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Simon Tavaré Ofer Zeitouni

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Preface

Three series of lectures were given at the 31st Probability Summer School in Saint-Flour (July 8–25, 2001), by the Professors Catoni, Tavaré and Zeitouni. In order to keep the size of the volume not too large, we have decided to split the publication of these courses into two parts. This volume contains the courses of Professors Tavaré and Zeitouni. The course of Professor Catoni entitled “Statistical Learning Theory and Stochastic Optimization” will be published in the *Lecture Notes in Statistics*. We thank all the authors warmly for their important contribution.

55 participants have attended this school. 22 of them have given a short lecture. The lists of participants and of short lectures are enclosed at the end of the volume.

Finally, we give the numbers of volumes of Springer *Lecture Notes* where previous schools were published.

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