

Breaking of Ground Heralds New Premises for Blank Manufacture



Dr. Tietze, Technical Head of the SCHOTT Optics Division, breaks the ground at a location point of the new factory. With Dr. Tietze from left to right are Mr. Schuster and Mr. Adolphs, both members of the SCHOTT Board of Directors, and Dr. Eden, a former member of the SCHOTT Board of Directors, now retired.



This photograph was taken at the location of the future casting tank. Around the first 1.8-m Zerodur blank produced with the new spin-casting technique developed at SCHOTT are, from left to right: M. Tarenghi of ESO, Dr. Tietze, Technical Head of the SCHOTT Optics Division, Mr. Schuster of the SCHOTT Board of Directors, Dr. Eden, a now retired former member of the SCHOTT Board of Directors, Dr. Adolphs, also of the SCHOTT Board of Directors, Dr. Muller, Project Manager of the 8-m Blank Production and Mr. Hubler, Commercial Head of the SCHOTT Optics Division.

A major milestone for the VLT Project took place in Mainz on 6 July 1989 with a symbolic turning of the soil at the location of the future VLT mirror blank manufacturing site. The importance and complexity of such a production re-

quires the construction of a complete new factory designed and dedicated to the manufacture of the VLT 8 m Zerodur blanks. A building measuring 70 m \times 40 m will house the entire complex. It will include the casting tank, the anneal-

ing furnaces, the grinding machine, and all other equipment necessary. Completion of the new factory will be at the end of 1990 when the casting of the first blank will take place.

M. Tarenghi (ESO)

NTT News

The commissioning time of the NTT following the first light reported in the last issue of the *Messenger* has continued with modifications and improvements to the hardware and software of the telescope and building. New additions include two rails which will be used for the installation and maintenance of the EMMI instrument which have been installed on a floor of the instrumentation room. A carbon fiber sky baffle for the M3 unit has also been implemented; it will have two working positions, one for optical observations and the second for infrared observations.

More tests of pointing and tracking were performed and by the end of July the telescope pointed better than 1.6 arcseconds r.m.s. In the months to come, the final tuning will be completed, and October/November will be dedi-

cated to the erection of the first of the two adapters. We expect to have EFOSS 2 working at full capacity by the

end of this year; see also the article about this new instrument on page 66 in this *Messenger* issue. M. Tarenghi (ESO)

Status Report on EMMI

The ESO Multi-Mode Instrument for one Nasmyth focus of the NTT is in the final phase of its integration and testing in the laboratory in Garching. All of the mechanical functions have been thoroughly tested and installed. The electronic hardware has also been integrated and an engineering version of the control software is fully operating. The coated optics for the red arm (high efficiency in the range 400–1000 nm) have been delivered and will be installed in

September; the final tests with the detector, a 1024 \times 1024 Thomson TH 31156 CCD, will then start. The blue arm optics (high efficiency in the range 300–500 nm) have been manufactured and coated: they are expected to arrive at ESO in October. Integration of the instrument in Chile is foreseen for the beginning of 1990. The form for Applications for Observing Time for Period 45 includes a description of the observing modes of the instrument which are likely