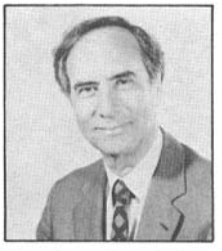
mode-locking of the color-center system to be evaluated at wavelengths around 1 μm. By changing the active medium to the NaF and NaCl based F_2^+-type color center crystals, the researchers say it should be possible to adapt the passive mode-locking technique to the 1.0 to 1.7 μm spectral regions.

—*George Leopold*

AWARDS

Maiman awarded Japan's highest science prize



Theodore H. Maiman

OSA fellow Theodore H. Maiman, who holds the basic patent on the ruby laser, has been awarded the Japan Prize for his accomplishments in the field of electro-optics.

Described as "the Nobel Prize of the East," the award was initiated by Japan in 1985 "to further develop science and technology, since they are the important assets of mankind that will lead us into the next century."

Now an independent business consultant for high technology ventures, Maiman served as vice president of advanced technology for the electronics and defense sector of TRW from 1976 to 1983. He was head of the quantum electronics section at Hughes Research Laboratories when he received his laser patent in 1960.

Maiman is one of the few living Americans to be honored in the U.S. Patent Office's National Inventors Hall of Fame, whose roster includes Thomas Edison, Eli Whitney, and the Wright Brothers. In addition to his affiliation with OSA, Maiman is a fellow of the American Physical Society and SPIE; he is also a member of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineers.

The award, a state-level prize endorsed by the Japanese government, is administered by the Science and Technology Foundation of Japan under the supervision of the Prime Minister's Office and other national agencies. The prize consists of a certificate, medal, and a sum of approximately $300,000.

STANDARDS

Simplification of Scratch-Dig standards proposed

The standardization of surface imperfections, or Scratch-Dig standards, was discussed in the last Standards column (*Optics News*, Sept. 1987, p. 31) on the ISO/TC 172/SC1 meeting held in Thun, Switzerland, in May 1987. As we reported, an instrument developed by Lionel Baker at SIRA called the Microscopic Image Comparator (MIC) shows great promise in helping to quantify various surface defects into specific classifications.

Shortly after the Thun meeting, the U.S. Army brought together representatives of the English-speaking allied countries—the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia—on the subject of optical surface quality. The purpose of this meeting was to make the application of surface quality standards more quantitative.

One recommendation was to reduce the number of U.S. scratch designations from five (80, 60, 40, 20, and 10) to three (80, 60, and 20) to simplify beauty inspections of optical surfaces. Because of the cosmetic nature of the U.S. Army application of surface quality standards, the 10 scratch was considered too small to be significant and the 40 to be too close to those on either side. The Army would like to hear comments from industry before making any changes in the applications of MIL-0–13830. Comments can be sent to John Salerno, AMSMC-QAF-I(D), Picatinny Arsenal, N.J. 07806–5000.

On another standards subject, the ANSI Z80 Subcommittee on Ophthalmic Instruments is trying to increase participation by opthalmologists and optometrists in its standards writing efforts. The Z80 subcommittee is worried that the ISO/TC 172/SC7, Ophthalmic Instruments, standards writing activities are moving forward without sufficient U.S. participation. Without additional U.S. input, the next generation of ophthalmic instrumentation may be dominated by Japanese and German influences.

The next ANSI Z80 meeting is scheduled for Nov. 20–21 in Fort Lauderdale. For further details, contact James E. Sheedy, School of Optometry, University of California-Berkeley, Berkeley, Calif. 94720.

—*Robert E. Parks*