

## PREFACE

The last IAU Symposium on Be Stars was held in München during April 1981. This was followed by IAU Colloquium 92 on the *Physics of Be Stars* in Boulder during August 1986. At both these meetings, the emphasis was on the circumstellar envelope rather than on the source of the mass loss—the underlying star. Extension of observations into the infrared, ultraviolet and X-ray region has greatly increased our knowledge and stimulated further research into the circumstellar material and the stellar wind as is evident from these Proceedings. Very recently, it has even become possible to resolve the circumstellar disks around some Be stars. The presentation of these results at the Symposium was a major highlight.

The development of high-resolution digital spectroscopy in the late 1970's led to the discovery of new types of pulsating variables among the B stars (53 Per,  $\zeta$  Oph). This was soon followed by the discovery of periodic line-profile and light variations in Be stars. These discoveries have focussed attention on nonradial pulsation, in combination with rapid rotation as a possible mechanism for enhanced mass loss in Be Stars. The interest in nonradial pulsation in Be and other early-type stars motivated the Workshops on *The connection between nonradial pulsations and stellar winds in massive stars* in Boulder (April 1985) and on *Rapid Variability of OB-Stars* in Garching (October 1990). Since that time, the long-standing problem of the mechanism which drives pulsation in  $\beta$  Cephei stars has been resolved by the revision in metal opacities. This led to the possibility of understanding the pulsations in Be stars, if indeed it is pulsations that are responsible for the periodic line-profile and light variations (see the debate in these Proceedings). Recently, evidence has been found which suggests that the photospheres of Be stars are very active indeed. If we are to understand the complexities that abound in Be stars, it is necessary to exchange information about the effects of pulsation, rotation, magnetic fields, stellar winds, etc. in other early-type stars. This was one of the main motivating factors for the Symposium.

The proposal that a Symposium of this nature should be organized originated among the committee members of the *Working Group on Be Stars* under the chairmanship of D. Baade in 1988. We are grateful to Dietrich Baade, Vera Doazan, Tony Hearn, Mike Marlborough, Joachim Dachs, John Percy and Gerrie Peters for taking the first steps in getting the Symposium started. By 1991, it became clear that the Observatoire de la Côte d'Azur, in particular the Optical Interferometry Group, was interested in hosting the meeting. This is particularly appropriate as it was this Group who pioneered the technique of interferometric resolution of Be-star disks. The excellence

of the work done at the Observatoire de Nice on pulsating B stars is also well known by the international community. Later that year the LOC under the chairmanship of Farrokh Vakili was established. Nominations for the SOC and its chairperson were solicited from the committee of the *Working Group on Be Stars*, a vote was taken, and the SOC was established.

The meeting was held at the beautiful coastal resort city of Juan-les-Pins just outside Nice from 5–8 October 1993 at the Palais des Congrès. The attractions of Juan-les-Pins and the calibre of the invited speakers assured a very good attendance of young and established scientists from all over the world. The format of the meeting was somewhat unusual in that there were no contributed talks. Instead, 15 minutes were devoted to discussion after each invited talk. The well-lit top floor of the Palais des Congrès was used for poster presentations: one hour was set aside each afternoon for viewing posters.

Through the support of the International Astronomical Union, and the Local Organizing Committee, many young astronomers were able to attend the Symposium. We are very grateful for this support and wish to express our thanks to the Executive of the IAU and the LOC.

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