

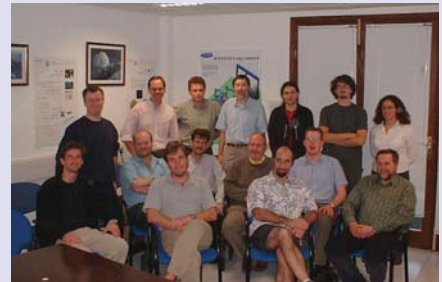
OTHER NEWS FROM ING

NAOMI Workshop

Adaptive Optics has been the centre piece of ING's development programme for some years now. First results of the NAOMI AO system at the WHT have been presented in earlier issues of this newsletter. As ING is climbing the steep learning curve of adaptive optics, the time was considered ripe to compare our experience at the WHT with that of other telescopes with many more years of experience. In order to keep the workshop well focussed and encourage the best opportunities for debating results only a small number of participants were invited to attend. Key invited guests included Norbert Hubin from the European Southern Observatory, Francois Rigaut from GEMINI, Stefan Hippler from the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy, and Eric Steinbring from the Centre for Adaptive Optics. But apart from the invited guests, we also had excellent contributions from Adriano Ghedina of the Telescopio Nazionale Galileo, where adaptive optics features as part of the instrument set, and from Nicholas Devaney of the GTC 10-m telescope project. Plans for GTC include an AO system as part of their second-generation instrument suit. Presentations on design and current performance of NAOMI and the OSCA coronagraph were given by Richard Myers from Durham University, and by Chris Benn and Sebastian Els from the ING.

Presentations and discussions included aspects such as performance expectations and reality of operational AO systems; performance characterisation; specific problems and advantages of segmented and continuous deformable mirrors; calibration and data reduction aspects. For the AO group at ING this sharing of experience and open discussion has been an extremely useful event which helped the team to focus on key questions with some of the world specialists in the field. □

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Snapshots and participants of the NAOMI Workshop 9-11 January 2003.

VIP Visitors

Anatoly Karpov, world chess champion 1975–85 and 1993–99, visited the William Herschel Telescope in November 2002 (see picture on the right), accompanied by the presidents of the chess federations of La Palma and of the Canary Islands. A few days earlier, he played 18 simultaneous matches in Gran Canaria, half of them via internet with opponents on other islands. The La Palma challenger was Chris Benn, manager of the William Herschel Telescope (the sponsors of the event wanted somebody in a remote location), playing from a computer in the observatory with members of the local chess federation acting as referees. Having 18 times as long as Karpov to think about each move was encouraging, but by move 15, Karpov's pieces had somehow taken over the centre of the board. Then Chris made a weak move, and Karpov very rapidly demolished his defences and checkmated on move 24. He won the other 17 games too. Other VIP visitors were Josep Piqué (Spanish Science and Technology Minister), Annejet Meijler (director of the Physical Science Council of NWO) and Richard Wade (Director of PPARC's Programmes). □



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Personnel Movements

The most difficult aspect of the changes ING is going through is that several of our personnel have left or will be leaving ING. These colleagues have helped building ING and played a role in delivering the service to the community. As a consequence of these changes, both **Michael Simpson** and **Rachael Miles** recently left ING.

Theresa Dorward, working in the administration group, is now finding fortune elsewhere, whilst **Betty Vander Elst** joined this group on a part-time basis. We're very pleased that **Chelo Barreto** has returned to her original post after a three-year tour to work at the Joint Astronomy Centre on Hawaii.

Begoña García and **Johan Knapen** came to the end of their tours and returned to their home institutes in Tenerife and Hertfordshire, respectively. Last year, a new support astronomer, **Pierre Leisy**, started work at ING under the agreement with the IAC. Also joining the astronomy group as a short-term EU-funded Marie-Curie fellow has been **Ilona Soechting**.

Two engineers joined ING, also under the IAC agreement: **Andy Hide** will lead the Telescopes and Instruments group, while **Olivier Martin** will become primarily responsible for looking after the telescope systems.