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Gräfe, M.G.O.

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Chapter 10 |

Acknowledgements

Going through the life of a PhD-student with all its challenges and experiences had a big life-changing influence on me. The research itself and all the people connected to it with different mindsets but also living in a different country, in a city with many internationals, all those things have broadened my horizon and gave me a different perspective. Naturally, one cannot undergo all this without help from many others. I would like to dedicate this last chapter to express my appreciation to those who have played a role in this time.

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conferences not only to be remembered by the scientific content. I had the chance to attend to two ARVO annual meetings in amazing places: Denver in Colorado and Honolulu in Hawaii. Besides that these conferences had the great concept of forming the interface between researchers for technical advances and medical applications, I will always hold on to the memories of these locations.

To keep working on a research project, breaks and taking the mind off it to recharge are important things. That happened not seldom with Friday drinks and a whole lot of sarcasm. Thank you, all the regulars forming that sort of cracker barrel. Also all the other non-work related things made that time easier and welded the group(s) together: group outings, Easter brunches and other activities such as joint kayak tours, bouldering, movie nights, game nights and more – thank you all for that.

Having a regular schedule for doing sports formed an important contrary pole to the work at the university. For me, it was canoe polo. In the beginning of my time I joined the team of the **Amsterdam Vikings**. I certainly learned a lot from you guys, thank you! Later I joined the **KV Zeeburg**. There I could help to build their first team and had first experiences to start coaching others. I enjoyed it a lot to see you all learn, improve and finding fun in the same sport I like to practice. To stop doing that when I left was one of the hardest things. I hope you could keep training and keep the team together. I wish you plenty of fun and success for tournaments.

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Besides the many technical and scientific challenges, the doctoral studies can bear many other issues that can shake somebody in ones very core. Seeing time flying by while the experiments do not show enough progress, thinking about the temporary work contract and all that is connected to it when it expires can make you very anxious. I thank **Heather Awad** for our sessions and your help to overcome these problems.