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2008 National Japanese Liquid Crystal Conference

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CONFERENCE REPORT

2008 National Japanese Liquid Crystal Conference

From 17 to 19 September 2008 the National Japanese Liquid Crystal Conference was held at the Campus Plaza, Kyoto. The conference was made up of more than 250 presentations. At this meeting a new session called the ‘Company Session’ was introduced, with details as given below. Also, probably due to the inclusion of this new session, the number of participants exceeded 500, which was larger than that of last year’s conference in Tokyo.

On the afternoon of the first day the poster session was held. A total of 136 posters were presented and many participants extensively discussed the novel topics. For young scientists, the Japanese Liquid Crystal Society (JLCS) has established the poster award, called ‘Kohsai-sho’. This prize is mainly awarded to those that show the ability to understand, present and communicate their specific topic of research and their novel results. This year, six young scientists (Mr Tomohiro Uemura, Mr Yuki Ohba, Dr Masahiro Kojima, Miss Mizuho Kondo, Mr Yoshimitsu Sagara and Dr Hiroyuki Yoshida) who specialise in liquid crystal physics, chemistry, displays and related topics received the award after strict assessment. The award ceremony was held during the conference banquet.



Figure 1. Discussions at the very well attended poster session of the 2008 National Meeting of the Japanese Liquid Crystal Society.

On the second day, the ‘Company Session’ was held. This session was established for the purpose of attracting, in particular, participants who are engaged

in the field of flat panel display devices. Six invited talks about sealing technology (Dr Masanori Matsuda, Sekisui Chemical), process technology (Dr Osamu Yamashita, Nakan), alignment layers (Dr Masayuki Kimura, JSR), optical films (Dr Kohei Arakawa, ZEON Corp), drop processes (Dr Kazuteru Tomiyama, Musashi Engineering) and new liquid crystal compounds (Dr Haruyoshi Takatsu, DIC) were presented in the morning. In the afternoon, two plenary talks by Hitachi (Dr Yuka Utsumi) and Sharp (Dr Yuichiro Yamada) were presented, which were very well attended by the conference participants and provoked much active discussion. Before the banquet, the JLCS general meeting was held. In this meeting the award ceremony was included, where three senior scientists (Professor Naoyuki Koide, Professor Takashi Katoh and Dr Kenji Okamoto) were recognised for their significant achievements, three young scientists were awarded for their encouraging new contributions (Dr Kiyooki Usami, Dr Akihisa Yamaguchi and Dr Ryotaro Ozaki) and four outstanding papers and one textbook for liquid crystals were recognised.



Figure 2. The ‘Company Session’ facilitating talks from industry-based speakers on the future applications of liquid crystals.

It goes without saying that novel topics in the fields of synthesis, physical behaviour and applications were presented in every session. In particular, I felt that the number of presentations focused on the blue phase increased at this conference. A total of nine talks were presented on this topic, discussing blue phase

photonic effects, characterisation and new materials, and they initiated much discussion among participants. The recent publication by Samsung of a proto-type display using the blue phase may certainly have promoted this tendency.

It was decided that the 2009 National Japanese Liquid Crystal Conference returns to Tokyo. It will be held at the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology from 12 to 15 September 2009. The meeting will be well balanced between academia and industry, between fundamental science and application. I thus

think it will present a good opportunity to learn about the latest news in our field. I expect that a large number of participants will return to the JLCS Conference in 2009 and hope that many researchers will join and actively discuss novel trends in liquid crystal research, despite the current severe economic difficulties.

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