

EQUADIFF 8

Foreword

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FOREWORD

The tradition of the Czecho-Slovak EQUADIFF conferences dates back to 1962 when EQUADIFF 1 was organized in Prague. In addition to 160 domestic participants it was attended by 75 foreign ones. Subsequent conferences held in Bratislava (1966, 1981), Brno (1972, 1985) and Prague (1977, 1989) turned EQUADIFF into the worlds oldest series of comprehensive conferences on differential equations. They attracted a growing number of mathematicians from all over the world. Having been accessible for a wider participation from the former East bloc countries, they created a rare opportunity for specialists from East and West to meet each other.

Equadiff 8 was organized in Bratislava on August 24-28 by the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics of the Comenius University. For the first time the invited speakers have been proposed by an international scientific committee. It consisted of S.-N. Chow, W. Jäger, J. Kačur, I. Kiguradze, K. Kirchgässner, J. Mawhin, J. Nečas, F. Neuman, C. Olech, V. Pliss, P.-A. Raviart, I. Skrypnik and A. Vanderbauwhede.

From the proposed speakers 40 were selected to present 13 plenary lectures as well as 27 lectures in 3 sections. The conference was attended by 352 participants from 41 countries. There were 189 short communications and 45 posters.

Due to dramatic political and social changes EQUADIFF 8 was organized under entirely new conditions. The fall of political barriers and restrictions made the organization and attendance easier. On the other hand, the splitting of the country and the difficult economic situation in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe created new problems for both the organizers and the participants.

A strong demonstration of the will to continue the EQUADIFF as a joint event of both the Slovak and the Czech communities as well as support from the participants of the former Equadiffs encouraged the organizers to go ahead. In the absence of subsidy from the academic budget, support from other sources was instrumental. Our

gratitude goes in the first place to the Open Society Fund and the International Science Foundation of G. Soros. Thanks to their support attendance has been made possible to 49 participants for whom the conference would hardly be accessible otherwise. We gratefully acknowledge support from the National Bank of Slovakia as well as from other sponsors who helped us according to their possibilities. Yet, the largest source for the organization expenses were the conference fees of the participants to whom we are thankful for their confidence.

On behalf of the organizers we would like to express our gratitude to the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics for providing its facilities, to the organizers of the previous EQUADIFFs, to the Honorary Advisory Board for sharing with us their experience and to all the participants without whom there would be no conference. Finally, we are thankful to the referees for their quick action and to the publishers for their professional work.

We have been pleased by the message to the participants from our Brno colleagues to organize EQUADIFF 9 in 1998.

The Editors