

COMMENTS



We are most pleased to publish the Proceedings from the 3rd International Conference on Open Magnetic Systems for Plasma Confinement in the *Transactions of Fusion Technology*. The *Proceedings* from the 2nd Conference in this series (Novosibirsk, Russia, July 1998) was published previously (*Trans. of Fusion Technol.*, **35**, 1T, 1998) and received considerable attention by readers worldwide. While open systems have not received as much publicity in recent years as have toroidal devices (tokamaks, stellarators, etc.), a very strong basic research program on such systems has continued worldwide. Consequently, a number of im-

portant new results have emerged, and this international conference series provides a very visible avenue for communicating this progress. Thus, this *Transactions* record of the conference plays an important role in this communication. Topics covered include a number of basic plasma and engineering issues, along with a broad coverage of recent studies related to mirror experiments and prospects for mirror-based reactors. Again, while mirror systems have not received much publicity in recent years, their potential for future fusion systems cannot be ignored. The problem of a relatively low energy gain (Q-value) may be offset by the ability to easily couple to direct energy conversion, the relative ease of construction and maintenance due to the basic cylindrical geometry, and the ease of fueling and impurity control. Indeed, the mirror configuration is also being given serious consideration as a potential near-term "volume" fusion neutron source for materials testing. For all of these reasons, we feel that the fusion community will find this issue of the *Transactions* to be a most significant addition to the fusion literature.

In closing, we wish to thank K. Yatsu and the conference organizing committee for their splendid help in the preparation of this *Proceedings*. They carried a bulk of the workload and handled it in a most efficient and expeditious manner. We look forward to future publications in this series.

George Miley