

## ILC goes Comiket

This summer the International Linear Collider made a debut in world famous "Comiket" Comic Market, held in Tokyo. Comike is the world's largest comic convention with a history of over a quarter of a century, and is the hall of fame of the "Otaku" culture. More than half a million attendees came from all over the world for this three-day event. So, what did all these people come for? The answer is the "doujinshi," self-published publications which are usually manga or novels. Most works are written and edited by amateur writers or artists, but some are famous professionals who started from doujinshi. People wanting to buy their works sometimes have to wait for more than three hours.



A page from "Kasokuki de Go!"



Fun at the Comiket: costume players.

Getting an exhibitor ticket to the Comiket is highly competitive, sometimes only one out of six applicants can get one. "I was pretty surprised to get a table," said Masao Fujino, law school student at the University of Tokyo who represented the Linear Collider 'familiarisation committee,' the group of ILC supporters seeking a fun way to make the ILC popular. Their publication was entitled "The Scientist's Viewpoint", a review by scientists of Sci-Fi novels, animations and comics. "The scientists have made serious explanations, not just criticising them as impossible or ridiculous things. I think this makes our publication very attractive." They sold about 150 copies. "I thought that we could sell 20 copies at best. I am surprised to see a lot of people interested in accelerator and fundamental physics".



The table selling ILC fan books.

Another ILC-related publication "Kasokuki de Go! (Let's go with the accelerator)" edited by the ILC fan club was also sold at the Comiket. "Most of ILC fan club members are science-fiction fans, who are one of the main audiences here. That's why we gave a try to have a table," said Etsuko Iwasaki, who is one of the founders of the club. Their publication has variety of different styles, from comic to essay. "We conducted a survey in the form of a questionnaire, and

received responses from 23 ILC scientists," said Shino Kojima, the other founder of the fan club. They made an analysis of the ILC scientists' personalities in their book based on the responses. "We can feel the sense of closeness to the scientists this way," she added. Their publication sold about 130 copies even though it wasn't cheap.

Both groups were happy that they could recover the cost of printing, which they had not expected. "The deadline for next Comiket is this coming Wednesday, and we are going to prepare the application," said Fujino. "We will be here on 30 December if we can get the tickets again". ILC is gaining fans through a unique and very Japanese way.

-- Rika Takahashi