Filamentary structure west of R136 in the 30 Doradus Nebula. This region is believed to be a site of triggered massive-star formation. The image is a false-colour composite of Hα (green) and S [II] (red) exposures with the HST/WFPC2, prepared by R. H. Barbá and N. R. Walborn (see p. 336, and particularly Fig. 1 of that paper). The circles mark IR sources and a dense nebular knot with an embedded O star.

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Preface

The first Boulder-Munich Workshop on 'Properties of Hot, Luminous Stars' was held at JILA in 1989 August. The purpose was "to consider at some depth the parameters of hot stars...from the perspective of standard models." A second meeting was originally intended to consider issues of time dependence and non-sphericity; those topics have indeed been the focus of several subsequent meetings, though not under the aegis of 'Boulder-Munich'. There have also been a number of meetings devoted to the rarer denizens of the upper part of the Hertzsprung-Russell diagram: Wolf-Rayet stars and Luminous Blue Variables. However, astronomers had not gathered with the principal purpose of discussing the more 'normal' hot, luminous stars since Boulder-Munich I.

At the time of the first Workshop the Hubble Space Telescope had yet to be launched; no infrared observations were reported in the Proceedings; and, in the hot-star context, the few 'extragalactic' observations available were firmly limited to the Magellanic Clouds. Much progress has been made since that time, and a meeting to review that progress was clearly overdue. The opportunity arose to hold such a meeting in 1997 July, in the pleasant surroundings of Cumberland Lodge, in the heart of Windsor Great Park. (We have followed the precedent of the 'Cambridge Cool-Star Workshops', in taking the content, not the geographical location, to define a 'Boulder-Munich Workshop'.) Availability of accommodation limited participation to a relatively small group of specialists, the great majority of whom gave oral presentations. Those presentations, plus a handful of poster papers, form the basis of this Proceedings volume.

Scientific and local organizing committees were never formally constituted, but in practice consisted of Peter Conti, Ian Howarth, Rolf Kudritzki, and Allan Willis. Our thanks go to the session chairs (Mike Barlow, Ron Hilditch, Simon Jeffery, Antonella Nota, and Dave Stickland); to Linda Smith, who navigated the participants' coach through the wilds of darkest Berkshire; and to the sound crew – Kaj Siebert, Matt Stroud, and Rich Townsend – who made the tape recordings from which the Discussions were transcribed. Those discussions have been edited for conciseness ('de-ummed' in BBC parlance) but are otherwise almost verbatim. The colour frontispiece was kindly provided by Nolan Walborn, and evening 'hospitality' was sponsored by the Perren Fund, through the generous co-operation of the current encumbent of the Perren Chair, David Williams. Given the enthusiasm with which that hospitality was embraced, from an etymological viewpoint our Workshop might have been better styled a 'symposium'!

Ian Howarth, UCL
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