

Preface

Welcome to the Third International Symposium on Combinatorial Search (SoCS)! This is an important year for SoCS as we have established archival proceedings for the first time. These proceedings are the result of hard work by many, from researchers to reviewers and the publisher.

The reviewing process was rigorous. Every submitted paper was assigned to three anonymous reviewers; all experts in the topic of the paper. Decisions were carefully made based on the reviews and on further discussion by the conference chairs and the reviewers. The conference chairs (Ariel Felner and Nathan Sturtevant) submitted a number of papers to the conference but only ones for which the research was primarily conducted by students. These submissions were independently handled outside the main reviewing processes by Rong Zhou. Zhou recruited anonymous reviewers and made the acceptance or rejection recommendations for these papers based on these reviews.

A total of 39 papers were submitted to SoCS-2010 and were assigned to 22 reviewers. Most papers were of high quality. Of these, 18 papers were accepted for oral talks, 8 papers for poster presentations, and 2 papers were accepted for the special position paper session. In addition, as one of the purposes of SoCS is to cross fertilize the field of combinatorial search, 8 posters were selected based on related papers that had been accepted to other venues.

Besides these talks and presentations the program of SoCS-2010 has many sessions of note. We have the privilege of having two invited talks from internationally recognized experts. Dorothea Wagner from Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) will present an invited talk on search methods for road networks. These methods were developed outside the traditional artificial intelligence search community and so we are excited to bring this work to a wider audience. In another invited talk, Sven Koenig from the University of Southern California (USC) will cov-

er a long line of research that was carried out in the past decade by him and others about the important topic of search in nondeterministic environments. Finally, we scheduled an important panel discussion about the differences and mutual influence of domain dependent search and domain independent search for planning environments. Wheeler Ruml moderates the panel, which includes three experts who represent different perspectives of this topic — Richard Korf, Stefan Edelkamp, and Malte Helmert.

This year, the SoCS venue is the Evergreen Marriott Resort at Stone Mountain near Atlanta, Georgia. To continue the ongoing tradition of previous SoCS events, registration for the event includes all meals, which are commonly held. This enables attendees of SoCS the opportunity to get to know each other and start discussion and collaboration while at the event.

Many people and institutions made SoCS-2010 possible and they all deserve our deepest thanks. First, we heartily thank the generous support from the *Artificial Intelligence Journal* (AIJ) and the United States National Science Foundation (NSF). This support enabled the establishment of archival proceedings, helped subsidize the invited speakers, and provided scholarships that helped many student attend SoCS this year. We are especially grateful to NSF, which provided financial support to SoCS for the third time. Their ongoing support has been a great help in launching and establishing SoCS and the entire community owes NSF a great debt of gratitude.

Behind the scenes, there were many individuals who helped make SoCS-10 successful and we wish to thank them all. The past SoCS organizers, including Sven Koenig, Wheeler Ruml, and Rong Zhou, were always available to give advice. As both of this year's organizers were outside the United States, Wheeler Ruml played an important role in helping to establish SoCS as an unincorporated association. Thanks

to the staff at the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence and the AAAI Press who generated the proceedings. Finally, special thanks to Richard E. Korf for handling the grant application for NSF. Korf spent many hours in preparing and managing this proposal and anyone who received financial help for attending SoCS owes him their deepest thanks.

We are very happy with the opportunity we had in organizing this event and are excited about the program of SoCS this year. We look forward to many more successful gatherings.

– *Ariel Felner and Nathan Sturtevant*
Symposium Chairs