

The role of the CHESS Operator

Park Doing, Asst. Operations Manager

Part of the uniqueness of CHESS among synchrotron facilities is the role of the CHESS operator. During an experiment, users interact mostly with the CHESS operator. I would like to explain the role of the CHESS operator and give some guidelines to users for how to make the most of their experimental time by utilizing the skills of the CHESS op-

erator.

The typical CHESS operator has an engineering or physics degree, is just starting out in his or her career, and is eager to learn about the world of scientific research. Over the years, their skills have been used to build all of the experimental stations and most of the equipment in the lab. The operators' forte is

their hands-on experience with the experimental stations at the lab. Each operator works with a staff scientist on the long term development, diagnostic testing, and upkeep of a particular station. And, while they 'specialize' in one station, they have worked on all of the stations at one time or another.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

The Visit to CHESS. Experimenters can make the best and most efficient use of the CHESS staff by preparing in advance so that the basics of the experimental equipment are understood before arriving at CHESS. CHESS has a home page on the WWW (<http://www.chess.cornell.edu/>) so that many preliminary questions about the equipment can be answered quickly by the users themselves. It is particularly important that the fundamentals of our station software, SPEC, are understood before arrival, so that beamtime is not wasted in learning software at the beginning of an experiment. If there are any unresolved

questions, please feel free to contact the CHESS staff since a few minutes of communication may save valuable time for all.

While conducting an experiment, if a piece of equipment is acting suspiciously, the CHESS operator should be consulted immediately. Odds are that the operator has dealt with such a problem in the past. Also, keep in mind that while the operator knows about the equipment in the lab, he or she might not know about each specific experiment being conducted. New users should take a minute to discuss the experiment with the CHESS operator upon their arrival. The operators are familiar with a wide

variety of experimental setups and can often provide valuable information to assist the user in making efficient use of time and facilities. Finally, let me note that while the operator is there to help make on the spot alterations to your experiment if necessary, users are generally responsible for ensuring that their own equipment is in working order prior to their arrival at CHESS.

Those of you who have been to CHESS know how valuable the CHESS staff is in the support provided to the user community. We are looking forward to continued productive use of the CHESS experimental stations in the future.