RoboCup ‘97: Virtual Soccer at ISI
by Milind Tambe

RoboCup is an international effort to develop “world-cup” soccer for robotic and synthetic agents, with the goal of stimulating research in multi-agent systems and robotics. The first big RoboCup event is scheduled to be held at IJCAI-97 (for more information on RoboCup, see http://www.csl.sony.co.jp/person/kitano/RoboCup/RoboCup.html). At ISI, Ernesto Brodersohn-Ostrovich and I are developing Soar-based synthetic agents for participation in RoboCup. Our two teams, “Korea” and “Argentina,” can each have 11 virtual players, although the largest team size in the tournaments we have run has been six players.

To build our virtual players, we are building on techniques used in creating helicopter and fighter-jet pilot agents. For instance, we are attempting to implement the “teamwork” concept used in the implementation of a team of helicopter pilots -- based on a modified version of Cohen and Levesque’s joint intentions framework. However, we are in very preliminary stages, possibly with just about 10% of the required rules (or maybe even less).

Our first-version players included zero teamwork, so that all players wanted to get to the ball, and score the goals themselves. This would typically result in all agents crowding around the ball, and our two teams, Korea and Argentina, tying the score (e.g., 3-3). More recently, we have put in “position” play and some teamwork, so that players attempt to stay in their positions, and collaborate. In some recent experiments, we played our Korean team, incorporating such teamwork, against Argentina, with no teamwork. To our surprise, Argentina manages to win the game almost consistently. Partly, this is because the Argentinean players are moving faster; however, we need to further understand this result. We still have not really made much progress on understanding collaboration or agent modeling (issues we want to investigate). Nonetheless, based on what I saw of the team from CMU and from the ETL laboratory in Japan, ISI’s soccer team is doing really well! While domain experts at ISI (Bob MacGregor, Jafar Adibi, Behnam Salemi and others) have provided us a lot of valuable information, knowledge acquisition remains a real problem. To remedy this situation, we have started playing soccer ourselves.

ISD Logo Contest Deadline Extended

We have extended the deadline for the ISD Logo Contest, since the few people who have been working on logos are still struggling with the Muses. So there is still time to get started on a logo of your own! The only rule is that the logo must be ISD related.

To enter, submit a hard copy of your logo to Theresa Cox by June 14. The contest winner will receive a gift certificate to CPK.
ISD’s “Beastly” Encounter with the BBC

In April, ISD folks finally got a chance to see a video that was made by the BBC and Britain’s Open University, for a televised literature class on the subject of Approaching Literature. The name of the video was “Building the Perfect Beast,” and it featured ISD’s own Lewis Johnson and Paul Rosenbloom discussing their work on intelligent agents. Those of you who were around last September might remember the day that the BBC came to film here. Unfortunately, the video ended up presenting ISI’s agent work in a relatively unflattering light.

The InSiDer asked ISI staff for reactions to the video, and received two responses: one from Lewis Johnson, and one from Ramesh Patil.

From Lewis Johnson:

I should first explain how and why this video got created in the first place. The producer at BBC, Tony Coe, posted an inquiry to the Agents mailing list, asking for information about projects creating computer agents. I responded to him, and mentioned to him work that we were doing in the IFOR project, and work that we were planning for the VET project. After a series of discussions over the net between Tony, Paul Rosenbloom and myself, we decided to go ahead with the project.

We knew at the outset that we were taking a risk by associating ourselves with the Frankenstein project. Would we be cast in the role of modern-day Victor Frankenstein? However, Tony succeeded in allaying our fears. It sounded as if he had a serious interest in portraying the reality of creating virtual agents.

The filming itself turned out to be a disappointment, at least for me. Funding for the VET project was significantly delayed, so we were unable to show the pedagogical agents that we are now building. All that I was able to show was the Jack human figure, which we intend to use as a realization of our pedagogical agents. Consequently, the material that we did show was footage of the IFOR warfighting agents.

In the end, I would say that they created a misleading impression of what agent technology is all about. Our work became heavily associated with actual warfighting systems. Part of that is because the only material we could provide them was of simulated warfighting. I think that it is also partly because the producers felt that it would be more effective to have people other than ourselves talk about the positive aspects of technology.

Also, the whole discussion of virtual reality did not come across very clearly. What relationship does virtual reality have with Frankenstein? They needed to explain better that virtual environments are relevant because they can be living spaces for autonomous agents. The general discussion of

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE meets NATURAL CURIOUSITY

Little known facts about ISD researchers...

Did you know... that a longtime project leader accumulated enough bus tokens to buy his OWN BUS?!

And another project leader can be found at ISI late at night, using the copier to RECEIVE ALIEN TRANSMISSIONS!

Fortunately it’s only a small number of personal copies.

It is not widely known... that the people who leave ISI twice a week DO NOT IN FACT GO TO PLAY SOCCER!

Hehe, that’s a rich, old boy Martin?

I say, did anyone bring the ball?

Strangest of all: one ISDer has UNUSUAL difficulty with SIMULTANEOUS KEY CODE ENTRY!

You know who you are.
technology and its dangers muddled the issues even further.

The lesson that I draw from this is that it is very easy for your message to get mangled when you entrust it into the hands of the popular media!

From Ramesh Patil:

Well it was perfectly terrible. The show was about Frankenstein and not technology. There were so many cut in and outs that the editor could have put together any story he wanted. Most people interviewed were props for the producer and editors.

The only explanation is that the producer, director, script-writer, and editor all have had brain damage due to over indulgence in mind altering drugs. Perhaps they ingested them rather than inhaling them.

New Faces in ISD

Johnny Chen

I left my family in Taiwan and came to the United States at the age of 13. I learned to enjoy sports in public junior high in Texas. I spent most of my time learning English and doing different sports: football, basketball, martial art, etc. I got my first computer in the 8th grade: Orange II--you guessed it--an Apple II clone. I spent ungodly amount of time doing what personal computers were really good for--playing games. I also spent few geek hours here and there memorizing 6502 commands (couldn't afford an assembler) and the 0th page content in the Apple.

I focused my high school years on books. I would've focused on girls except I was too short to play varsity football. Inspired by "Color of $," I went to Baltimore to become a hustler after high school. I practically lived in the smoke-filled 24-hr pool hall, where I surprisingly found out that real life was not at all like the movies. I waited and waited and waited but Paul Newman never showed up, and I wasn't making enough $ on the pool tables. My first clue was that Balabushika in the movie wasn't even a hand-made cue. Fortunately my parents helped me out because I told them I was in college. I later tried a real Balabushika. I think it's so hyped mostly because the artist is dead.

I studied and played hard in Johns Hopkins (*there are S's after both "John" and "Hopkin") where I founded the pool club, led a collegiate team (ACU-I), participated in over 10+ other extracurricular organizations, stayed up all night to get on the CM2s, and miraculously got my degrees. No, I did not win my diplomas over a game of 9-ball with the dean, though it would've been cooler.

was in Baltimore when the Cowboys had their first 0-13 season; ain't my fault.

I started doing serious research in Syracuse University in 1991 because my girlfriend was in Toronto and I couldn't find other summer jobs in Buffalo nor Rochester. The research led to my first publication. In 1992 I left my pool cue in Texas and entered UCLA grad school doing AI. I also worked part-time in Cedars-Sinai Medical Center (they changed the name after removing OJ's lymph node during the trial). My job in the hospital was to teach the computers to find the heart on SPECT scans. The Ph.D. thing didn't work out. I started working in Westside Billiards Cafe (next to Hard Rock) as the equipment man and pool instructor. I was, again, unable to make a living shooting pool and had to work full-time in the basement of Cedars where they made patients radioactive and glow.

In my spare time--as well as rest of the time--I enjoy basketball, volleyball, bowling, tennis, racquetball, pool, snooker, ski, water ski, swimming, football, and rollerblading. I've pretty much given up martial art as a competitive sport because I happen to believe size matters. I still swing my nunchucks once a while when watching TV and amazingly haven't broken the tube as my mom has predicted. I'm currently looking for pool and tennis partners. My high-run in pool was 39 (As of 1992. I haven't played much straight pool since, and my shot-making ability has gone down the toilet). I suck in tennis, but I like to hit hard and am always willing to run. Ever since I came to this country as a kid, my goals have been

1. being able to dunk, preferably 2-handed
2. not to go bald

I've been working on reaching the rim for past 20+ years; I mostly just wave at the thing. I'm considering buying a pair of them shoes that cost as much as the Stealth Bomber, but more technologically advanced. But I also heard that the shoes are responsible for Shaq's free-throw ability. I guess one out of two ain't bad. At least I hope it's one out of two.
Getting to Know ISD

In an effort to get to know each other better we will be highlighting members of the ISD staff in each newsletter. This month we are highlighting the members of the Machine Translation project.

The Natural Language project at USC/ISI has been conducting research in various areas of Computational Linguistics / Natural Language Processing since 1978. This research includes work on single-sentence realization, multi-sentence text and sentence planning for descriptions and explanations, parsing and semantic analysis, the semi-automated construction of large semantic knowledge bases (so-called ontologies) and lexicons of various languages, and the automated planning of multimedia human-computer communication.

Since 1991, much of this work has been used in the construction of Machine Translation systems. One such system, JAPANGLOSS, translates Japanese newspaper articles in any domain into English using a mixture of symbolic and statistical techniques. Statistical techniques provide large-scale coverage at a lower level of quality while symbolic (linguistic and other traditional) techniques provide reduced coverage of the language but at higher quality. JAPANGLOSS is used in both an e-mail translation server and a prototype translating copy machine, the latter incorporating optical character recognition. Another MT system is SPANGLOSS, built in collaboration with research groups at Carnegie Mellon University and New Mexico State University, that translates Spanish newspaper texts into English.

Over a decade of previous work on sentence generation resulted in the PENMAN English sentence generator, through which the project is linked to sister projects in Germany and Australia. PENMAN (or its multilingual descendant KPML) is being used in several projects in North America, Europe, and Asia.

Yaser Al-Onaizan

I was born in Al-Rrass, a small town in central Saudi Arabia, in September 2nd, 1970. I have 11 brothers and sisters, I'm number 11. Upon finishing high school, I moved to Riyadh, the capital, to join the computer science department in King Saud University (KSU). I graduated in July 1992. Then, I worked for King Abdulaziz City for Science & Technology, a governmental research organization, in the period Jan 93 - Dec 93. Then, in spring 94, I joined USC as a graduate student in computer science. I finished my Masters degree in spring 95 and now I'm a Ph.D. student. My main research interest is natural language processing and since I'm a native speaker of Arabic I work in the field of Arabic language analysis. Recently, I'm becoming more and more obsessed by languages which is perhaps the reason that I decided to learn Spanish. For fun, I enjoy playing soccer. I play with the ISI soccer team every Friday at noon.

Ishwar Chander

I was born in a city called Amritsar (Northern India). After graduating in EE at I.I.T. Kharagpur (Eastern India), I worked at BEL in a city called Bangalore (Southern India). While in India, I traveled and enjoyed diverse cultures, languages, foods, and customs. After a couple of years of working I was ready to explore the lands beyond the parochial boundaries, and embarked on a journey for studies in the USA. I graduated from the University of Detroit, Michigan, with an MS in Computer Science and an MBA in 1980. I have enjoyed working in the computer software and applications industry, with numerous opportunities to work with various industrial giants: GM, Ford, CDC, DuPont, and Northrop Grumman. It is my love of learning that brought me back to USC to pursue my Ph.D. in Computer Science. I feel extremely blessed to have very supportive people at ISI, USC, and Northrop Grumman (my current employer). I am proud to be a member of the most creative "Natural Language Group" family here at ISI, since 1992. Dr. Kevin Knight and I have been working on building a software tool which would correct and/or insert articles in a free-flowing English text (somewhat like a spell checker, call it an articles corrector), and I hope to make a sales pitch (thesis defense) of it this fall. I enjoy tennis, golf, soccer at ISI, and light philosophy.

Eduard Hovy

Ed promised to write us a funny bio, but in the rush between trips he never got around to writing one. So we took the liberty of copying the bio from his homepage, and spicing it up a little. Maybe when he returns from his world travels, Eduard can give us a real bio.

Eduard is from somewhere in South Africa. He probably had a really interesting childhood. You
should ask him to tell you all about it one day. He is a very good choral singer, and currently sings baritone with a small group called the Scola Cantorum that is loosely affiliated with Loyola Marymount University. He speaks a bunch of languages, which is pretty handy when you’re a linguist.

Eduard is currently heading the Natural Language Processing group at USC/ISI doing research on various aspects of natural language processing, specifically on Machine Translation and automated text planning and generation. He is personally involved in five research directions: the construction of the Pangloss family of machine translation systems (this work originally in conjunction with researchers at Carnegie Mellon University and New Mexico State University); the development of theories of discourse structure and the construction of multisentence text and sentence planning systems (this work in collaboration with researchers at the Universities of Waterloo and Toronto in Canada); the development of sentence generation theory and systems, including management of the Penman project; the development of theory to address problems in multimedia human-computer communication (in collaboration with people at ISI); and the development of MEDTRANS, a system to translate and convey forms and information among Health Care providers (this work in collaboration with the DSSA group at ISI).

Ed’s Ph.D. (in Computer Science, from Yale University, 1987) focused on the development of a text generation program that took into account the pragmatic aspects of communication, since the absence of sensitivity toward hearer and context has been a serious shortcoming of generator programs written to date. Ed is interested in all facets of communication, especially human language, as used to express intelligence.

Bruce Jakeway

I was born in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada but soon moved three hours south to Calgary. When I was 2 1/2 I flew with my parents to Bolivia, where they ran a Christian medical clinic for a few years. I returned to Edmonton where I spent most of my remaining life. In 1992 I graduated from the University of Alberta with a B.Sc. in Computing Science. I rewarded myself with a trip to Europe! I returned to Canada to take an MMath in Artificial Intelligence at the University of Waterloo, which I finished in December, completing a thesis on authoring tools for natural language generation, specifically, Penman. I came to LA on January 1 to work with Eduard Hovy on a sentence planner based on the Penman generator. I have made good on a desire to see a lot of Southern California while I am here. The soccer group here at ISI has provided enjoyment for me while down here. I will return to Canada June 8 with a fond memory of ISI and my LA friends. I am looking forward to returning to England to present my thesis at the INLG Workshop. July 1 I return to school, this time at Trinity Western University, near Vancouver. I will be working towards a masters degree in Linguistics and Exegesis, which I intend to use in developing a written language for some one of the many “people groups” without a written language. My goal is to provide them with a translation of the Bible.

Latifur Khan

My name is Latifur Rahman Khan. I am a graduate student in the computer science department of USC. I was born in Dhaka, Bangladesh. I obtained my bachelor of science degree in computer science and engineering field at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology in December, 1993. Then I worked as a lecturer in the same department of the university for about two years. My undergraduate thesis was on the simulation of large number multiplication using Fast Fourier Transform (FFT) which reduces complexity to O(n.lgn).

I am currently working on project MEDTRANS at ISI under Dr. Eduard Hovy. Our goal is to develop a system that will translate and convey forms and information among health care providers.

My non-academic interests include soccer and cricket. I am new to LA and the USA. Still I feel homesick. I talk to my parents Lutfe Ara Begum and A. H. Baqui Khan over the phone most of the time. But I like LA’s weather, freeways and hectic life.

Kevin Knight

Greetings, I'm married to Yolanda Gil, and we're expecting our first baby this month. I have two brothers and they're also expecting their first babies this month. I grew up in Louisiana. I was wearing plaid pants about the time those bicentennial quarters came out. I like that place Versailles on Washington Boulevard. El Cholo’s
I attended Case Institute of Technology, where a Univac 1107 was reserved for students. The basic course for freshmen included a little taste of numerical analysis. Computers were then & there regarded as important useful tools, tho not something anybody who had Real Work to do should get too involved with. (Knowing what was referred to as "the buffer" meant one was getting too involved.) It was rumored that several promising young mathematicians had lost their moorings due to the seductive lure of sheer computation. (Nothing like a lower core dump with its fan-fold reams of octal digits to get a young man's blood pumping. Today's tech-weenies have no idea of the gratification that comes with...ah, but that's another story.)

I ended up graduating from the University of Michigan, which I attended at about the same time as Tom Haden, now a local politician of some notoriety, and Ted Kaczynski, a promising young mathematician, also of some notoriety and who apparently also lost his moorings, tho not due to the seductive lure of sheer computation, at least not directly. I also made the acquaintance there of Cathy Guisewite--my closest brush ever with true fame.

Since I was studying physics, I did some programming for the high energy physics group to help pay the bills. Card decks with over-night turnaround of batch jobs were the norm. Not for more than decade did I come to know the joy of compiling a program without leaving my seat.

As an undergraduate, aside from the early course in numerical analysis, I took nothing else that smacked of computer science, tho I did have a logic course in the Philosophy Department taught by Dag Prawitz, who may have mentioned something about effective procedures. Only much later did I learn that he was responsible for some important early work in machine reasoning.

I entered graduate school at UCLA in its Philosophy Department, which then had a curriculum in logic and philosophy of language that was nearly positivist in its agenda (Rudolf Carnap had passed away shortly before I arrived). Alonzo Church and Richard Montague were typical faculty members; Angela Davis, an atypical member. While there, I actually got to meet & converse with Paul Grice, the eminence grise of conversational implicature, plus a lot else. (We shared a fondness for the novels of Iris Murdoch.) Though I was unaware of it at the time, the studies I undertook there would...
ultimately prove to be at least as effective in equipping me for my current work as my computer-specific classes & experience, most of which was still to come.

After surviving the rigors of the Ph.D. program, I rashly undertook a dissertation project (which sensibly remains unfinished; the world is a better place, with lower entropy, for it) on the philosophy of mind of Sigmund Freud. I did learn a lot about the human psyche; notably, that sometimes a cigar is just a cigar. There, too, I picked up an aberrant notion of 'ontology,' which continues to hamper my usefulness in today's discussions. And for some time, the Turing machine was as close as I got to a computer.

Sensing the need to gain some employable skill—philosophy bakes no bread, it is said, and in my case, it was doubly so—I managed to overcome any early doubts I might have had about the suitability of computation as a career choice. It had become clear that while there might be Real Work to be done in physics or philosophy, it was not I who was going to do it. And after all, the field had become graced with actual academic departments, rather than being the bastard child of math and EE. Other pluses were that it offered clean work, with no heavy lifting. (This is no joke! I'd actually been trimming palm trees to make ends meet while I burnt out on my dissertation.)

So I did some work in numerical analysis in the Math Department, which, before I quite knew what was happening, led to a job at System Development Corporation (now a mostly defunct part of Unisys). While there, a serendipitous confluence of circumstances led me from calculating satellite orbits to the R&D division, where I joined the Deductively Augmented Data Management project, and shortly thereafter back to UCLA to study machine reasoning in the Computer Science Department, mostly under Judea Pearl and D. Stott Parker. Meanwhile, Michael Dyer, a newly minted Ph.D., arrived at UCLA from Yale with a chip on his shoulder the size of Roger Schank, and nearly eradicated any interest I might have had in natural language processing. [Syntax? Phooey! Semantics? Hooye! All you really need are these 14 (Count 'em—just 14!) primitives...oops! Now it's 16! Well, anyway, what's a couple primitives more or less?] Tho this cabal appeared to take its ontology seriously, I felt no kinship with it.

Serendipitously again, about the same time as I was losing hope in nlp at UCLA, Bill Mann and Norm Sondheimer, no doubt impressed by my ability to distinguish attributive from referential definite descriptions, brought me to ISI to join the newly formed Intelligent Systems Division as part of the Penman project, where they set me to work on a noun phrase planner. They and all the other people on board at that time—Len Friedman, Ron Ohlander, Ray Bates, Christian Matthiessen, Robert Albano, Tom Kaczmarek—have moved on, up, or over to other things. Meanwhile, I'm still looking for a testbed for that noun phrase planner....

I did eventually finish my academic career with a Master's thesis based on some early work I did here at ISI.

I currently carry out programming tasks in the Natural Language Group, and monkey around with Kevin Knight's machine translation Juggernaut. Because of a bad case of poor intuitions, coupled with a nasty tendency to display foot-in-mouth syndrome, I am only rarely allowed to meet the public.

My professional affiliations include the West Malibu-Ventura Landowners Association and the Mercedes Benz Club, which reflect my two other jobs: as a land developer (my wife & I—masochists both—are trying to build a house in California's Coastal Zone) & diesel mechanic, specializing in the repair of 10+year-old machines of Teutonic extraction.

In my free time, I do some swimming in Santa Monica Bay & jog along the beach. I like hiking, mountain climbing, & skiing. I hope to spend the week of the 4th of July hiking, by myself, across the Sierra Nevada, and finishing up with a little rock-climbing with some friends in a remote chasm felicitously known as the Gorge of Despair. Later in the summer, with my family, I'll likely spend a couple weeks in Wyoming's Wind River Range.

I am married to Nurit Bornstein, and we have a son, Elihu, now nearly six years old, who likes to play X-wing pilot on our new Performa 2300, and will likely never learn to use a slide rule. He is, however, learning Spanish, while I appear destined to make up for my own inability to do so through artificial means.
Kenji Yamada

I am a Ph.D. student in USC's CS department. Before going back to school, I worked at the Japan Research and Development Center of Digital Equipment Corporation, and had relocated to MCC, Austin, Texas, working under Elaine Rich during 1992-1993. My personal interest is listening to classical and jazz music. I play the piano, and a little bit of the flute.

ISD Tidbits

Gil/Knight Collaboration Bears Fruit

After many months of development, Dr. Yolanda Gil and Dr. Kevin Knight are pleased to announce the delivery of Angela Forrester Knight. Angela was born on Friday, May 24, at 2:43 pm. She weighed in at 7 pounds, 15 ounces, and she was 20 inches long. She has lots of dark hair. Yolanda and Angela are reportedly doing fine, and Kevin appears to be walking on air.

Martin Frank To Disappear for Summer!

Martin Frank will disappear for four weeks straight this summer... first heading back to Atlanta, where his fiancee still lives, to enjoy the Olympics (and, yes, he does have tickets for the soccer semi-finals and final!). He expects his family and some old friends to arrive there August 3rd, just in time for the Olympic closing ceremonies the next day - which happen to coincide with the opening ceremonies of Martin's career as a thirty-something...

And while all of the family is in town anyway, well, he could as well get married... The date is set for August 10th in Atlanta, the Saturday after the Olympics, and, yes, still a logistics adventure.

Then he is going to disappear to Hawaii for two weeks where he hopes to practice his locally acquired catamaran skills (but will hold off on Maui-testing his not-yet-acquired surfing skills on his fiancee's request). The Honolulu-Atlanta return flight conveniently stops in Los Angeles, so there actually is a chance you'll see his face again around the end of August...

Tambe Graces London Times

ISD's own Dr. Milind Tambe was featured on the front page of the Innovation Section of the May 12th edition of the Sunday London Times. The article, entitled “Soccer Robots Train for Their World Cup,” described RoboCup '97, the international robotic soccer world cup. Milind was quoted extensively in the article.

Upcoming AI Seminars

Jun 7: Martin Greenberger, IBM Professor of Computers and Information Systems; Danny Hillis, Disney Fellow and Vice President, Research and Development for Walt Disney Imagineering; and Alan Kay, Apple Fellow and Regents Professor at UCLA:


NOTE: This talk is part of the Jacob Marschak Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Mathematics in the Behavioral Sciences at UCLA, and will take place at 1PM in the Korn Convention Hall of the Anderson School of Management Building (near room C-301).

Jun 21: Brad Allen, Limbex Corp.:

“WebCompass: A Metasearch and Metadata Extraction Agent for the Web”

11th floor large (east) CR

Jul 12: Pat Langley, Institute for the Study of Learning and Expertise, and Stanford University

“Learning Strategies for Selective Sensing”

11th floor large (east) CR
Shakespearean Corner

Our visitor from the North, Bruce Jakeway, recently came across the following excerpt from what may be a lost play of Shakespeare's, entitled "The Merchant of Marina del Rey." Debates have raged ever since over whether this play can be attributed to the Bard or if it is just another attempt on the part of Sir Francis Bacon or Sir Walter Raleigh to horn in on Shakespeare's popularity. We encourage your input on this important subject.

Insidio: What ho, my liege? From what most noble frolic Hast thou once more returned? Prithee, do tell; For mine ears have longed for some whispered strain Of thy good health and thy land afar; The land flowing with Arbour's most glorious ambrosia, The land which, I am told, is clothed with beauty Which surpasseth even Eden, shouldest God allow it. Of thine adventures, enchant mine ear, my liege.

Prospero: My second kin, how hast O glorious Fortune Been so gracious as to perform her wondrous act So that mine eye might once again perceive you anew? But come, my lips have been unkindly closed too long Against their will, and have desired to convey to you The meanings and imaginings of the country far.

Insidio: Indeed, as have mine ears. Carry on.

Prospero: As I travelled the length of that country, Both far, and yet, strangely close as well, I encountered a pleasant people, not unlike those here. Their manners and customs were all too similar as well, Save in the Orient, where mine ear perceivest a tongue With flowing beauty, but my mind understandeth not it. And save also in the Orient beyond, the tongue was ours, But the words escapeth my immediate reckoning. In truth, in beauty the land was as Venus in her best; From sea to sea she doth convey a multitude of dimensions: From mountains high, the shimmer due Poseidon, The vast amber plains, and the verdure of unspoilt foliage Doth commend her. Yea, e'en she presents the comforts Of this present life, yet with air so pure and clean. But e'en such land in which such virtues abound, Strife hath begun to wield her most vile hand. The Orient hath some desire to dissociate herself, And from the main leave her compatriots alone. This puzzleth me and causeth me great grief. Yet, even this trial hath no match for the unity Found in the sport which enthralleth its citizens. The land which Icy Winter doth entrap for seasons long Hath produced a glorious dance on that self-same ice. With bold determination the dancer doth take stick And flow across the pond in most glorious grace. And his opponent, a team of equalled strength, Engages himself with skill on the shimmering surface. A most pleasant pasttime, my friendly Insidio!
Insidio: Mine ears have heard of such majestic sport,
But alas, cruel Summer doth reign too long here.

Prospero: Aye, but in that land Summer doth present herself
With full temporal celebration. The vales and mountains—
What verdour? The plains—Amber doth bless them!
The rivers and oceans compare with Heaven's Sapphire.
And Summer hath presented the time for the fair land
To engage in your land's sport and o'ertake all:
For who is more superior than the birds of the sky—
The Jays of the North?

Insidio: Alas, I know too well.

Prospero: Take heart. The citizens of the North do love thee.
They have set themselves as second to thee in all manner.
I knowest not why. But e'en now their pride doth rise,
And rise on its wings as e'en the eagle soarest here.
They love their land and wisheth peace upon it,
And e'en upon the globe as to it their sons are sent.
Ah! I see it now. The Maple Leaf. The Red and White.
An image of destiny do I see:
The True North, Strong and Free!