

Travel Report from NORCHIP'05

Niklas Lepistö
Mid Sweden University, Sundsvall

Introduction

In November 21-22 I attended the NORCHIP conference with several of my colleagues from Mid Sweden University. NORCHIP is an annual microelectronics conference which is usually organized in the Nordic countries, it covers all areas of microelectronics from analog and RF to digital design. The NORCHIP 2005 conference was held at the Radisson SAS hotel in Oulu, Finland.

The trip

Since there were no direct flights between Sundsvall and Oulu we had to travel through Stockholm and Helsinki with a total of three flights, which resulted in a lot of time spent at the airports. After spending 8 hours travelling we finally ended up in Oulu, about as far from Sundsvall as the distance covered by the shortest of our three flights.

Oulu is the largest city in northern Finland and has a population of about 120000. The city is located at the Gulf of Bothnia and is approximately at the same latitude as the Swedish city of Skellefteå. This year happened to be the 400th anniversary of Oulu, not that I would have noticed it without someone telling me. I was slightly disappointed with the weather; there was no snow at all and it was far too warm for northern Finland.

The conference

The conference lasted for two days and had two parallel sessions, one for analog electronics and the other for digital electronics, there was also a poster session held each day. Totally about 70 papers were presented during the conference. The first day started off with an opening speech by Timo Rahkonen from the University of Oulu followed by a keynote speech on Digital RF processors by Dirk Leipold from Texas Instruments. The keynote was one of the most interesting presentations on the conference and gave a relatively technical (for a keynote) description of Texas Instruments chips for software defined radio.

At the end of the first day I presented my paper, "High-Performance FPGA-Based Camera Architecture For Range-Imaging", it was my first "real" presentation and afterwards I felt that I probably should have used that extra time at the airport for rehearsing. On the second day my colleague Najeem Lawal had an interesting poster presentation on Embedded FPGA Memory Requirements for Real-Time video Processing Applications. Another presentation among the most interesting ones was on Semi Floating Gate A/D converters presented by René Jensen from Oslo University. To my surprise the analog electronics sessions which I attended proved to be more interesting than many of the digital sessions.