Dear Wit,

Thank you very much for the invitation to attend the last Phobos collaboration meeting. Unfortunately, I am not able to attend, but I would like to share with you a few of my own thoughts as you celebrate the experiment.

I fondly look back at my own six years of (active) Phobos participation. I firmly belief that Phobos is one of the few collider experiments that allowed a graduate student to go through the entire experiment cycle: participate in the design, construction, data-taking and finally the analysis of the physics data (the only thing I - wisely? - missed was decommissioning). The size of the experiment was such that all collaborators could essentially know the entire experiment, not just the little part that they were focussing on. For a graduate student, this is incredibly valuable as you can get the feel of all the aspects of the experiment (try that with STAR or any of the LHC experiments). I learned a tremendous amount in that time. Even though my own physics interests have changed over time, I have taken the lessons I learned in Phobos with me and my contributions to the success of the KamLAND experiment are largely due to the training I received at Phobos.

The Phobos experiment is a success by any measure (e.g. 13 PRLs with 6 of them with more than 100 citations!) and as spokesperson you can justifiably be extremely proud of this. There was risk involved at almost every stage of the experiment - to most of us it was clear that this was much more so than for instance for STAR or Phenix - cancelling Phobos could buy that EMcal for STAR or help with the muon system for Phenix or perhaps just finish the accelerator. We were also exposed to risk with the detectors themselves, be it the ambitious initial electronics, the silicon or simply the fact that a single blast of the beam into our detector could kill the experiment. You guided us, with consultation, through many of these issues, making the right decisions when it was necessary. I would like to personally thank you for this leadership.

Finally, I would also like to point out the very high quality of the people involved. I think that you and Bolek have done a fantastic job of gathering a terrific group of people making it all possible. In the end it is not just about getting the money or the tools - without the right people it would just not work. The great achievements of Phobos are due to the fact that the right people were involved.

I hope that you and all the other current and former members of Phobos will have a splendid weekend in Maryland and I hope that it is not completely "over" and that the remaining Phobos analyses will get completed and written up - not an easy task as new ventures are clearly emerging on the horizon!

All the best,
Patrick.

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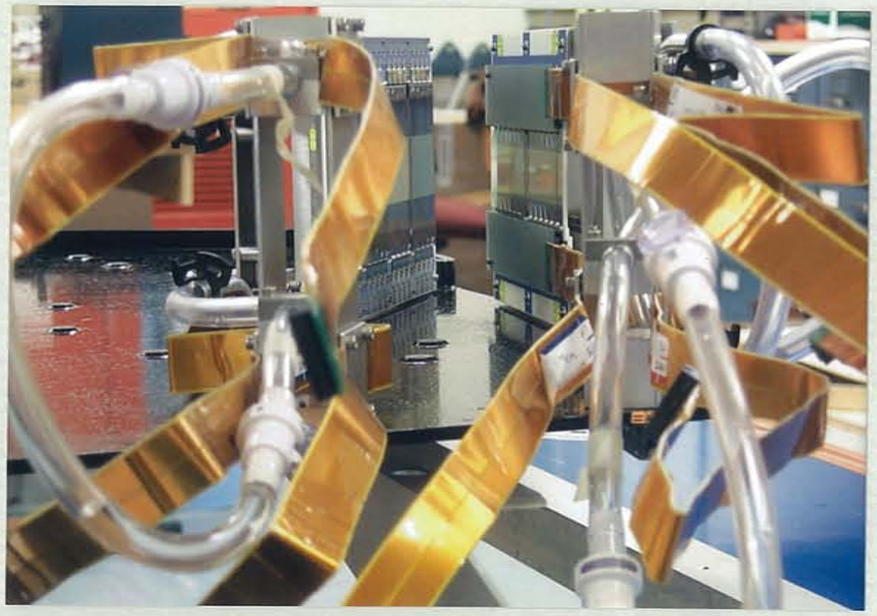
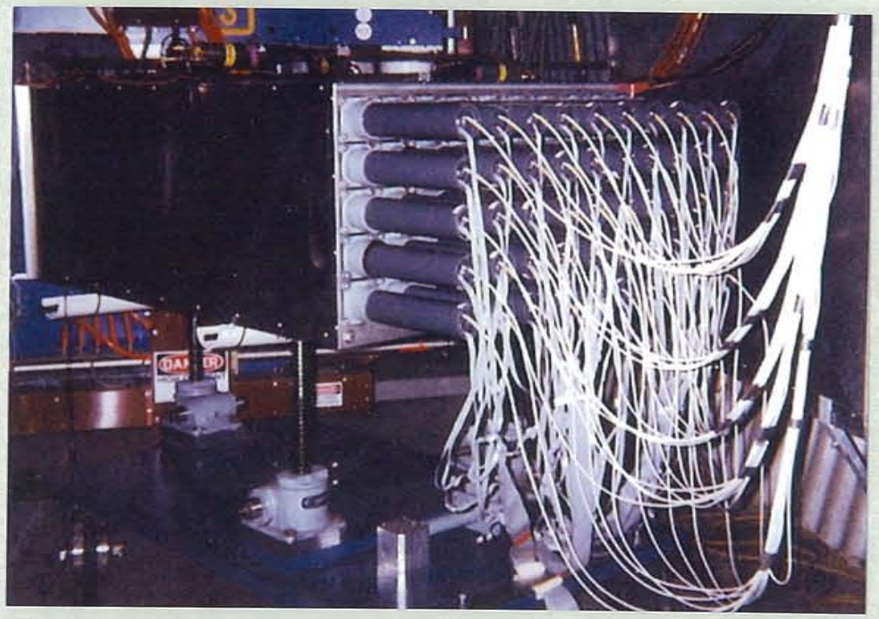
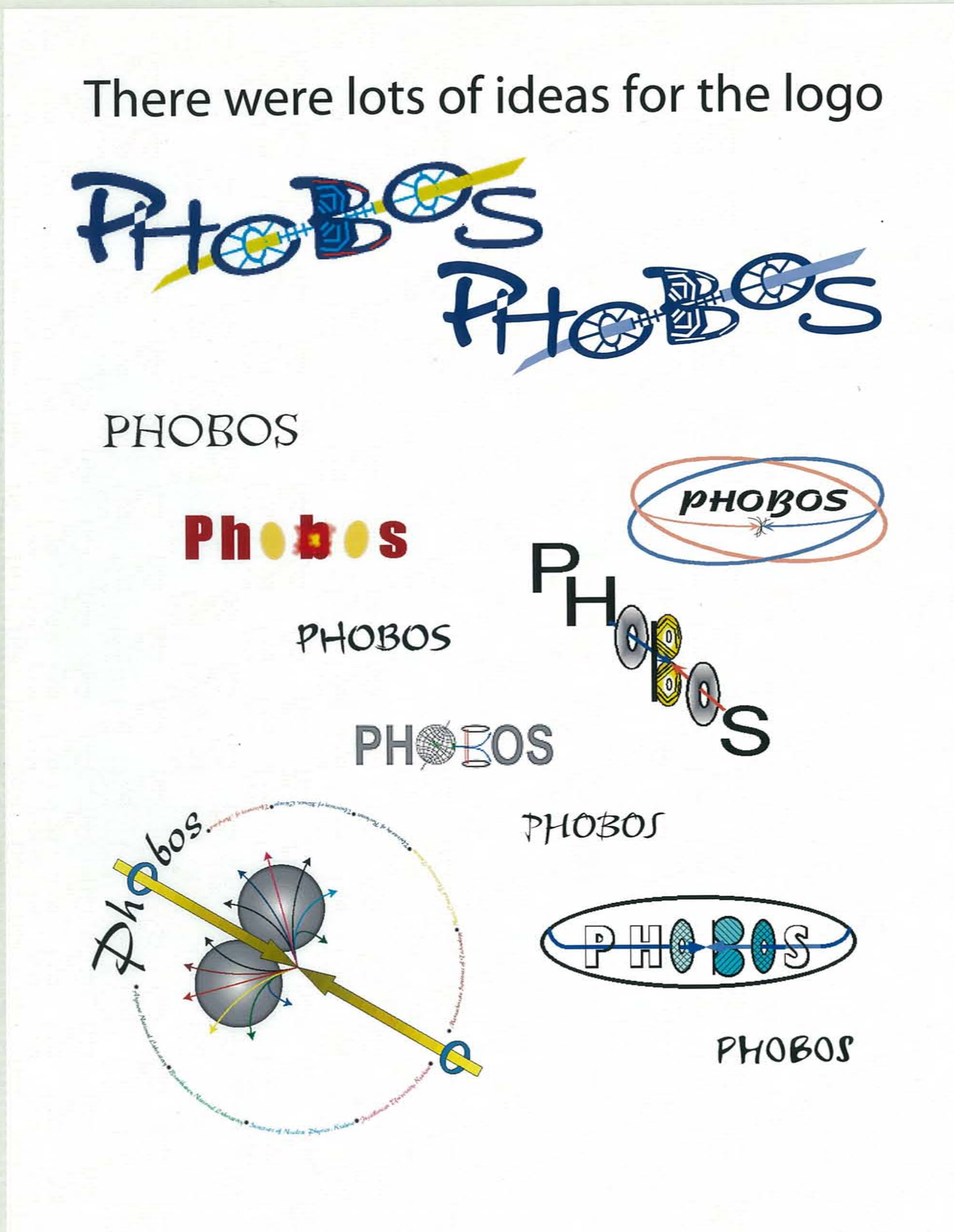
Patrick Decowski | Physics Dept. ; UC Berkeley





There were lots of ideas for the logo



The mug was also very popular