecture hall. The conference center is dedicated to the study and celebration of the Mediterranean culture, and the murals illustrate this.

Jean-Daniel then gave the attendance figures for this year, as illustrated in the table, where they are broken down by nationality. This year, there were 171 registered participants, 38 of which were students.

Jean-Daniel also gave a brief report on the *Workshop on Geometric Computing* which was held at INRIA Sophia Antipolis on June 2-3, immediately preceding this year's SoCG. It was supported by the CGAL project and its goal was to serve as a venue for discussion on the foundations of geometric computing and ongoing software developments. There were 12 invited 1-hour talks, accompanied by demonstrations of software and discussions. There were 60 participants.

Jean-Daniel acknowledged support for SoCG from Ville de Nice, Matra Datavision, Matra Marconi Space, Noésis, Thomson Training Systems and INRIA Sophia Antipolis. The hard work invested by all of the local organizers was acknowledged with much appreciation: Monique Simonetti (registration), Mariette Yvinec (treasurer), Olivier Devillers and Franck Yampolsky (computer facilities) and Bernhard Geiger (pictures). Finally, Joe Mitchell acknowledged the outstanding job of the conference chair, Jean-Daniel Boissonnat.

1.2 Theory Track PC Chair: Raimund Seidel

Next on the agenda was a report from Raimund Seidel, Chair of the Theory Track program committee. He noted that 92 regular papers were submitted. Of these, 21 (=22.8%) were accepted,

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LOCATION	ALL ATTENDEES	STUDENTS
USA	49	6
Canada	12	3
N. America	61	9
France	33	11
Germany	24	8
Switzerland	8	2
The Netherlands	8	3
Israel	8	2
Spain	7	2
Austria	4	
Italy	3	
Greece	1	
Russia	2	
Europe	98	28
Hong Kong	5	
Japan	5	1
South Korea	2	
East Asia	12	1
1997 TOTAL	171	38
1996 TOTAL	166	50
1995 TOTAL	155	
1994 TOTAL	157	

16 (=17.5%) were invited to be presented in the communications (poster) session (and all 16 accepted), and 55 (=59.7submissions to the communications session, and of these, 2 (=49.99%) were accepted.

1.3 Applied Track PC Chair: Christoph Hoffman

This was followed by the report of Chris Hoffmann, Chair of the Applied Track program committee. The PC was comprised of 4 core CG members and 8 members from applications areas (including solid modeling, computer-aided geometric design, and graphics). He noted that 90 regular papers were submitted. Of the received papers, 19 regular papers were accepted and 16 were invited to be presented in the communications (poster) session (and all 16 accepted). Of the 7 submissions to the communications session, 4 were accepted. The average number of authors per paper is 2.7. The review process comprised 3 core reviews by program committee members (and/or their subreferees), plus 2 or more additional reviews, if warranted. The core review included one expert in the subject and one peripheral to it, with the goal to obtain both a CG perspective and an applications perspective. Submissions by continent were as shown in the table.

1.4 Video Review Chair: Jack Snoeyink

Jack reported that there were 12 videos submitted, 7 of which were accepted. He made some constructive suggestions for future submissions of videos:

- avoid **bright** colors;

LOCATION	# SUBMISSIONS
Europe, Asia Minor, Middle East:	46
America:	39
Asia and Australia:	12

- avoid especially bright reds, since they "bleed."

2 Preview of SoCG'98

The conference chair for SoCG'98 is Ravi Janardan (`janardan@cs.umn.edu`); he was unable to attend this year's conference, so Joe Mitchell presented some facts that he supplied about next year's meeting:

- Conference Chair: Ravi Janardan
- Program Committee Chairs:
  - Ken Clarkson (Theory Track);
  - Jarek Rossignac (Applied Track)
- Dates: June 7-9, 1998 (Sunday - Tuesday) [Note: as a result of the discussion at the business meeting, the organizers have now extended the conference to span four days: June 7-10, Sunday - Wednesday.]
- Location: Minneapolis / St. Paul, Minnesota
- Host: Univ. of Minnesota, Geometry Center
- Airport: Minneapolis-St. Paul International

  Domestic hub for Northwest Airlines

  Direct flights from Europe on KLM and Asia on Northwest
- Hotel: Radisson Hotel Metrodome

  On campus, 1 block from CS Dept. and from (future) location of Geometry Center.

  Approximately 20 miles from airport.

  Rate: $ 90 (single), $ 100 (double) + tax
- Weather: mid-70s (rain possible, hopefully no snow :-)
- Web Page: `http://www.cs.umn.edu/scg98/index.html`
- Registration Fee: To be determined

The PC chairs for SoCG'98 made brief statements: Ken Clarkson (Theory Track) introduced his program committee members:

Chanderjit Bajaj (Univ. Texas, Austin)
Bernard Chazelle (Princeton Univ.)
Ken Clarkson, chair (Bell Labs)
John Hershberger (Mentor Graphics)
Jiří Matoušek (Charles Univ.)
Mark Overmars (Utrecht Univ.)
János Pach (New York, Budapest)
Micha Sharir (Tel Aviv Univ.)
Michiel Smid (Univ. Magdeburg)
Steve Vavasis (Cornell Univ.)
Mariette Yvinec (INRIA)

Jarek Rossignac (Applied Track) stressed the importance of bringing the Computational Geometry talent in closer contact with related communities, such as Solid Modeling, Computer Aided Geometric Design, Computer Graphics and Animation, Bioengineering, etc. He acknowledged that the dual-track system is a major step in this direction. The applied track committee is:

Marshall Bern (Xerox Parc)
Jean-Daniel Boissonnat (INRIA)
Fred Bookstein (U Mich)
Tamal Dey (I.I.T. Kharagpur)
Gershon Elber (Technion)
Steve Fortune (Bell Labs)
Randy Franklin (RPI)
Ken Goldberg (Berkeley)
Leo Guibas (Stanford Univ.)
Christoph Hoffmann (Purdue Univ.)
Dinesh Manocha (UNC)
Nick Patrikalakis (MIT)
Jarek Rossignac, Chair (GVU/Georgia Tech)
Francois Sillion (Imag)
Steven Skiena (SUNY at Stony Brook)

3 Announcements

1. Joe Mitchell announced the results of the election for the new Computational Geometry Steering Committee members. The new members (in alphabetical order), each serving 2-year terms, are Nina Amenta, Bernard Chazelle, Herbert Edelsbrunner, Joe O'Rourke and Mark Overmars. (All were present at the business meeting, except Joe O'Rourke, who sent his regrets.) There were 147 people that voted in the election.

   [The new Steering Committee has since selected its new Chair: Mark Overmars.]

2. Guissepe Liotta announced the Graph Drawing'97 conference in Rome, Italy, September 18-20, 1997. See `http://www.inf.uniroma3.it/calendar/gd97.html`

3. Pankaj Agarwal announced the 2nd CGC Workshop on Geometric Computing on October 18-19, 1997, at Duke University. Submission deadline is September 8.
   See `http://www.cs.duke.edu/CGC/workshop97.html`

4. Pankaj Agarwal announced the 3rd Workshop on Foundations of Algorithmic Robotics (WAFR) at Rice University, March 5-7, 1998.
   See `http://www.cs.rice.edu/ kavraki/wafr_conference.html`

5. It was announced that WADS'97 will take place August 6-8, 1997, at Dalhousie University, Halifax, CANADA. See `http://www.tuns.ca/ wads/`

4 Discussions

4.1 SoCG'99: FCRC?

The first topic of discussion was whether or not the community wants to join FCRC in 1999. Mike Goodrich, as liaison to FCRC and Conference Chair of the 1996 SoCG (with FCRC), summarized the experience at FCRC in 1996. It had mixed reviews. Basically, the service level was low and cost too high. There were plans to address both of these concerns. FCRC'99 will take place in late May of 1999; possible locations being discussed are Denver and Las Vegas. Mike went on to discuss what he knows of SIGACT's potential involvement in FCRC'99: SIGACT wants to place restrictions on cost, and demands on service level, if they are to participate again. Further, individual conferences may have the opportunity to do much of their own organization and publicity, under an FCRC "umbrella," rather than having the overall organization done by a professional firm.

Joe Mitchell called a straw vote on the subject: Should we go along with SIGACT in their decision whether or not to join FCRC (placing restrictions on their participation)? The majority voted "yes." In the event that SIGACT decides not to join FCRC, then the location for SoCG'99 will be decided by the community by an email vote in the near future, before SoCG'98.

Leo Guibas suggested another possibility: That we attempt to co-locate SoCG with some other applications conference.

4.2 Video Review: To be or not to be?

Jack Snoeyink suggested that perhaps the Video Review could be held every other year, instead of annually, given the amount of effort that must go into it each year. Nina Amenta suggested that perhaps we try a "rest" for one year. Danny Halperin pointed out how much he likes the video review, that he uses them in class, and he hopes the tradition continues. Joe Mitchell immediately nominated Danny to Chair next year's Video Review; the motion carried by an overwhelming show of applause.

[The Video Review Committee for 1998 will consist of Gershon Elber (Technion), Dan Halperin (chair; Tel Aviv University), Leo Joskowicz (Hebrew University), Matthew Katz (Ben Gurion University), Joseph S.B. Mitchell (SUNY Stony Brook), Ayellet Tal (Technion)]

4.3 Meeting Formats Discussion

The general topic of discussion was "On the format of future SoCG conferences, the relationship between the theory and applied tracks, and the place of short communications in this brave new world."

[The Secretary apologizes if he missed recording a statement that you made at the meeting.]

Bajaj: suggested poster venue for "late breaking topics," as at SIGGRAPH.

Overmars: opposed to the conversion of regular submissions to communication papers.

Chazelle: the highest priority is to increase acceptance, especially in applied areas. We say to the applied people "come, come" and then have these massive rejections.

Sharir: against parallel sessions. Willing to go to 15-minute talks to avoid parallelism.

Rossignac: disagrees that the acceptance rate this year was too low. This is true of many other (especially prestigious) conferences.

Chazelle: this is not the place to be prestigious. Physics, medicine and math don't do it this way.

Drysdale: We should not accept papers based on number of slots but on quality. Go to 15-minute talks if necessary.

Pollack: against parallel sessions.

At this point, Joe Mitchell called for a straw vote on 3 versus 4 days of conference. The result was that there were approximately 36 in favor of a 4-day conference, and approximately 29 in favor of a 3-day conference.

[Note: The organizers have decided to have a 4-day event.]

Whitesides: proposes 3 days, with second day being parallel sessions. Suggests that papers in parallel sessions are not necessarily second rate.

Amenta: strongly favors posters.

Dobkin: trusts the next program committee to make the decision.

Vitter: suggest to keep the current format.

At the point, there was another straw vote among three choices:

(a) Those in favor of a *single* category of papers in the proceedings (approximately 10 pages). [about 50 votes]

(b) Those in favor of having a second category of paper, with about 6-8 pages in the proceedings. [about 4 votes]

(c) Those in favor of having a second category of paper, with about 3-5 pages in the proceedings. [about 8 votes]

Next we continued the discussion on alternative meeting formats and the role of short communications:

Guibas: the 3-page format for short communication is too short.

Overmars: get rid of short communications. The original idea of short communications was to get applied papers.

Rossignac: suggests parallel sessions may be better.

Bremner: supports parallel sessions.

Sack: supports 4-day conference and 20 minute talks.

J.Mitchell: points out that 15-minute talks have also been suggested.

At this point, Raimund Seidel put up some slides and outlines his proposal (this had been circulated via email to the compgeom-announce mailing list prior to the conference, and hard copies were available at the meeting). Raimund proposed radically shorter talks, to open the schedule to allow for invited speakers and plenty of discussion time with colleagues, while still permitting a greater number of papers to be accepted.

Preparata: likes this year's format.

Overmars: does not like complicated mechanisms.

Sharir: quality is most important.

Bajaj: allow 5-minute talks for poster papers. Also, demos and posters are natural for applied track.

There was another straw vote: Do we want parallel sessions? Most are opposed.

Snoeyink: suggests that food should be served in the room where posters are displayed; this helps to increase participation.

Rote: likes posters combined with 5-minute talks.

Goodrich: likes to see 30% acceptance rate.

Yap: likes this year's format, but not necessarily the 25-minute slots.

Guibas: Should we really have two classes of papers?

Joe Mitchell: pointed out that we already have two classes of accepted papers in the current format (regular plus short).

Another straw vote was held:

(a) All presentations of same length: [overwhelmingly in favor]

(b) Two different length talks, decided by PC: [8 votes]

(c) Parallel sessions: [25 votes]

Officially, the business meeting concluded at this point.

Post-Meeting Announcements

Kamal Abdali from the National Science Foundation volunteered to provide some brief information about the funding situation for CG at NSF. CG is one of 6 areas under the NSF program on Numeric, Symbolic and Geometric Computing, managed by Abdali. Computer Graphics has recently been been added to this program (with additional money). Abdali mentioned two special interdisciplinary programs: (a) PSE ("Problem Solving Environments"), which seeks to integrate numeric, symbolic and geometric techniques; and (b) Science Challenges.

CISE (which contains Abdali's program) has recently been reorganized: most grants will now be "standard," not "continuing." Fewer, and only 2-year, grants were given out this year, during the transition. This has been a hardship for the community. But starting next year, we will see 3-year grants. September 16, 1997 is the strict deadline for all regular proposals. See `http://www.cise.nsf.gov/ccr` for more information.