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Preface

The 30th Anniversary Conference on Current Trends in Theory and Practice of Computer Science, **SOFSEM 2004**, took place during January 24–30, 2004, in the Hotel VZ Měřín, located about 60 km south of Prague on the right shore of Slapská přehrada ("Slapy Dam") in the Czech Republic.

Having transformed itself over the years from a local event to a fully international conference, the contemporary SOFSEM tries to keep the best of its winter school aspects (the high number of invited talks) together with multidisciplinarity trends in computer science – this year illustrated by the selection of the following 4 tracks:

- Computer Science Theory (Track Chair: Peter Van Emde Boas)
- Database Technologies (Track Chair: Jaroslav Pokorný)
- Cognitive Technologies (Track Chair: Peter Sinčák)
- Web Technologies (Track Chair: Július Štuller)

Its aim was, as always, to promote cooperation among professionals from academia and industry working in various areas of computer science.

The 17 SOFSEM 2004 Program Committee members coming from 9 countries evaluated a record 136 submissions. After a careful review process (counting usually at least 3 reviews per paper), followed by detailed discussions at the PC meeting held on October 2–3, 2003 in Prague, Czech Republic, 59 papers were selected for presentation at the SOFSEM 2004:

- 22 contributed talks papers selected by the SOFSEM 2004 PC for publication in the Springer-Verlag LNCS proceedings volume (acceptance rate 19%), including the best paper from the Student Research Forum,
- 29 contributed talks papers that will appear in the MatFyzPress Proceedings (acceptance rate 26%),
- 9 student research forum papers (acceptance rate 38%), 8 of which will appear in the MatFyzPress proceedings.

The Springer-Verlag proceedings were completed by the 10 invited talks papers.

SOFSEM 2004 was the result of considerable effort by a number of people. It is our pleasure to express our thanks to:

- the SOFSEM Steering Committee for its general guidance,
- the SOFSEM 2004 Program Committee and additional referees who devoted an extraordinary effort to reviewing a huge number of assigned papers (on average about 24 papers per PC member),
- the Springer-Verlag LNCS Executive Editor Mr. Alfred Hofmann for his continuing trust in SOFSEM,
- Springer-Verlag for publishing the proceedings, and
- the SOFSEM 2004 Organizing Committee for a smooth preparation of the conference.

Special thanks go to:

- Hana Bílková from the Institute of Computer Science (ICS), Prague, who did an excellent job in the completion of the proceedings,
- Michal Bušta and Martin Stareček from ICS for realizing the SOFSEM 2004 web pages and a submission and review system that worked perfectly thus allowing a smooth PC session in Prague.

Finally we highly appreciate the financial support of our sponsors (ERCIM, Microsoft, Deloitte & Touche, SOFTEC Bratislava, Centrum.cz) which assisted with the invited speakers and helped the organizers to offer lower student fees.

November 11, 2003

Peter Van Emde Boas
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Table of Contents

Invited Talks

Games, Theory and Applications 1
H.J. van den Herik, H.H.L.M. Donkers

Database Research Issues in a WWW and GRIDs World 9
K.G. Jeffery

Integration, Diffusion, and Merging in Information Management Discipline 22
V. Kumar

Flexibility through Multiagent Systems: Solution or Illusion? 41
P.C. Lockemann, J. Nimis

World Wide Web Challenges: Supporting Users in Search and Navigation 57
N. Milic-Frayling

Querying and Viewing the Semantic Web: An RDF-Based Perspective 60
D. Plexousakis

Knowledge Acquisition and Processing: New Methods for Neuro-Fuzzy Systems 62
D. Rutkowska

Algorithms for Scalable Storage Servers 82
P. Sanders

Fuzzy Unification and Argumentation for Well-Founded Semantics 102
R. Schweimeier, M. Schroeder

Tree Signatures and Unordered XML Pattern Matching 122
P. Zezula, F. Mandreoli, R. Martoglia

Regular Papers

Quantum Query Complexity for Some Graph Problems 140
A. Berzina, A. Dubrovsky, R. Freivalds, L. Lace, O. Scegulnaja

A Model of Versioned Web Sites 151
M. Bieliková, I. Noris

Design of Secure Multicast Models for Mobile Services 163
E. Blessing, R., R. Uthariaraj, V.

Some Notes on the Complexity of Protein Similarity Search under mRNA Structure Constraints 174
D. Bongartz

Measures of Intrinsic Hardness for Constraint Satisfaction Problem Instances 184
G. Boukeas, C. Halatsis, V. Zissimopoulos, P. Stamatopoulos

Validity Conditions in Agreement Problems and Time Complexity 196
B. Charron-Bost, F. Le Fessant

Supporting Evolution in Workflow Definition Languages 208
S.M. Fernandes, J. Cachopo, A.R. Silva

Clustered Level Planarity 218
M. Forster, C. Bachmaier

Artificial Perception: Auditory Decomposition of Mixtures of Environmental Sounds – Combining Information Theoretical and Supervised Pattern Recognition Approaches 229
L. Janku

Features of Neighbors Spaces 241
M. Jirina, M. Jirina, Jr.

Discovery of Lexical Entries for Non-taxonomic Relations in Ontology Learning 249
M. Kavalec, A. Maedche, V. Svátek

Approaches Based on Markovian Architectural Bias in Recurrent Neural Networks 257
M. Makula, M. Čerňanský, Ľ. Beňušková

Processing XPath Expressions in Relational Databases 265
T. Pankowski

An Embedded Language Approach to Router Specification in Curry 277
J.G. Ramos, J. Silva, G. Vidal

Multi-document Automatic Text Summarization Using Entropy Estimates 289
G. Ravindra, N. Balakrishnan, K.R. Ramakrishnan

Implicit Flow Maximization by Iterative Squaring 301
D. Sawitzki

Evolving Constructors for Infinitely Growing Sorting Networks and Medians 314
L. Sekanina

Fuzzy Group Models for Adaptation in Cooperative Information Retrieval Contexts 324
M.-Á. Sicilia, E. García

Theory of One Tape Linear Time Turing Machines 335
K. Tadaki, T. Yamakami, J.C.H. Lin

Avoiding Forbidden Submatrices by Row Deletions 349
S. Wernicke, J. Alber, J. Gramm, J. Guo, R. Niedermeier

Building a Bridge between Mirror Neurons and Theory of Embodied Cognition 361
J. Wiedermann

The Best Student Paper

Fully Truthful Mechanisms 373
N. Chen, H. Zhu

Author Index 385