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Foreword

The *9th International Ion Chromatography Symposium 1996* (IICS '96) was held at the University of Reading, Reading, UK, 16–20 September 1996. 200 scientists from 27 countries attended IICS '96, now well established as the foremost international conference concerning the latest research, developments and applications in the ion chromatography (IC) and capillary electrophoresis (CE) of small ions and molecules. There were 68 oral and 78 poster presentations producing a very interesting and stimulating programme. Although there was no particular theme to the conference, there was clearly a lot of interest in the scope and future development of CE and how it would relate to the established IC techniques. These aspects were put into focus by four excellent plenaries giving a broad view of the latest developments in IC and CE. The meeting was opened by the presentation of the 1996 Ion Chromatography Achievement Award to the first plenary speaker, Professor Kazuhiko Tanaka. The Programme Chairman, Dr. Donald Pietryzk, in his opening address, highlighted Professor Tanaka's extensive achievements in IC, particularly his pioneering work in ion exclusion chromatography and his very important studies of acid rain composition in south east Asia. This last topic was the main subject of Professor Tanaka's plenary which described how he and his team had developed a novel combined ion exclusion and cation exchange separation system for the simultaneous determination of anions and cations as part of an automated monitoring system for acid rain analysis.

The next plenary was presented by Professor Paul Haddad, recognised as one of the international leaders in research and development in this area of separation science. He delivered a thought provoking

and enlightening exposition comparing IC and CE technologies and set the tone for the rest of the conference. The plenary on the second day was delivered by Dr. Chris Pohl whose theme, the state of the art in IC, was essentially posing the question "Are you getting the best out of your IC?". Drawing on his considerable experience in the development of IC technology, his intriguing talk starting from a historical perspective, showed the remarkable developments in IC since the 1970s and clearly demonstrated that IC is not standing still and important developments are still continuing in both separation and detection. It was fitting that the final plenary on the last day of the conference should focus specifically on CE. It was given by Professor Knut Bächmann a major pioneer in exploiting the special properties of CE. His talk showed some fascinating insights into the role CE is likely to play in small sample analysis such as the determination of ions in cloud particles and single plant cells. The rest of the programme was wide ranging with major sessions on Separation Selectivity and Methodology, Environmental Applications and Pharmaceutical, Clinical and Biochemical Applications. Two areas were highlighted by Keynote lectures, one given by Dr. Jeremy Glennon in the Special Sample Treatment and Preconcentration Procedures session and the other by Dr. Kelvin Tapley in the Environmental Applications session.

The granting of travel and registration bursaries to research students is now a well established part of the IICS philosophy to help support young students to present their work at the conference. This year the travel awards went to Hossein Salimi-Moosavi, University of Saskatchewan, Canada, Philip Doble and John Madden, University of Tasmania, Australia

and Liwen Ye, University of Calgary, Canada. The Scientific Committee presented the best poster award to Miroslav Macka for the presentation entitled "Changes in Electrolyte pH Due to Electrolysis During CE: The Role of Electrode Position and Electrolyte Buffering".

The continuing success of the IICS meetings is due to the quality and diversity of the presentations, but the management of the conference is also important and I would like to thank the members of the Scientific Committee: Wolfgang Buchberger, Richard M. Cassidy, Purnendu K. Dasgupta, James S. Fritz, Paul R. Haddad, Charles Lucy, Kikuo Oikawa, Donald J. Pietryzk, Hamish Small and John Stillian and the members of the Organising Committee: Mike Amey, Roger George, John Green, David Lock and Pavel Nesterenko for their willing support and contributions to the organisation of the confer-

ence. A special thank you goes to Janet Strimaitis of Century International whose dedication to these symposia and excellent organisational skills played a major part in the success of the conference. Thanks also go Dr. Erich Heftmann of the *Journal of Chromatography A* as editor of the Proceedings Volume. Finally, on behalf of the symposium delegates we give particular thanks to the Dionex Corporation for financial and organisational support.

The Chairman of the *International Ion Chromatography Symposium 1997* is Professor Purnendu Dasgupta, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas. The meeting will be held 14-17 September, 1997, in the San Francisco Bay Area, The Westin Hotel, Santa Clara, CA, USA. We look forward to seeing you there.

Plymouth, Devon, UK

Phil Jones
Symposium Chair