

# CDCL SAT Solving and **Applications to Optimization Problems** Alexander Nadel, Intel & Technion, Israel April 17, 2023 Satisfiability: Theory, Practice, and Beyond Workshop Simons Institute, UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA, USA







- 1. Core CDCL SAT Solving
  - Review of the foundations
- 2. Solving Complex Optimization Problems with SAT
  - Opportunity for the future
    - based on my own industrial experience

### Introduction

SAT: determine if a Boolean formula in Conjunctive Normal Form (CNF) satisfiable

 $\mathbf{F} = (\mathbf{a} \lor \mathbf{b}) \land (\neg \mathbf{a} \lor \neg \mathbf{b} \lor \mathbf{c})$ 

- The original NP-Complete problem: the famous Cook-Levin theorem (early 70s)
- SAT has exponential complexity unless P = NP -- whether or not P = NP is frequently called the most important outstanding question in CS
- Check a solution is easy  $\rightarrow$  is it also easy to solve?
- SAT is an unresolved mystery
- Yet, SAT solvers are scalable widely used tools, how come?!





### SAT Fundamentals: Backtrack Search

#### The baseline algorithm in modern SAT solvers is backtrack search

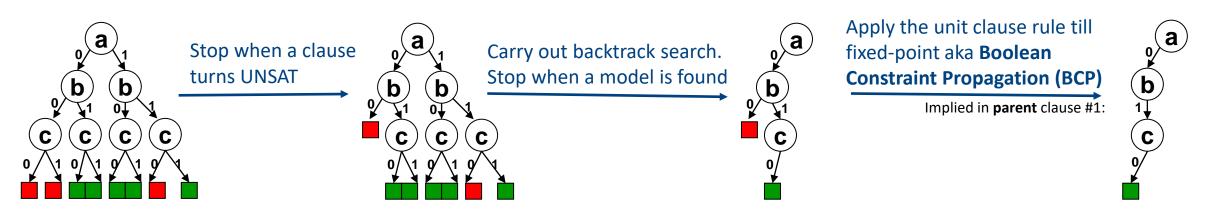
#### Called DPLL or DLL

*Davis, Martin; Logemann, George; Loveland, Donald:* <u>"A Machine Program for Theorem</u> <u>Proving"</u>. <u>Communications of the ACM</u>. 5 (7): 394–397. (1961).

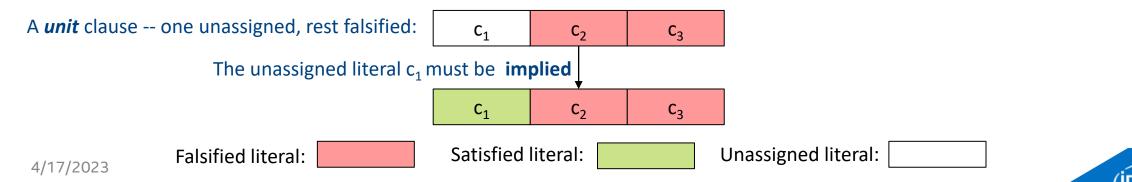
Davis, Martin; Putnam, Hilary: A computing procedure for quantification theory. Journal of the ACM 7 (1960)

### From Enumeration to DPLL





The unit clause rule: the unassigned literal in a unit clause must be 1



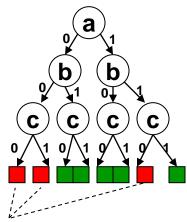
5/15

### The Mystery of SAT Solver Scalability

DPLL could handle formulas with <2,000 clauses

Modern SAT solvers cope with industrial instances of 100,000,000's clauses

The introduction of Conflict-Driven-Clause-Learning (CDCL) or, simply, Conflict-driven Solving was the birth of modern highly-scalable SAT solving



Learn from conflicts to drive & prune backtrack search



# **CDCL: the Intuitive Principles**

#### Learning and pruning

Block already explored sub-spaces

Locality

- Focus the search on the relevant data
- Learn strong clauses from the local context

#### Well-engineered data structures

Extremely fast Boolean Constraint Propagation (BCP)

**Beyond CDCL** 

- Inprocessing
- Local search integration



### Today's Focus for the 1<sup>st</sup> Part of the Talk

In-depth dive into the "core of the core"

- Conflict analysis loop
- Boolean Constraint Propagation (BCP)

### **Conflict-driven SAT Solving: Seminal Work**

#### 1996: GRASP by Joao P. Marques-Silva and Karem A. Sakallah

João P. Marques Silva, Karem A. Sakallah: GRASP - a new search algorithm for satisfiability. ICCAD 1996: 220-227

#### 2001: Chaff by Matthew W. Moskewicz, Conor F. Madigan, Ying Zhao, Lintao Zhang and Sharad Malik

Matthew W. Moskewicz, Conor F. Madigan, Ying Zhao, Lintao Zhang, Sharad Malik: Chaff: Engineering an Efficient SAT Solver. DAC 2001: 530-535



Abstract The 2009 CAV (Computer-Aided Verification) award was presented to seven individuals who made major advances in creating high-performance Boolean satisfiability solvers. This annual award recognizes a specific fundamental contribution or series of outstanding contributions to the CAV field.

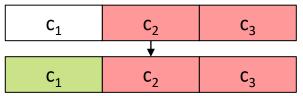


# **Boolean Constraint Propagation (BCP) Essentials**

#### BCP consumes 80-90% of SAT run-time

What?

Identify and propagate in unit clauses (performance)



Identify and report any conflicts (correctness)

C<sub>1</sub> C<sub>2</sub> C<sub>3</sub>

#### How?

- Every literal *l* holds a Watch List -- WL(*l*) with all the clauses where *l* is watched
- When literal l is falsified, visit all the clauses in WL(¬l)

Falsified literal:







#### Efficient Data Structure for BCP

- GRASP watched all the literals
- It is sufficient to watch two *non-falsified* literals: SATO's Head/Tail!

 $C_1$ 

Hantao Zhang: SATO: An Efficient Propositional Prover. <u>CADE 1997</u>: 272-275

Chaff's 2WL: watching the first two literals – no need to visit during backtracking!
c<sub>1</sub>
c<sub>2</sub>
c<sub>3</sub>
c<sub>4</sub>
c<sub>5</sub>
c<sub>6</sub>
c<sub>7</sub>

 $C_2$ 

Ca

C₄

C

C

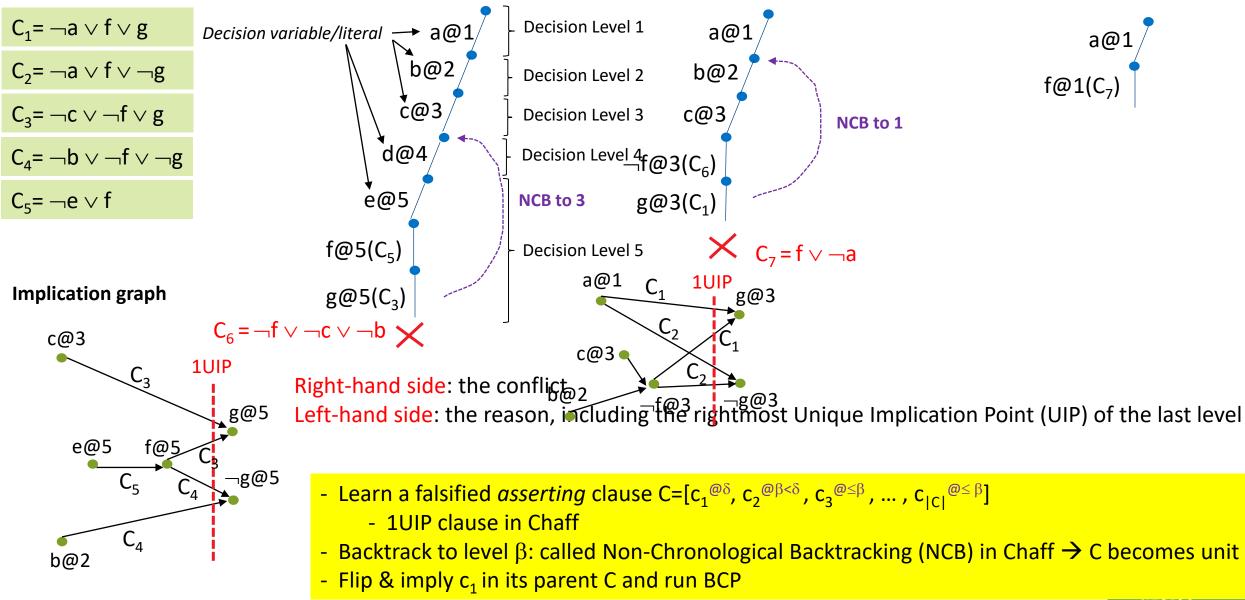
**C**<sub>7</sub>

- as long as: decision-level(falsified watch) ≥ decision-level(falsified non-watch)
- Caching one literal inside the watches & inlining binary clauses

Sörensson, N., Eén, N.: MiniSAT 2.1 and MiniSAT++ 1.0 - SAT race Editions. SAT, Competitive Event Booklet (2008) (caching one literal) Geoffrey Chu, Aaron Harwood, Peter J. Stuckey: Cache Conscious Data Structures for Boolean Satisfiability Solvers. J. Satisf. Boolean Model. Comput. 6(1-3): 99-120 (2009) (caching one literal & inlining binary clauses)



# Conflict Analysis Loop in Chaff

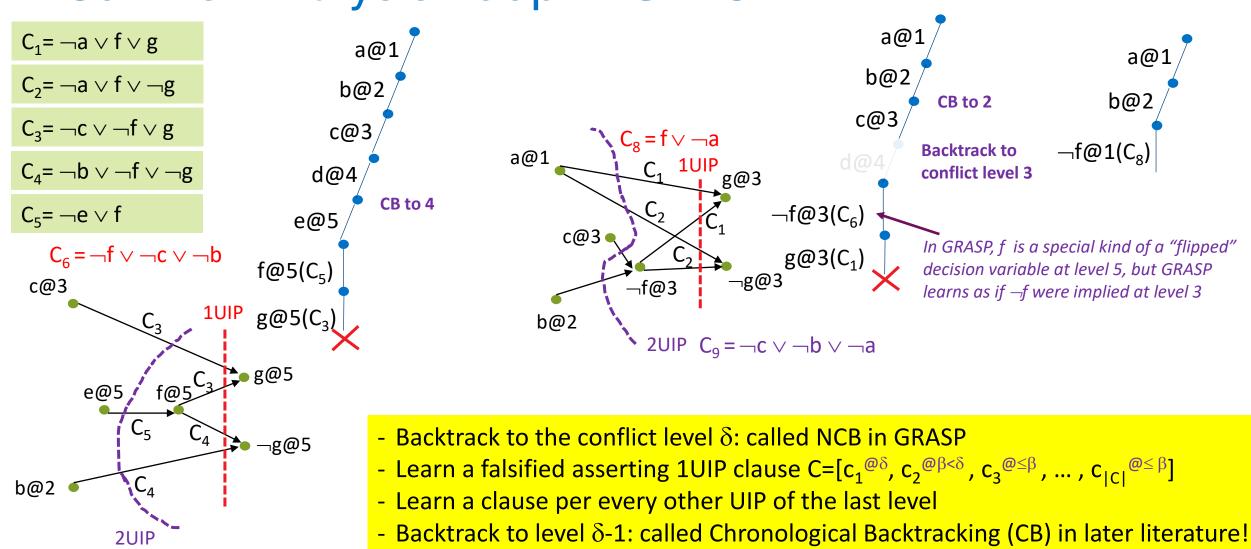


12/11

Inte

# **Conflict Analysis Loop in GRASP**

 $C_7 = \neg e \lor \neg c \lor \neg b$ 



- Flip & imply c<sub>1</sub> in its parent C and run BCP

13/11

#### Up-to-date Conflict Analysis Loop Algorithm Covers GRASP & Chaff & Modern Solvers

- 1. Backtrack before conflict analysis: backtrack to the conflict level  $\delta$ , if required
- Required in GRASP and called Non-Chronological Backtracking (NCB) in GRASP
- Not required in Chaff: current decision level = conflict level
- 2. Learn an asserting clause C=[ $c_1^{@\delta}$ ,  $c_2^{@\beta<\delta}$ ,  $c_3^{@@\leq\beta}$ , ...,  $c_i^{@@\leq\beta}$ , ...,  $c_{|C|}^{@\leq\beta}$ ]
- 1UIP clause in both GRASP & Chaff
- 3. Optionally, learn other clauses
- GRASP: a clause for every other UIP of the conflict decision level
- 4. Backtrack: backtrack to a level in [ $\beta$ ,  $\beta$ +1, ...,  $\delta$ -1] -- makes the asserting clause unit
- GRASP -- always  $\delta$ -1: Chronological Backtracking (CB) in today's terminology
- Chaff -- always β: Non-Chronological Backtracking (NCB) in today's terminology
- 5. Flip  $c_1$  by implying it in C and run BCP

# **Conflict Analysis Loop Evolvement**



- CB algorithm is similar to GRASP's
- Integrating CB with post-GRASP data structures for BCP (Watch Lists) turned out to be highly non-trivial
  - Because of simultaneous propagation at several levels
  - BCP must be adjusted to prevent correctness & performance issues
  - Useful BCP invariants are still violated
- Cadical'19: custom (score-based) backtracking
- Sibylle Möhle, Armin Biere: Backing Backtracking. SAT 2019: 250-266
- Backtrack to the decision level with the highest variable score
- Applied by Cadical & IntelSAT
- CB & BCP integration: implemented, but not discussed



@10

# Integrating CB and BCP

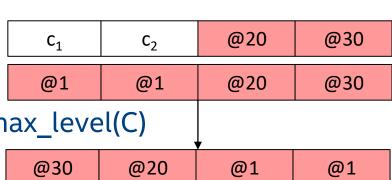
- Example of a necessary adjustment
- ¬c<sub>1</sub> and ¬c<sub>2</sub> are assigned @1 < max\_level(C)</p>
  - Can't happen with NCB, where the assigned level is always > max\_level(C)

Falsified literal:

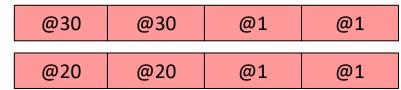
Satisfied literal:

- Must swap lit's & update WL's to watch two highest falsified lit's
- Essential for correctness in order not to miss conflicts after backtracking!
- Useful invariants are still violated even with the adjustments:
- Iowest implication: no assigned literal can be implied at a lower level
- lowest conflict: every conflict, BCP returns a clause falsified at the lowest possible level

Intel<sup>®</sup> SAT Solver (IntelSAT): lowest implication & lowest conflict ensured!



@10





### Intel<sup>®</sup> SAT Solver (IntelSAT)

An open-source CDCL solver written from scratch in C++20

- Alexander Nadel: Introducing Intel<sup>®</sup> SAT Solver. SAT 2022.
- Alexander Nadel, "Introducing Intel<sup>®</sup> SAT Solver" [video], MIAO Seminars. February 2023.

License: MIT (free)

Public repository: <a href="https://github.com/alexander-nadel/intel\_sat\_solver">https://github.com/alexander-nadel/intel\_sat\_solver</a>

Tuned towards incremental applications with mostly SAT queries

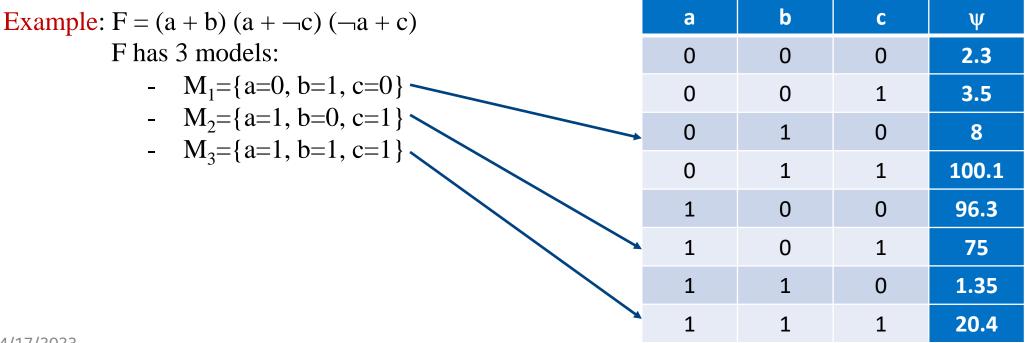
- Paper: anytime unweighted MaxSAT
- @Intel: optimization problems placement, scheduling, etc.



# **Optimization in SAT**

OptSAT(F,  $\psi$ ): given a propositional formula F in CNF and a Pseudo-Boolean objective function  $\psi$ , return a model to F which minimizes  $\psi$ 

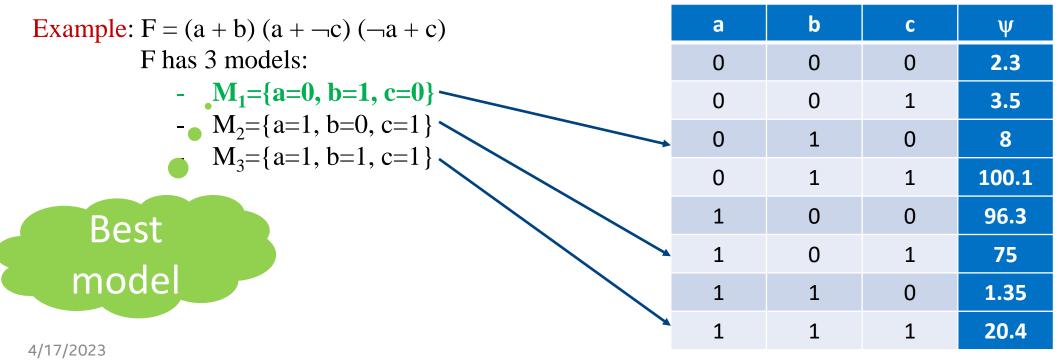
 A Pseudo-Boolean (PB) function: a mapping from every full assignment to a real number



# **Optimization in SAT**

OptSAT(F,  $\psi$ ): given a propositional formula F in CNF and a Pseudo-Boolean objective function  $\psi$ , return a model to F which minimizes  $\psi$ 

 A Pseudo-Boolean (PB) function: a mapping from every full assignment to a real number



# Solving OptSAT(F, $\psi$ ) Instances in Real-life

Is  $\psi$  is a linear PB function:  $\psi = w_{n-1}^* t_{n-1} + ... + w_1^* t_1 + ... + w_0^* t_0^?$ 

- t<sub>i</sub>'s are Boolean variables
- w<sub>i</sub>'s are strictly positive integer coefficients
- Example: ψ = 2\*t<sub>2</sub> + 5\*t<sub>1</sub> + 7\*t<sub>0</sub>

Yes

MaxSAT: a rich wellestablished field! Scarce research

Our contribution

- Polosat algorithm: simulate local search with SAT (Nadel, FMCAD'20)
  - Very efficient and simple to implement

No

- In focus today
- High-level local search with SAT/Polosat as an oracle (Cohen&Nadel&Ryvchin, TACAS'22)



## Polosat: Black-Box Optimization in SAT

Polosat: minimize a black-function  $\psi$ (V), given the SAT formula F(V)

How to use Polosat:

- 1. Similarly to SAT, create the CNF formula by adding clauses
- 2. Call the SAT solver (possibly under assumptions), but also provide  $\psi$  as a callback function
  - The solver will query  $\psi,$  when all the variables are assigned
  - The solver expects to get back a number

No need to bit-blast  $\psi$  into clauses: calculate  $\psi$  in the callback instead!

In practice:

- $\psi$  depends only on observables B= {b<sub>n-1</sub>, ... , b<sub>0</sub>}  $\subseteq$  V, and
- $\psi$  is strictly monotone in B:  $b_i \in B$  flipped from 1 to  $0 \rightarrow \psi$  is decreased
  - Example: MaxSAT, where  $\psi = w_{n-1}^* b_{n-1} + ... + w_1^* b_1 + ... + w_0^* b_0$
- these restrictions can be lifted



### Polosat Algorithm: Simulate Local Search with SAT

- Polosat (F,  $\psi$ , T)
- M := SAT(F)
- External loop: run the following internal loop until M is not improved anymore
  - Internal loop: go over all the bad observables (bad: never assigned 0 in any model)
    - Try to **flip** the current bad observable b:
      - » M' := SAT(F, {¬b}) (¬t is an assumption)
    - If (satisfiable and  $\psi(M') < \psi(M)$ ) M := M'
- Return M
- No model can be rediscovered by construction
- Making Polosat work in practice:
- Apply polarity-fixing in all the SAT invocations to simulate local search
  - TORC heuristic: fix the observables to 0 and the rest to the best model so far M
- Use a conflict threshold N (N=1000): limit every SAT call (except for the 1<sup>st</sup> one) by N conflicts
- Initial boost to the VSIDS scores of the observables can also be useful

#### Polosat: Incomplete vs. Complete

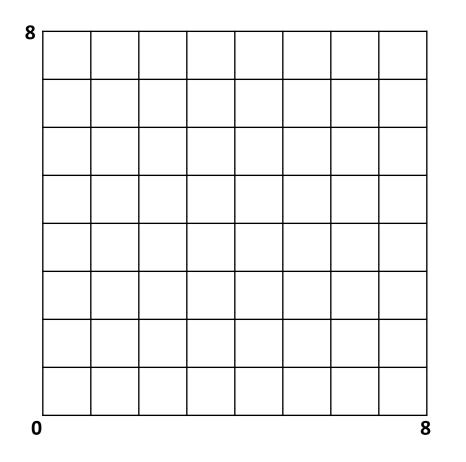
Polosat is an incomplete algorithm

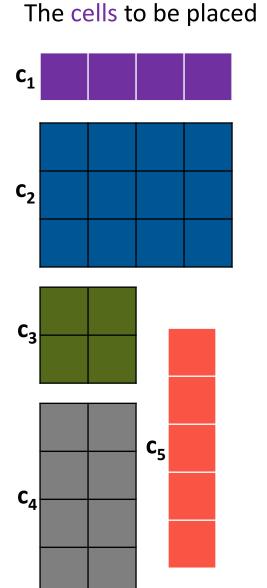
Polosat can be integrated into a high-level complete algorithm by **replacing** SAT queries to Polosat queries



#### Cell Placement without Optimization: Input

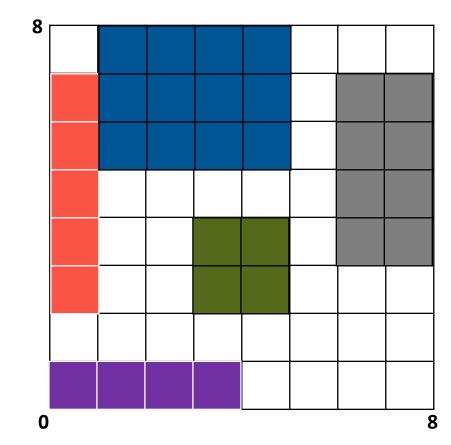
The grid where to place the cells



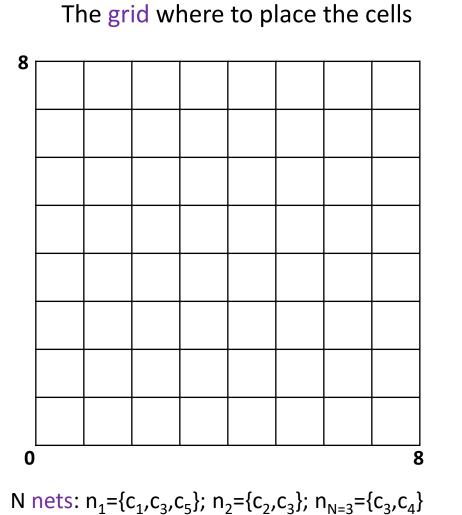


#### Cell Placement w/o Opt.: Output

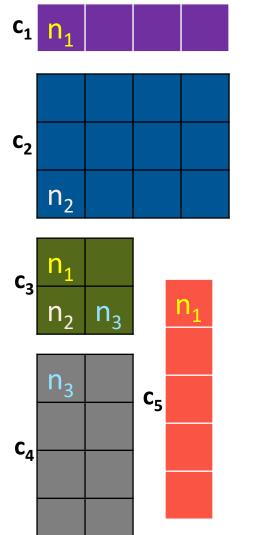
- The cells are placed
- Already NP-complete!



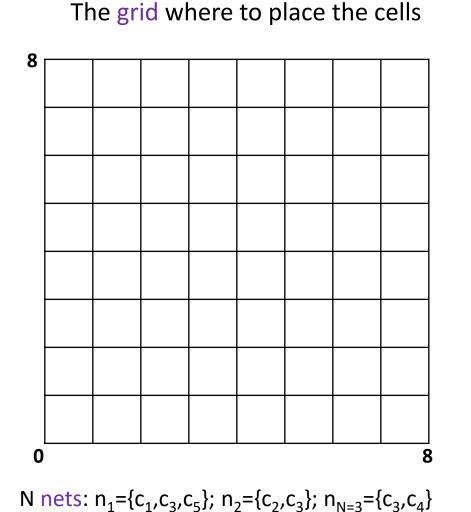
### **Cell Placement Input**



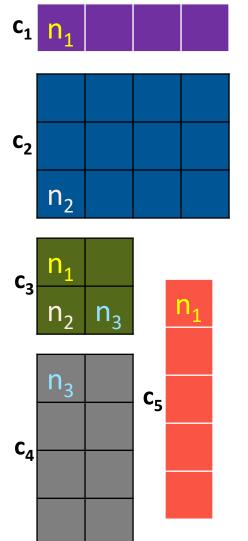
#### The cells to be placed



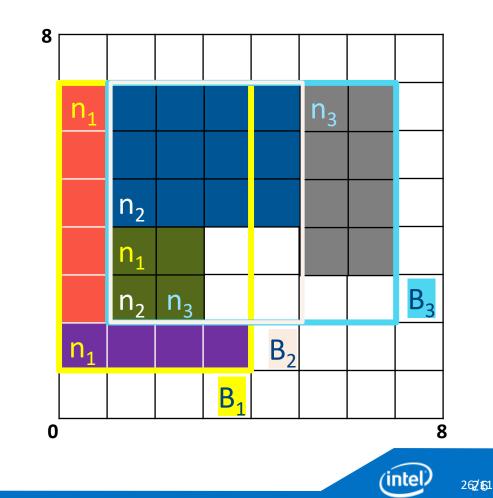
# **Cell Placement Input**



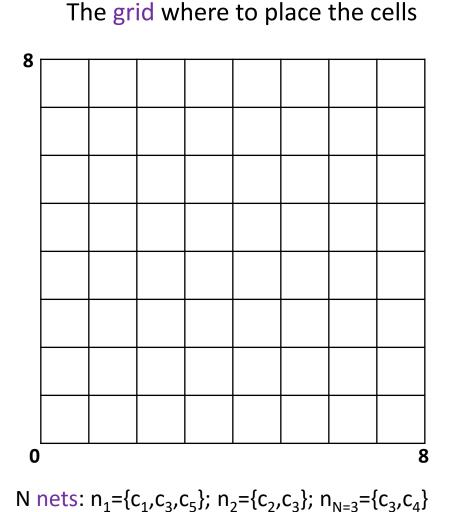
#### The cells to be placed



Net size |n<sub>i</sub>| of n<sub>i</sub>: the perimeter of n<sub>i</sub>'s bounding box B<sub>i</sub>

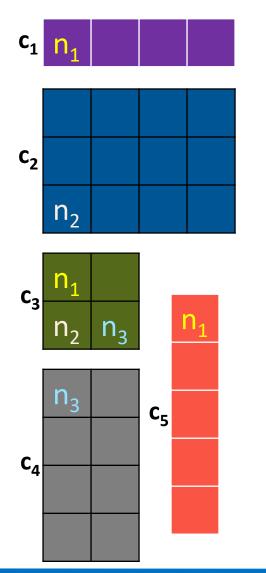


# Cell Placement Input



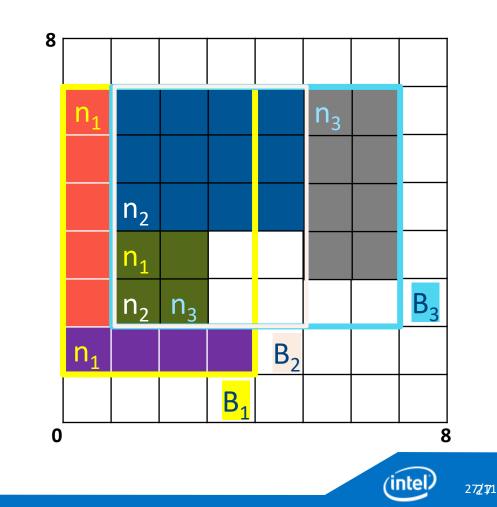
Industrial practice: additional constraints!

#### The cells to be placed

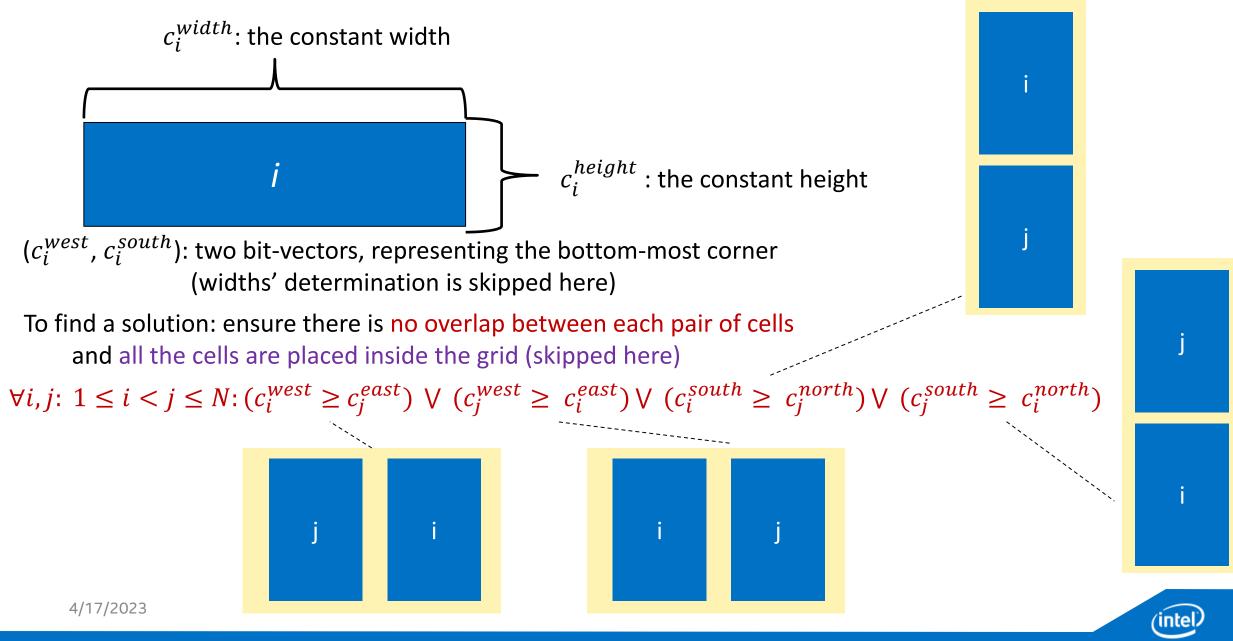


#### Cell Placement with Opt. Output

- Net size |n<sub>i</sub>| of n<sub>i</sub>: the perimeter of n<sub>i</sub>'s bounding box B<sub>i</sub>
- Minimize placement size: the sum of all the net sizes

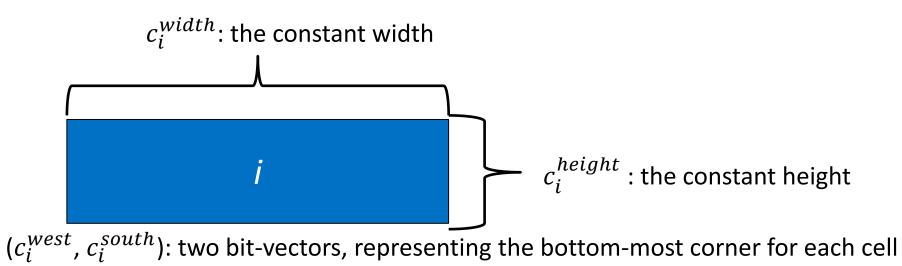


#### Cell Placement → BV/SAT : Constraints



287/**8**1

#### Solving Placement with Optimization Modulo Bitvectors (OBV)



A BV variable for the net size for each net: 
$$n_i = \left(\max_{c \in ni} c^{east} - \min_{c \in ni} c^{west}\right) + \left(\max_{c \in ni} c^{north} - \min_{c \in ni} c^{south}\right)$$
  
The OBV target T =  $n_1 + n_2 + \dots + n_N$ 

#### OBV goal: minimize T

# Solving OBV(F,T) with SAT-based Linear Search

- 1: solver.Assert(F);  $\mu := solver.Sat()$
- 2: while  $\mu$  is a solution **do**
- 3:  $solver.Assert(T < \mu(T))$
- 4:  $\mu := solver.Sat()$
- 5: return  $\mu$

▷ assert *F* and find the first solution ▷ while there is still a solution ▷ block all the solutions with  $cost \ge \mu(T)$ ▷ can we improve our solution? ▷  $\mu$  is guaranteed to be *T*-minimal

- + Complete anytime algorithm
  - anytime algorithm: finds better and better solutions, the longer it keeps running
- + Outperforms other OBV algorithms (binary-search-based)
- Still, gets stuck far from the optimum on industrial placement instances
  - bit-vector addition (in the target) is too heavy



### **Polosat for Placement**

Integration: Polosat invocations **replace** SAT invocations inside linear search  $\psi$  simply returns the value of T under the current model

**Observables** B = all the bits of  $\{n_1, n_2, ..., n_N\}$ ;  $\psi$  is monotone in B

- 1: solver.Assert(F);  $\mu := solver.Sat()$
- 2: while  $\mu$  is a solution **do**
- 3:  $solver.Assert(T < \mu(T))$
- 4:  $\mu := solver.Sat()$

#### 5: return $\mu$

▷ assert F and find the first solution  $\leftarrow$ ▷ while there is still a solution ▷ block all the solutions with cost  $\ge \mu(T)$ ▷ can we improve our solution?  $\leftarrow$ 

 $\triangleright\,\mu$  is guaranteed to be T-minimal

A BV variable for the net size for each net: 
$$n_i = \left(\max_{c \in ni} c^{east} - \min_{c \in ni} c^{west}\right) + \left(\max_{c \in ni} c^{north} - \min_{c \in ni} c^{south}\right)$$
  
The OBV target T =  $n_1 + n_2 + \dots + n_N$ 

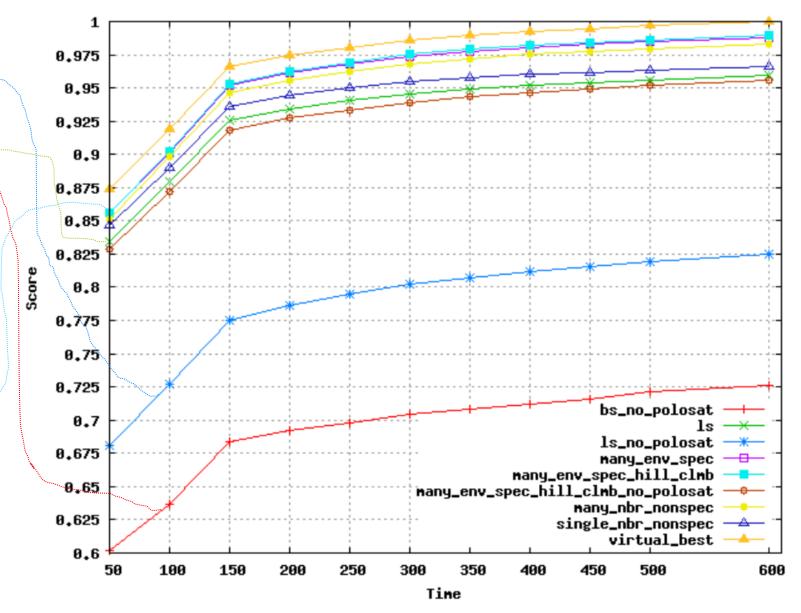
#### Experimental Results: Industrial Cell Placement Benchmarks (our TACAS'22 paper)

- 1200 proprietary industrial designs of various sizes and complexities.
- Algorithms:
  - {OBV with Binary search, OBV with Linear search, LSSO} x {SAT, Polosat}
    - LSSO: Local Search with SAT/Polosat as an Oracle (our TACAS'22 paper)
- Maximal timeout: 600 sec.
  - Intermediate timeouts: 50, 100, 150, 200, 250, 300, 350, 400, 450, 500
- Score = best  $\Sigma$ (net-sizes) / my  $\Sigma$ (net-sizes)
  - normalized to [0, 1] for every timeout
  - 1: the absolutely best result within the timeout (the virtual best)
  - the closer to 1 the better



- Polosat impact
  - Linear search with SAT (ls\_no\_polosat) outperforms binary search with SAT (bs\_no\_polosat)
  - Linear search with Polosat (ls) outperforms linear search with SAT (ls\_no\_polosat)
  - LSSO with SAT/Polosat as an Oracle

- Best LSSO with Polosat outperforms the linear search with Polosat
- Out tool has been successfully productized at Intel!



#### Polosat for MaxSAT: our FMCAD'20 Paper

Integrated into the anytime MaxSAT solver TT-Open-WBO-Inc

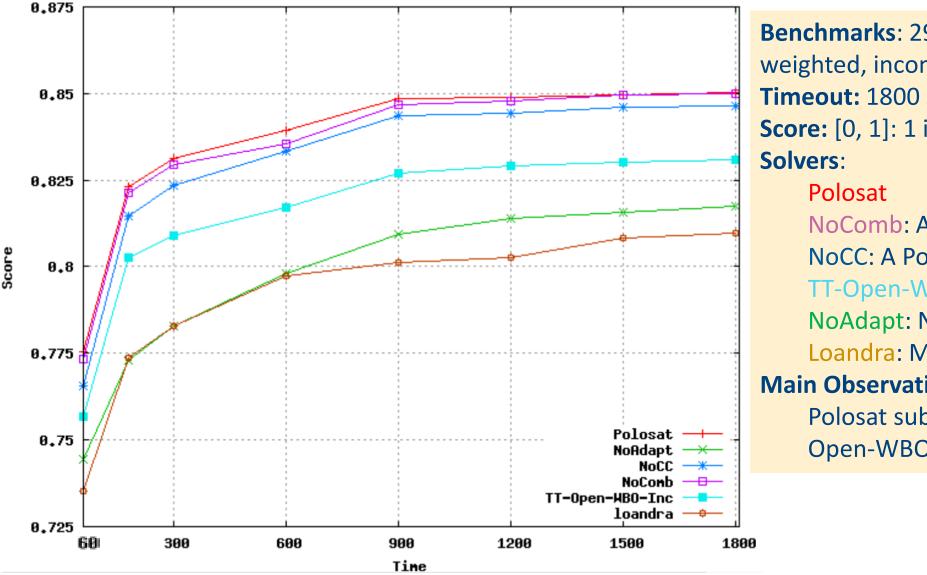
• Winner of MSE'19 in both the weighted, incomplete categories

Integration: replaced SAT invocations by Polosat invocations

Used adaptive strategy to stop Polosat forever, when it gets too slow

• Gets too slow: generates less than 1 new model per second

#### Polosat for MaxSAT: Results



Benchmarks: 297 MSE'19 benchmarks in weighted, incomplete categories Timeout: 1800 sec. **Score:** [0, 1]: 1 is the best **NoComb:** A Polosat variation **NoCC: A Polosat variation** TT-Open-WBO-Inc: MSE'19 winner NoAdapt: No adaptive strategy Loandra: MSE'19 runner-up Main Observation: Polosat substantially improves TT-**Open-WBO-Inc!** 

35**35**1

#### **Polosat: Status**

Polosat is an enabler for solving industrial optimization problems at Intel

Polosat was used by the winner of the MaxSAT Evaluation 2022 in all the incomplete categories

- NuWLS-c: preprocessing with local search + TT-Open-WBO-Inc
- Categories: {weighted,unweighted} X {60 sec. to, 300 sec. to}



# Solving Complex (Non-Linear) Optimization Problems is an Opportunity for the SAT Community!

Currently, SAT-based verification comprises SAT's heaviest industrial usage

#### CAV 2022 PROGRAM

<u>Ziyad Hanna</u>

Harnessing the Power of Formal Verification for the \$Trillion Chip Design Industry (abstract)

Invited Talk: A Billion SMT Queries a Day (Neha Rungta)

But what about industrial optimization problems?

Alternative: mixed-integer nonlinear programming (MINP)

- Might not work in the presence of complex Boolean constraints, where SAT-based solutions are expected to be a better fit (similarly to MaxSAT vs. ILP in linear case)
- Optimizing black-box functions in MINP is not explored
- A SAT-based solution is already productized @ Intel for placement and scheduling!



#### Solving Complex Optimization Problems with SAT: Ideas for Future Research

- Classic (non-SAT-based) local search
- Dedicated algorithms for sub-classes of optimization functions
- Going beyond SAT constraints (Pseudo-Boolean)
- Finding more applications





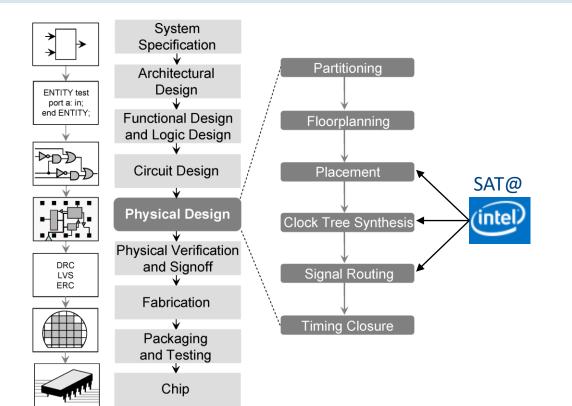


### SAT Application Examples CAV 2022 PROGRAM

Ziyad Hanna

Harnessing the Power of Formal Verification for the \$Trillion Chip Design Industry (abstract)

#### Invited Talk: A Billion SMT Queries a Day (Neha Rungta)



#### () MAY 30, 2016 (REPORT)

#### Computer generated math proof is largest ever at 200 terabytes

by Bob Yirka , Phys.org



Credit: Victorgrigas/Wikideia/ CC BY-SA 3.0

(Phys.org)—A trio of researchers has solved a single math problem by using a supercomputer to grind through over a trillion color combination possibilities, and in the process has generated the largest math proof ever—the text of it is 200 terabytes in size. In their paper uploaded to the preprint server *arXiv*, Marijn Heule with the University of Texas, Oliver Kullmann with Swansea University and Victor Marek with the University of Kentucky outline the math problem, the means by which a supercomputer was programmed to solve it, and the answer which the proof was asked to provide.

The <u>math problem</u> has been named the boolean Pythagorean Triples problem and was first proposed back in the 1980's by mathematician Ronald Graham. In looking

40**4** M

## IntelSAT Concepts

#### Incremental Lazy Backtracking (ILB)

- In-between incremental queries, backtrack only when necessary and to the highest possible level
  - Other solvers backtrack all the way to level 0

#### Reimplication: new core SAT algorithm

- Reimplies assigned literals at lower levels without backtracking
- Enables ILB
- Independently of ILB, restores the two core BCP invariants, broken by Chronological Backtracking (CB)
- Trail implemented as doubly-linked list (rather than stack) to facilitate CB & reimplication
- No pointers, efficient array-based implementation

New heuristics (query-driven tuning, subsumption-based flipped clause filtering, incr. score reboot)

No heavy algorithms, such as, inprocessing and vivification