

## The 1994 Gaston Planté Medal Presentation Address

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Presentation of the 1994 Gaston Planté Medal to Professor Detchko Pavlov (left) by Academician Yordan Malinovsky (right).

I assume that it would be trivial to tell this highly professional audience about the relevance of the venerable lead/acid battery to contemporary life. But, I also presume that 135 years ago when Gaston Planté presented his invention to the members of the French Academy of Sciences neither the inventor, nor anybody else, could imagine the brilliant future awaiting the device.

Rather rough, heavy, and perhaps even obsolete at this time, the lead/acid battery has been continuously improved and sophisticated, and has been continuously implemented into so many contemporary technical and technological applications. For 135 years, scientists and engineers have worked hard to develop it into the system that we know today.

How many millions of batteries are moving on the roads, how many millions are in telecommunications networks, computer centres, airports, power stations, and hospitals? I am afraid no one can calculate.

In spite of this progress, however, the lead/acid battery still retains many secrets. Attempts to reveal these have been made by a vast number of researchers and engineers. The present conference is proof of this statement.

Having this in view, and on the initiative of the Organizing Committee of the International Conference on Lead–Acid Batteries LABAT '89, the Board of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences established an award — a medal, in honour of the inventor of the lead/acid battery, Gaston Planté. This medal is bestowed for outstanding achievements in the solution of scientific and technological problems associated with the development of lead/acid batteries.

The first recipient of the Gaston Planté Medal in 1989 was Dr Ernst Voss from Germany, followed in 1993 by the second award winner, Dr Paul Ruetschi from Switzerland.

Here, I would like to stress, and make it completely clear, that the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences itself is not at all involved in the selection of the recipient of this medal. This is the responsibility of an International Gaston Planté Medal Committee that comprises worldwide acknowledged authorities on the science and technology of the lead/acid battery.

With deep satisfaction, and with some national pride, I can now announce that the International Planté Medal Committee has decided to award the 1994 Gaston Planté Medal at this important international forum, the 4th European Lead Battery Conference, to Professor Detchko Pavlov, a member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, in acknowledgement of his significant contributions to the theory and technology of the lead/acid battery.

The Board of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences is most pleased and gratified that one of the scientists in its Academy has been honoured with this prestigious award.

It is my personal pleasure that, following the decision of the International Committee, I now present the 1994 Gaston Planté Medal to the talented Bulgarian scientist, Professor Detchko Pavlov.

Academician Yordan Malinovsky  
President of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences  
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