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Preface

The AI conference series is the premier event sponsored by the Canadian Society for the Computational Studies of Intelligence / Société canadienne pour l'étude d'intelligence par ordinateur. Attendees enjoy our typically Canadian atmosphere – hospitable and stimulating. The Canadian AI conference showcases the excellent research work done by Canadians, their international colleagues, and others choosing to join us each spring. International participation is always high; this year almost 40% of the submitted papers were from non-Canadian researchers. We accepted 24 papers and 8 poster papers from 52 full-length papers submitted. We also accepted eight of ten abstracts submitted to the Graduate Student Symposium. All of these accepted papers appear in this volume.

The Canadian AI Conference is the oldest continuously-held national AI conference in the world. (ECCAI's predecessor, AISB, held meetings in 1974, but these have since become international.) Conferences have been held biennially since 1976, and annually since 2000. AI 2002 again joined its sister Canadian computer science conferences, Vision Interface and Graphics Interface, enriching the experience for all participants. The joint meeting allows us to stay informed about other areas, to make new contacts, and perhaps to investigate cross-disciplinary research. This year the conferences was held on the beautiful campus of the University of Calgary, and many participants took the opportunity to tour nearby Banff and the magnificent Rocky Mountains.

To mark the second quarter-century of the conference, we invited three of the founders of the society to give invited talks: Zenon Pylyshyn, Alan Mackworth, and Len Schubert. Their foresight and efforts, at that time and continuing until this, mark a milestone in Canadian AI worth celebrating. Canadians are reputedly overly modest (although we boast about our olympic gold medals!). However, at AI 2002, we wished to applaud those who first recognized that Canadian AI researchers need a society to support them – to give them an identity, a community, and a voice.

We are grateful to many: to the American Association for Artificial Intelligence and to the National Research Council Canada for supporting the Graduate Symposium, allowing many graduate students to attend and to display and present their work; to CSCSI's president Bob Mercer for keeping the flame, and to its treasurer Howard Hamilton for tending it; to Camille Sinanan for coordinating the local arrangements for all three conferences; to Ali Ghorbani the AI 2002 chair; to the program committee and the referees for their dedication to the vital task of assessing scientific content; to the authors for contributing the material that is the main attraction; again to our invited speakers; to Alfred Hofmann and Karin Henzold of Springer-Verlag for their assistance in preparing these proceedings; to the organizers of VI and GI conferences for their collegiality while coordinating from a distance; and to the partipants, for making all of the effort worthwhile.

May 2002 Robin Cohen, Bruce Spencer

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