Proceedings of the Eleventh International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence

Vol. 1



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Volume 1

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Foreword

At the outset, when I agreed to serve as Program Chair for IJCAI-89, I knew that I faced two significant challenges. Firstly, the field of Artificial Intelligence now spans the globe and thus the conference had to reflect the truly international character of the field. Secondly, the rapid growth witnessed in the past eight years would continue and pose difficulties in terms of sheer numbers. The conference you are attending has been shaped by the responses to these two challenges.

We received papers submitted from 38 countries covering all the continents! This is a real landmark event in the history of AI. We have made a careful attempt to increase world-wide participation in panels and invited talks. At the same time we have strived to uphold the high standards that have marked the past IJCAIs. I extend a warm welcome to all the delegates from near and far.

We planned ahead with innovative ways of dealing with an anticipated 1200 papers. When over 1300 papers arrived in December, it made us scurry to find the means to tackle this overflow. The largest growth took place in the areas of Search, Planning, Knowledge Representation and Learning. All the program committee members have handled their assignments and overflows cheerfully and with promptness. All the program committee members had collected names and addresses for the needed number of reviewers months ahead of the paper submission deadline. They were ready with detailed procedures for reviewing, ways to counteract the capriciousness of international mail during the holiday season and with a keen understanding of the need for thorough and lucid reviews on a multiplicity of review criteria. Every paper was required to be reviewed at least twice, with a third review when needed. The program committee met in Detroit for two days to view the conference facilities and to finalize the selection of papers. Using the technique of small group meetings and avoiding any simplistic, formulaic process, the committee labored hard, selected a total of 266 papers, and wrote detailed justifications for the rejected papers.

The committee laments the rejection of more than 1000 papers, each paper representing not only months of effort, but signifying aspirations unmet. I am, however, confident about the quality of the selected papers. Looking at about a dozen complaints I have received from dissatisfied authors (1% of the submissions) I believe the program committee ought to be congratulated on their diligence and for a job well done. The technical program consisting of contributed papers is augmented by invited talks and panel discussions. Dr. William Mark and Prof. James Schmolze undertook this responsibility and have developed an international array of speakers, panelists and topics.

A significant innovation for this IJCAI is the Videotape track. Recognizing that videotapes are better suited than technical papers for a variety of subjects, Dr. John Birk undertook to organize this track. He has assembled a program of 11 videotape presentations spanning a broad range of topics. These tapes will be shown twice in their entirety. Copies are available for purchase through Morgan Kaufmann, publishers of the paper track proceedings. The results of this experiment are sufficiently encouraging that I hope this becomes a permanent and larger feature of future conferences.

The Tutorials were arranged by Dr. Mark Fox and the Workshops were coordinated by Dr. Joseph Katz, two seasoned organizers. The decision to allow a large number of workshops was made to permit small special interest groups to have intensive technical exchanges. This was deemed especially important given the large number of anticipated conference attendees.

Arranging the 266 papers into sessions necessarily resulted in multiple parallel sessions. Knowing that there would be considerable dissatisfaction with parallel sessions, we also adopted the innovation of Summary Sessions on an experimental basis. Summary sessions are not survey talks on the state of the art. They are a means for the audience to receive the highlights of significantly large tracks of IJCAI-89. Summarizers will present a perspective on the subject area, identifying key results contained in papers at this conference and indicated areas for future research. We have arranged for summaries in the areas of Search, Planning and Learning. These areas are significant aspects of mainstream AI and are well-represented at this conference in terms of submitted and accepted papers. A summary session of the International Conference on Knowledge Representation, co-sponsored by IJCAII, has been included.

I thank the IJCAII Trustees for the confidence they placed in me by charging me with the responsibility of Program Chair. It has been a monumental challenge, larger than I had anticipated in the beginning. But it has been a fun learning experience. If you are called upon to do it, please say YES; you will not regret it. You will learn a lot about people, about organizing and about AI. But the secret to success in this endeavor is to have able people you can trust to take on parts of the responsibility.

The work of the Program Chair would not be possible without a trusted Program Committee. I was fortunate is assembling a committee that worked for almost a year in preparation. They understood the time pressures they would face during the refereeing process, they came up with innovative ways of preventing mailing problems and with overflow papers, they worked well with deadlines and never sacrificed quality of reviewing and decision making. My sincere thanks go to these hardworking volunteers who are in fact responsible for the quality of the technical program. We owe a special debt of gratitude to Dr. Don Christian, who stepped in at the last minute as an additional member of the program committee and cheerfully handled an overflow of papers in the area of robotics and computer vision.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to Dr. Lee Erman who stepped forward on several occasions to be a surrogate Program Chair during my many absences on business travel. To volunteer thus, without official title or recognition, is in the spirit of a true volunteer.

I thank Ann Weindorf, Steve Taglio, Claudia Mazzetti and the AAAI staff for their support and assistance. They ran a finely honed system to handle papers. Their arrangements for the program committee meeting, with Steve manning a portable computer and printer, made the work of the committee feasible and very orderly. Special congratulations go to Ann who mailed out acceptances to authors exactly on the target date of March 27!

Morgan Kaufmann Publishers continue to render excellent service to the AI community. Mike Morgan and Shirley Jowell have succeeded admirably in simplifying the procedures that authors follow in the submission of final copies. Morgan Kaufmann will be publishing the printed proceedings and also the videotape track.

Dr. Sam Uthurusamy has been and continues to be a generator of many innovative ideas about the conference. He was also a gracious host to the Program Committee at Detroit. He has not only made the excellent local arrangements but garnered extraordinary financial support from the state of Michigan. He also originated and put together a unique event of the century—live satellite reception of the images from the Voyager fly-by of Neptune.

John Birk was enthusiastic from the beginning about the Videotape track. He learned all he needed to about tape formats, editing and reviewing procedures. He is a superb, independent executor and the

merits of the resulting videotape track are owed to him and his fine panel of reviewers. Dr. Schmolze and Dr. Mark have devoted months of their effort and attention and have rendered remarkable service.

I have known Prof. Wolfgang Bibel for over 15 years and have sought for a long time to collaborate in some significant endeavor. His abilities for meticulous organization and attention to detail in his capacity as Conference Chair have played a significant role in the quality of the conference. On many occasions when I felt overwhelmed by my responsibilities, Dr. Don Walker, IJCAII Secretary-Treasurer, lent his moral support, good advice and words of encouragement. To them both, I give my boundless thanks.

My colleagues at FMC were united in their consideration when IJCAI work usurped priorities many times. I never heard them complain. I thank them for their understanding and patience. Last, but not least, Sheila, whom I courted and married amidst all the hectic pace of work, has been the source of much strength and encouragement. She would even wait for our honeymoon till after the Program Committee meeting! My debts to her cannot be repaid in words alone.

N. S. Sridharan Program Chair, IJCAI-89

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Gerald M. Edelman, Rockefeller University
Neural Darwinism and Selective Recognition Automata

Koichi Furakawa, ICOT Fifth Generation Computer Project: Toward a Coherent Framework for Knowledge Information Processing and Parallel Processing

> Geoffrey Hinton, University of Toronto Connectionist Learning Procedures

Fernando C. N. Pereira, Al Center, SRI International Interpreting Natural Language

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