

Preface

This year marks the seventh in a sequence of successful workshops devoted to the exciting challenge of automating qualitative reasoning techniques and applying these algorithms and theories to tasks involving physical systems. The first workshop, held in May 1987 in Urbana Champaign, has been followed by meetings in Paris, Palo Alto, Lugano, Austin, and Edinburgh. Next year we meet in Nara, Japan. The field has changed greatly in seven years. While I shall resist the temptation to directly contrast the papers in the Urbana proceedings with this year's research, please believe the assertion that both the sophistication of QR researchers and their aspirations have greatly grown. Of course, this has been a gradual metamorphosis so this year's program continues several trends that were clear in Edinburgh. Modeling remains a hot topic, there is continuing interest in the mathematical concepts of dynamical systems, and researchers are increasingly concerned with practical application of their theories.

Many people have contributed enormously to the organization and planning of this workshop. I owe a great debt to the Program Committee for their tremendous advice on the myriad decisions regarding the workshop as well as their good humor when faced with a heavy reviewing burden combined with rigid time constraints. In addition, I wish to thank the following people who, in addition to the PC members, served as reviewers for the workshop: Franz Amador, Kouamana Bousson, George Coghill, Philippe Dague, Jean-Luc Dormoy, Pascal Dziopa, Jean-Michel Evrard, Pierre Fouche, Francois Guerrin, Robert Milne, Antoine Missier, Dorothy Neville, Toyooki Nishida, Marc Prat, Miguel Tomasena, Tetsuo Tomiyama, George Turkiyyah, Bernard Yannou, and Laurent Zimmer.

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Organizing this workshop has been exciting, perhaps *too* exciting! I now understand why Roy Leitch, last year's chair, concluded "I'm looking forward to the stimulating presentations and discussions, but even more to the boring silence when its all over, at least for a while."

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