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## OLC '93 - V International Meeting on Optics of Liquid Crystals, 4-8 October 1993, Siofok, Hungary

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# ***OLC '93 - V International Meeting on Optics of Liquid Crystals, 4-8 October 1993, Siofok, Hungary***

***Report from Francesco Simoni, Universita di Napoli "Federico II", Dipartimento di Scienze Fifiche, Piazzale Tecchio 80, 80125 Napoli, Italy***

The International Topical Meeting on Optics of Liquid Crystals (OLC '93), held in Siofok, Hungary, a resort location on the southern side of Lake Balaton, continued the successful tradition of this biennial conference, showing the increasing interest of scientists in the subjects covered by the very rich program. Sixty-three participants came from 16 countries, so two important features were maintained: the size of the meeting which allowed its informal character with open discussions after the lectures, and its really international character so essential to keep the quality of papers high. The conference Chairman was Dr Istvan Janossy of the Research Institute for Solid State Physics, Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Budapest) and the Organising Committee belonged to the same institute.

The programme included 20 invited lectures, 13 oral presentations and 63 posters. Light controlled boundary conditions via the orienting effects of polymeric coatings and dyes was a new and very interesting topic discussed by invited talks by Gibbons (Hercules, USA) and Reznikov (Kiev). Also related to it was the presentation of a Z-scan study of dye-assisted optical reorientation by Maddalena (Naples). It was interesting to note how this field is rapidly broadening after the discovery of the unusually low threshold of the Optical Freedericksz Transition in dyed nematics reported by Janossy in Turin at OLC '88.

Another subject where applications in optical processing can be foreseen is the spatial pattern formation in liquid crystals described in talks by Firth (Glasgow), Santamato (Naples) and Macdonald (Berlin).

An increasing interest in composite liquid crystalline materials has also been shown not only because of the potential display applications but also for their peculiar physical properties which need a deep fundamental study. So that besides PDLCs discussed in talks and posters, new Liquid Crystal Dispersed Polymers (LCDPs) were discussed by Jakli (Budapest), polymeric networks in liquid crystals by Zumer (Ljubljana) and filled nematics by Kreuzer (Darmstadt).

It is not possible to report here all the

interesting papers presented at the meeting, however among others I can recall the remarkable study of self-oscillations and chaos in nematics by Umeton (Cosenza), the self-starting phase conjugation reported by Khoo (Penn State), the TIR study of optical reorientation by Warengam (Lille) and the orientational convective-thermal effects leading to strong nonlinearities described by Akopyan (Yerevan).

The atmosphere was very friendly and the excellent organisation included a half day trip to nice towns on the other side of the Lake Balaton.

Several good proposals were made to organise the next OLC '95 meeting and, regretting the fact that a choice was necessary, it was decided to organise it in France, the Chairman being Prof Marc Warengam of the University of Lille. □

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## ***1st Iberoamerican Workshop on Anisotropic Fluids, 5-8 June 1993, Cordoba, Argentina***

***Report from Daniel Pusiol, Conference Chairman***

The meeting, in the small town of La Falda near Cordoba, was attended by a total of 49 participants, including chemists, physicists and technologists from Stuttgart, La Plata, Buenos Aires, Cordoba, São Paulo, Campinas, Florianopolis, Londrina, Concepcion, Zaragoza and Barcelona.

There were eleven oral presentations on activities concerning research groups from Iberoamerica. The groups of Professor C Aguilera (Concepcion, Chile) and Professor J L Serrano (Zaragoza, Spain) presented works on synthesis and characterisation of polymeric liquid crystals, ferroelectrics and organometallic complexes.

Professor A Pellegrini from the Technological Researching Centre (Centro de Desenvolvimento Tecnológico — Campinas, São Paulo, Brazil) showed devices which were developed in the Pantallas Laboratory (an information display) using liquid crystals. The formation of a network for the development of new compounds was also discussed in the programme for microelectronic development, which is financed by the Spanish Government and coordinated by the group from Campinas.

Groups from Professor A Figueiredo Neto, Professor L Queiroz do Amaral (São Paulo, Brazil) and Professor T Taylor

(Florianopolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil) showed their results of detailed studies on the lyotropic liquid crystals phase transitions. This included diverse experimental work on the elastic and magnetic properties in lyotropic mesophases. Particular interest was generated by the studies of Professor Figueiredo Neto's group on anisotropic magnetic fluids. Professor H Gallardo (Florianopolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil) presented a new process, concerning the synthesis of thermotropic liquid crystals.

Professor J Font and Professor J Muntasell (Barcelona, Spain) presented detailed calorimetric studies on anisotropic fluids. Professor J R Grigera (Universidad de La Plata) clearly presented the bases of the simulation methods of physical and chemical properties, applied to anisotropic fluids, including both MC and MD methods.

Several experiments on Magnetic Resonance and Nuclear Quadrupolar Resonance were outlined by Professor N Heaton (Universidad de Stuttgart) as well as by researchers from Cordoba. The local order properties for the study of uni/biaxiality on thermotropic liquid crystals are of interest for both groups.

The next Iberoamerican Liquid Crystal Conference will be held in 1995 in the city of São Paulo (Brazil). □