

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor should be addressed to the Editor, EPS, BP 69, CH-1213 Petit-Lancy 2. They can be sent by normal mail, telefax (+41-22-793 13 17) or e-mail (peter.boswell@cern.ch).

Fonts

Europhysics News is printed with a classical "sanserif" font, and it is a good choice since in this font any confusion between 0 ("zero") and O (capital "o"), and between 1 ("one") and l (capital "i") is avoided. Clearly, this font is the least bad one. However, a confusion remains between l (the letter "l") and I ("capital i"). At the time when you have a new printing contract you could perhaps negotiate a better font. For example, in your font (*Ed.: Helvetica*), Cl and Cl are identical so Cl (capital "ci") can be confused with chlorine.

Finding a non-ambiguous font seems trivial: it is not. However, the chemists should have solved the problem. It would be nice to have an unambiguous font for European journals. The font used by *Physics Today* is correct, although the difference between 1 ("one") and l (the letter "l") is not striking. Such confusions have been eliminated in the banking area. Are physicists less clever than bankers?

François Spite

Observatoire de Paris, Meudon
Received by Internet (spite@obspm.fr)

COMSCEE

You may remember that at the meeting of the EPS East-West Coordination Committee (EWCC) held in Cracow in March 1994 I reported on the activities of the Special Committee on Science in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU-

COMSCEE), and mentioned that a general information brochure about it was in course of publication. This has now seen the light of day and I enclose a copy for your information. The text takes into account decisions taken at the last meeting of COMSCEE, held in Paris in mid-January 1995. If you need further copies, please let me know.

I understand that the EWCC has disappeared and will be replaced by some new, more restricted body. I trust that it will be able to continue the good work already carried out by the EWCC, which received very favourable comments at the recent COMSCEE meeting.

Owen Lock, Geneva

Ed.: The ICSU-COMSCEE brochure that was published in February 1995 can be browsed by consulting europhysics news extra on EurophysNet (<http://128.178.117.16>). Look under "Letters to the Editor", May/June 1995.

Physics Letters Express

I thought that I should let you know that we launched *Physics Express Letters* last week on World-Wide Web. It is accessible through the Institute of Physics welcome page at: <http://www.iop.org/> and you may wish to have a look at it if you have access. As you know, the service is free for this year, but we are asking all users to register.

Kurt Paulus, IOP Publishing, Bristol
(Received via Internet; forwarded by J. Hoogenboom, hoogenb@fys.ruu.nl)

Captions

I notice that in *Europhys. News* 26 (1995) 34 the captions to both photographs are incorrect. First, Eric van Herwijnen participated in, but did not lead, the EPS Working Group on the Standardised General Markup Language (it was I). Second, the person on the left of the lower photograph is not H. van der Rijst but A. de Ruijter (also from Elsevier Science Publishers).

Hans Sens, Lausanne

Ed.: The Editor apologises to all concerned for these mistakes.

Scientometrics

I wish to express my appreciation for your editorial "A Question of Tuning" in *Europhys. News* 25 (1994) 162. I commend especially its balanced standpoint and right timing.

A few years ago I ventured myself (in two articles published in Romania) to put forward a schema for evaluating scientific output and I have discovered that one must know and understand the content of a scientific paper in order to assess its relevance.

You may know that in the physics community of the post-revolution Romania there have appeared many persons who play with scientometric indicators. They remind me of a famous joke about a ship which after being stranded on the rocks of an isolated island in the Pacific Ocean succeeded to start the cruise again, but the crew forgot a violin on the island. The native tribe took long looks at the violin wondering what it could be for. After two years the youngest son of the tribe's chief — the smartest one — came up with an answer: "It is a musical instrument". "How is this?" was asked. "Look, you may beat the drum on its reverse side" was the answer.

M. Apostol

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Croatia not recognized

According to the item published in the September 1994 issue of *Europhysics News*, titled "EC Databases, Access Simplified", I logged onto echo.lu and followed the prompts to register using the on-line registration form. I encountered a problem when I was prompted to enter "country" (ISO Code or "?" for a list). This list does not contain Croatia although our country is fully internationally recognized and a member of United Nations. As the list contains a number of non-EC countries I suspect that Croatia should also be listed. Before I jump to any conclusions I would prefer to get an explanation from you.

Jadranko Gladic

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Received by Interneted (gladic@olimp.irb.hr)

Ed.: The Editor replied that the published information was correct. The correspondent took up the matter with ECHO and was pleased to be able to write:

I am pleased to inform you that the situation (regarding the non-existence of HR, the ISO code for Croatia) has been changed and the ECHO on-line recognition procedure now recognizes Croatia.

ERRATUM

The Editor apologises for refereeing to NOR-DITA as being in Stockholm instead of Copenhagen in the introduction and figure caption accompanying the article on Nordic collaboration in theoretical physics by P. Hoyer [*Europhys. News* 26 (1995) 30].

Universität Basel

Am Institut für Physik der Universität Basel ist eine

Professur für Theoretische Physik

(Nachfolge Prof. Harry Thomas)

wiederzubesetzen.

Ein Forschungsschwerpunkt in Basel ist die «Physik der kondensierten Materie». Wechselwirkung mit den daran beteiligten Arbeitsgruppen sowie Mitwirkung an der Lehre in Theoretischer Physik und an administrativen Aufgaben werden erwartet.

Die üblichen Bewerbungsunterlagen (Lebenslauf, Liste der wichtigsten Publikationen, Referenzen, Beschreibung der Forschungsinteressen) sollten das Dekanat der Philosophisch-Naturwissenschaftlichen Fakultät der Universität Basel, Missionsstrasse 64, CH-4055 Basel, Schweiz, **bis zum 15. Juli** erreichen. Rückfragen können an den Vorsitzenden der Berufungskommission gerichtet werden:

Prof. F.-K. Thielemann, cmtheory@quasar.physik.unibas.ch.
Bewerbungen qualifizierter Wissenschaftlerinnen werden ausdrücklich begrüsst.



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