

Many of the fascinating fibrous protein studies reported at the Workshop are being collected in a special issue of the Journal of Structural Biology to be published in the summer of 2002. The previous Workshop gave rise to a similar, very successful, special issue (J. Structural Biology 122, 1998). We are grateful to the publishers of the Journal, Academic Press, as well as to the Biological Structure and Function Section, Faculty of Medicine, Imperial College, London, UK for generously sponsoring the Workshop.

In summary, although we very much missed those who in the end could not come, the Workshop proved to be a splendid occasion, both scientifically and socially, in which many new friendships and collaborations were developed. It was agreed that there should definitely be another "Coiled-Coils, Collagen and Co-Proteins" Workshop in September, 2005. Make a note in your diaries.

John Squire

223rd National American Chemical Society Meeting, Orlando, Florida, April 2002

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The 223rd national ACS meeting was held in the Orange County Convention Centre on International Drive in Orlando. With more than 11,000 delegates and countless parallel sessions, the meeting covered a huge diversity of scientific activity. Of particular interest to the fibre diffraction and NCD communities were the sessions connected to the Division of Polymer Chemistry organised by John Blackwell (Case Western Reserve University) and Kenn Gardner (Dupont, USA). The sessions were very well organised and the quality of the presentations was extremely high throughout.

The topics covered a wide range of technical issues in fibre/polymer diffraction as well as recent scientific results. Perhaps the most striking thing about the meeting was the fact that just about every presentation highlighted the importance of combining different techniques in probing structure/function/property relationships. In addition to a number of presentations illustrating how x-ray, neutron and electron diffraction methods can provide powerful insights into polymer structure (Takahashi, Langan, Forsyth, Puigalli, Martin) there were many talks describing how results from electron microscopy (Namba)/spectroscopy are brought to bear on these problems. The presentation from Mahendrasingam on biaxial deformation of polymers also illustrated the importance of being able to record both low and high angle data simultaneously (as did that of Baltá Calleja). In the Biopolymers session Kirschner and Mitraki both gave exciting reports on amyloid structures, and Zugenmaier, Chandrasekaran, and French talked

about fibre diffraction work on polysaccharides. There were also some excellent presentations in the Structure Evolution session. Harrison's presentation on Teaching Diffraction Methods with Flash Movies was very well received as were the talks of Kornfield (shear induced crystallisation), and Chvalun (deformation studies of polyethylene). The talk of Riekkel on Kevlar fibres and of the variation of crystallite orientation and of the skin-core effect was a reminder of the remarkable scope of microbeam x-ray diffraction studies that are now possible. The Polymer Blends session also contained some excellent talks: Ryan and Xu talked about crystallisation in block copolymers and there were interesting presentations from Cheng, Borsali, Zhu and Kwon. In the final sessions on Structure Determination there were presentations from Farmer, Marchessault, Lotz, Winokur, Dosiere, Cebe, Ran, and Burger.

Trevor Forsyth



Left to right: Trina Gardner, Kenn Gardner, Anna Mitraki, Dan Kirschner, Trevor Forsyth wield minigolf clubs during an informal breakout session in Orlando.