

## TILC08 beyond the agenda

At the end of a productive working day, a long journey, a hard job or a rewarding week, Japanese people have a very useful phrase that expresses everything from gratitude and pride to exhaustion: *Otsukare sama deshita*, or simply *otsukare*. Even though not all participants of last week's TILC08 meeting may be aware of the expression, all are almost certainly aware of the 'otsukare' feeling after several days of intense and rewarding parallel and plenary sessions, splinter meetings and social interaction. Here are some impressions from the meeting that did not make it onto the official agenda.



Fire escape, Japanese style.



The power-hungry ILC community is working on its plug-compatibility.

This was the first meeting after the ILC community was hit by the bad news from the UK and the US. For a while it wasn't clear whether colleagues from the US would be able to attend. In order to make sure that work continues and important contributors are present, Japan and France decided to reinvent an old scheme that used to make sure that Russian colleagues would be able to attend meetings in the past: their expenses were covered by other countries. "KEK paid for four American colleagues to come to Sendai," says Kaoru Yokoya, head of KEK's linear collider office. "The only condition was that they come and spend a day at KEK, which they all gladly did." France had a similar idea. "It seemed very important for all of us not to lose the momentum and the benefit of the Sendai meeting," explains Guy Wormser, director of LAL, Orsay. "Maybe one day in the future our US colleagues will do the same for France. Budget problems can happen to any of us."

Getting travel organised wasn't the only adventure though - travelling itself turned out go less than smoothly for some of the European ILC people. Europe was hit by a major storm the weekend before the meeting, so many planes were delayed or even cancelled. A couple of DESY people, waiting at Hamburg airport for their first flight connecting them to Japan, even witnessed the [near-crash landing](#) of Munich-Hamburg plane that made it into all news channels. The resulting chaos at the airport left at least seven participants without their luggage for three days... which some solved by going on a mini shopping spree for new t-shirts, socks and sweaters. "Shopping choices were made under both language guidance and taste surveillance of the three ILC communicators. I do not know which of the aspects prevailed, but it certainly was fun," says Eckhard Elsen, one of the victims, showing off his new stripy sweater.

A lot of work was done the Japanese way: without shoes and way into the early hours of the morning. Participants gathered in the hotel lobby in the evenings to do the work that got left undone during the day, planning work group sessions, writing slides for talks or emailing colleagues awake at home. Those that had meetings at Tohoku University's Neutrino Center were surprised to find they had to leave their street shoes at the entrance. Picking a pair of slippers from a shelf, they settled down in meetings rooms that suddenly felt much more like home because of the unusual footwear.



After-hour preparation for a Working Group 1 session.



Because of a storm over Europe that left their luggage stranded in Helsinki, these three had to buy new supplies.

Social events were also under a strong local influence. Participants ceremoniously broke into a sake barrel, went to restaurants with a letter from the organiser Hitoshi Yamamoto stating in Japanese that 'this is a group of foreign guests who'd like to eat well' for a certain sum (and returned praising the Japanese cuisine), or tried their luck at karaoke.

The next ILC meetings will be held in [Dubna](#), Russia, and in [Warsaw](#), Poland in June. Bets are on as to whether the Russian and Polish languages provide a similarly useful expression as '*otsukare sama deshita*'...

-- Barbara Warmbein

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