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Foreword

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FOREWORD

The 24th Winter School 'Geometry and Physics' took place at the usual place, the village Srní in the Czech Republic, in the period January 17 – January 24, 2004. The Winter School was organized by the Union of Czech Mathematicians and Physicists, together with the Charles University and the Masaryk University, with financial support by the International Erwin Schrödinger Institute for Mathematical Physics.

During the School, 7 invited lecture series were presented: *Q-curvature and special invariants* by **Thomas Branson**, *Prolongations of overdetermined systems* by **Michal Eastwood**, *Contact structures, complex singularities and Einstein metrics* by **Krzysztof Galicki**, *Conformal de Rham Hodge theory and operators generalizing Q-curvature* by **Rod Gover**, *String, branes and matrices* by **Petr Hořava**, *Asymptotic spectral problems and differential geometry in Carnot-Carathéodory spaces* by **Michael Rumin** and *Special symplectic connections* by **Lorenz Schwachhofer**. In the rest of the program, many further lectures, communications, and posters were presented in two sections.

The Proceedings of this School, published traditionally in *Supplemento ai Rendiconti del Circolo Matematico di Palermo*, contain 18 contributions by the participants.

The list of all participants is included below.

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