

proof in all cases. The method used in FINPLT is to take each point and compare its coordinates to the point with the next larger value of the x coordinate. If both the x and y coordinates of the next point are close enough to that of the first point, then the point is accepted to be plotted on that line; if it is too far from the first point, it is left to be plotted on another line.

Clearly, the success of this method is dependent on the value of "close enough" used in the process. In FINPLT the value used is three times the maximum minus the minimum coordinate divided by the number of steps of triangular coordinate taken.

RESULTS AND COMPUTING TIMES

Examples of the type of results FINPLT produces may be found in [2], [3] where all of the field plots were drawn by FINPLT. Notice that the contour plots are perfectly smooth for well-behaved fields,

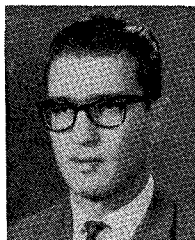
but that discontinuous changes in the derivative can occur in regions where the field changes rapidly. This is not the fault of FINPLT, but indicates that too few finite-element triangles were used to approximate the field in that region.

In order to do a typical plot, say a six fourth-order triangle problem with 30 equipotential lines, FINPLT requires about 30 s of central processing unit (CPU) time on an IBM 360/75 and about 6 min of time on a Calcomp 663 digital plotter.

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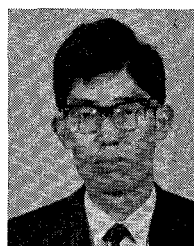


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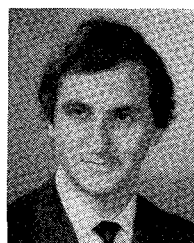
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