Hokkaido Mathematical Journal Vol. 35 (2006) p. 437-456

# On blocking semiovals with an 8-secant in projective planes of order 9

Nobuo NAKAGAWA and Chihiro SUETAKE

(Received October 28, 2004)

**Abstract.** Let S be a blocking semioval in an arbitrary projective plane  $\Pi$  of order 9 which meets some line in 8 points. According to Dover in [2],  $20 \leq |S| \leq 24$ . In [8] one of the authors showed that if  $\Pi$  is desarguesian, then  $22 \leq |S| \leq 24$ . In this note all blocking semiovals with this property in all non-desarguesian projective planes of order 9 are completely determined. In any non-desarguesian plane  $\Pi$  it is shown that  $21 \leq |S| \leq 24$  and for each  $i \in \{21, 22, 23, 24\}$  there exist blocking semiovals of size i which meet some line in 8 points. Therefore, the Dover's bound is not sharp.

 $Key\ words:$  blocking semioval, projective plane, ternary function, finite field, collineation group.

#### 1. Introduction

Let  $\Pi = (\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$  be a projective plane. A blocking set in  $\Pi$  is a set B of points such that for every line  $l \in \mathcal{L}, l \cap B \neq \phi$  but l is not entirely contained in B. A semioval in  $\Pi$  is a set M of points such that for every point  $P \in M$  there exists a unique line  $l \in \mathcal{L}$  such that  $l \cap M = \{P\}$ . The idea of a semioval was introduced in [1] and [9]. A blocking semioval in  $\Pi$  is a set S of points which is both a semioval and a blocking set.

Let  $\Pi$  be a projective plane of order  $q \geq 3$ , and let S be a blocking semioval in  $\Pi$ . Dover [3] showed that if S has a (q-k)-secant,  $1 \leq k < q - 1$ , then  $|S| \geq ((3k+4)/(k+2))q - k$ . We consider whether this bound is sharp or not, when k = 1. From the above Dover's result and Dover [2], it follows that if S has a (q-1)-secant, then  $(7/3)q - 1 \leq |S| \leq 3q - 3$  and the upperbound is met if and only if S is a vertexless triangle. Hence we assume that |S| < 3q - 3 in the followings.

Let  $\Pi = (\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$  be a projective plane of order 9, and let S be a blocking semioval with 8-secant in  $\Pi$  which is not a vertexless triangle. Let  $x_i$  denote the number of lines of  $\Pi$  which meet S in exactly *i* points. Then  $x_0 = 0$ and  $x_1 = |S|$  by the definition of S. By Dover [2],  $x_9 = 0$ . Set X(S) =

<sup>2000</sup> Mathematics Subject Classification : 51E20.

 $(x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_8)$ . If  $\Pi$  is a non-desarguesian plane, then  $\Pi$  is the Hughes plane, the nearfield plane or the dual nearfield plane by Lam, Kolesova and Thiel [6]. We show that if  $\Pi$  is a non-desarguesian plane,  $21 \leq |S| \leq 23$ and for each  $i \in \{21, 22, 23\}$  there exist blocking semiovals of size i with  $x_8 \neq 0$  using a computer. Since the size of any blocking semioval with  $x_8 \neq 0$  which is not a vertexless triangle in PG(2, 9) is 22 or 23, this shows that the Dover's lower bound is not sharp. We remark that there are many X(S)'s in a non-desargueian plane  $\Pi$  as compared with X(S)'s in PG(2, 9).

## 2. Blocking semiovals with $x_8 \neq 0$

Let  $\Pi = (\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$  be a projective plane of order q. We coordinate  $\Pi$  using Kallaher's method [5, Chapter 2]. Choose four points U, V, W, I, no three of which are collinear. Let Q = GF(q) as a set. Then, there exists a one-toone correspondence  $\alpha$  between Q and the points in  $WI - (UV \cap WI)$  such that  $0\alpha = W$ , and  $1\alpha = I$ . Using the set Q,  $\Pi$  is coordinated as follows:

- (1) To a point  $P \in WI (UV \cap WI)$  assign the coordinates ((b, b)), where  $b\alpha = P$ .
- (2) If  $P \notin WI$ , and  $P \notin UV$ , then assign to P the coordinates ((a, b)), where  $PV \cap WI = ((a, a))$ , and  $PU \cap WI = ((b, b))$ .
- (3) If  $P \in UV$  and  $P \neq V$ , then assign to P the coordinate ((m)), where  $WP \cap IV = ((1, m))$ .

(4) To V assign the coordinate  $((\infty))$ , where  $\infty$  is a symbol not in Q. Thus  $\mathcal{P} = \{((x, y)) \mid x, y \in Q\} \cup \{((a)) \mid a \in Q \cup \{\infty\}\}$ . The line *l* through the points ((m)) and ((0, k)) is assigned the coordinates [[m, k]]. The line *g* through the points  $((\infty))$  and ((k, 0)) is assigned the coordinates  $[[\infty, k]]$ . The line *h* through the points  $((\infty))$  and ((0)) is assigned the coordinate  $[[\infty, k]]$ . The line *h* through the points  $((\infty))$  and ((0)) is assigned the coordinate  $[[\infty]]$ . Thus  $\mathcal{L} = \{[[m, k]] \mid m \in Q \cup \{\infty\}, k \in Q\} \cup \{[[\infty]]\}$ .

A ternary function F is defined on Q as follows: If  $a, m, k \in Q$ , then F(a, m, k) is the second coordinate of the point  $((a, 0))V \cap ((m))((0, k))$ . Thus  $[[\infty]] = \{((x))|x \in Q \cup \{\infty\}\}, [[\infty, k]] = \{((k, y)) \mid y \in Q\} \cup \{((\infty))\}$  and  $[[m, k]] = \{((x, y)) \mid x \in Q, y = F(x, m, k)\} \cup \{((m))\}$  for  $m, k \in Q$ .

Now let  $\Pi$  be a projective plane of order 9 and let S be a blocking semioval in  $\Pi$  with  $x_8 \neq 0$  which is not a vertexless triangle. Set |S| = 17 + n. Then, by the Dover's bound  $20 \leq |S| \leq 23$  and  $3 \leq n \leq 6$ . Since  $x_8 \neq 0$ , we may assume that UV is the 8-secant of S. Then  $S \supseteq \{((x)) | x \in Q^* = Q - \{0\}\}$ . Since the remaining lines  $[[\infty, a]] = \{((a, y)) | y \in Q\} \cup \{((\infty))\}$  through  $((\infty))$  must also intersect S, there exists a mapping  $f: Q \ni x \mapsto f(x) \in Q$  such that  $\{((x, f(x))) \mid x \in Q\} \subseteq S$ . Thus

$$S = \{ ((x, f(x))) \mid x \in Q \} \cup \{ ((y)) \mid y \in Q^* \} \\ \cup \{ ((a_i, b_i)) \mid 1 \le i \le n \} \quad (*)$$

for some  $a_i, b_i \in Q(1 \le i \le n)$ , where  $(a_i, b_i) \ne (a_j, b_j), 1 \le i \ne j \le n$  and  $f(a_i) \ne b_i, 1 \le i \le n$ .

**Theorem 2.1** ([8, Theorem 2.4]) Let S be a point set of  $\Pi$  of size 17 + n satisfying the condition (\*). Then S is a blocking semioval if and only if the following hold.

- (1) For any  $a \in Q^*$ , there exists a unique element  $b \in Q$  such that  $f(x) \neq F(x, a, b)$  for all  $x \in Q$  and  $F(a_i, a, b) \neq b_i$  for all  $i \in \{1, 2, ..., n\}$ .
- (2)  $b_1, b_2, \ldots, b_n$  are pairwise distinct.
- (3)  $Q \ni x \longmapsto f(x) \in Q \{b_1, b_2, \dots, b_n\}$  is a surjection.
- (4) If  $f(a_i) = f(x)$ , then  $x = a_i$ .
- (5) If  $a \in Q$   $(a \neq a_1, a_2, ..., a_n)$ , then there exists  $x \in Q$   $(x \neq a)$  such that f(a) = f(x).

Let l(n) be the number of distinct elements in  $\{a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_n\}$ .

**Lemma 2.2** ([8, Lemma 2.6])  $9 \le l(n) + 2n$ 

**Lemma 2.3** If l(n) < 9, then  $8 \ge l(n) + n$ .

*Proof.* By Theorem 2.1(4), if  $f(a_i) = f(a_j)$ , then  $a_i = a_j$ . By Theorem 2.1(3), (4) and (5),  $Q = f(Q) \cup \{b_1, b_2, \ldots, b_n\} = \{f(x) \mid x \in Q, x \neq a_i \ (i = 1, 2, \ldots, n)\} \cup \{f(a_i) \mid i = 1, 2, \ldots, n\} \cup \{b_1, b_2, \ldots, b_n\}$ , where the right-hand side of the equality is a disjoint union. This yields  $9 \ge 1 + l(n) + n$ . Thus we have the lemma.

#### 3. The Hughes plane

In this section, we completely determine blocking semiovals with  $x_8 \neq 0$  in the Hughes plane of order 9 ([4]). On the field Q = GF(9), define a new multiplication  $\circ$  as follows:

$$x \circ y = \begin{cases} xy & \text{if } y^4 = 1, \\ x^3y & \text{if } y^4 = -1, \\ 0 & \text{if } y = 0. \end{cases}$$

The set Q with field addition +, forms a nearfield which is not a field. Then the Hughes plane  $\Pi = (\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$  of order 9 is defined as follows:

$$\mathcal{P} = \{ [x, y, z] \mid x, y, z \in Q, \ (x, y, z) \neq (0, 0, 0) \},\$$

where  $[x, y, z] = \{(x \circ k, y \circ k, z \circ k) \mid k \in Q^*\}.$ 

$$\mathcal{L} = \{ L_s A^m \mid s = 1 \text{ or } s \in Q - GF(3), 0 \le m \le 12 \},\$$

where  $A = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$  and  $L_s A^m = \{ [(x, y, z)^T (A^m)] \mid x + s \circ y + z = 0 \}.$ 

Here  $T(A^m)$  is the transpose matrix of  $A^m$ .

For  $B \in GL(3, 3)$   $\widetilde{B} \colon \mathcal{P} \ni [x, y, z] \longmapsto [(x, y, z)^T B] \in \mathcal{P}$  is a collineation of  $\Pi$ . Set  $G_1 = \{\widetilde{B} \mid B \in GL(3, 3)\}$ . Then,  $G_1 \cong PGL(3, 3)$ .

Let  $t \in Q$  such that  $t^2 = 1+t$ . Then t is a generator of the multiplicative group of the field GF(9). Then,  $\tau: Q \ni a + bt \longmapsto a - bt \in Q$   $(a, b \in GF(3))$ is an automorphism of the nearfield Q and  $\tau$  induces a collineation  $\tilde{\tau}$  of  $\Pi$ , that is,  $\tilde{\tau}[x, y, z] = [\tau(x), \tau(y), \tau(z)]$ .  $\varphi: Q \ni a + bt \longmapsto (a + b) + bt \in$ Q  $(a, b \in GF(3))$  is also an automorphism of Q. Let  $\tilde{\varphi}$  be the collineation of  $\Pi$  induced by  $\varphi$ . Set  $G_2 = \langle \tilde{\tau}, \tilde{\varphi} \rangle$ . Then,  $G_2$  is isomorphic to the symmetric group of degree 3.

**Theorem 3.1** ([10]) (1) Aut  $\Pi = G_1 G_2 = G_1 \times G_2$ . (2) Aut  $\Pi$  has two orbits  $\mathcal{P}_0 = \{ [x, y, z] \mid x, y, z \in GF(3), (x, y, z) \neq (0, 0, 0) \}$  and  $\mathcal{P} - \mathcal{P}_0$  on  $\mathcal{P}$ .

(3)  $(\operatorname{Aut}\Pi)_{[0,0,1]}$  has four orbits  $\{[0, 0, 1]\}, \Omega_1 := \{[a, b, c] \mid a, b, c \in GF(3), (a, b) \neq (0, 0)\}, \Omega_2 := [t^5, 1, 0] (\operatorname{Aut}\Pi)_{[0,0,1]}, \Omega_3 := [0, 1, t] (\operatorname{Aut}\Pi)_{[0,0,1]}$ on  $\mathcal{P}$ .

(4)  $(\operatorname{Aut} \Pi)_{[t^5, 1, 0]}$  has four orbits  $\{[t^5, 1, 0]\}, \Lambda_1 := \{[t^6, 1, 0], [t^3, 1, 0]\}, \Lambda_2 := \{[t, 1, 0], [t^7, 1, 0], [t^2, 1, 0]\}, \Lambda_3 := [0, 1, t](\operatorname{Aut} \Pi)_{[t^5, 1, 0]}$  on  $\mathcal{P} - \mathcal{P}_0$ .

Let S be a blocking semioval in  $\Pi$  with  $x_8 \neq 0$ . Let U, V, W, I be four points of  $\Pi$ , no three of which are collinear, and let  $S \supseteq UV - \{U, V\}$ . From Theorem 3.1, we may consider the following six coordinatizations by ((, )), (()) for the points and [[, ]], [[]] for the lines in  $\Pi$  (see Section 2). Namely when U = [0, 0, 1], there are three cases of  $V \in \Omega_1, V \in \Omega_2$  or  $V \in \Omega_3$ , and when  $U = [t^5, 1, 0]$ , there are three cases of  $V \in \Lambda_1, V \in \Lambda_2$ or  $V \in \Lambda_3$  as follows.

 $\begin{array}{ll} Case \ 1: & U = [0, 0, 1] = ((0)), \ V = [0, 1, 0] = ((\infty)), \ W = [1, 0, 0] = \\ ((0, 0)), \ I = [1, 1, 1] = ((1, 1)). \\ Case \ 2: & U = [0, 0, 1] = ((0)), \ V = [t^5, 1, 0] = ((\infty)), \ W = [0, 1, 0] = \\ ((0, 0)), \ I = [1, 1, 1] = ((1, 1)). \\ Case \ 3: & U = [0, 0, 1] = ((0)), \ V = [0, 1, t] = ((\infty)), \ W = [1, 0, 0] = \\ ((0, 0)), \ I = [1, 1, 1] = ((1, 1)). \\ Case \ 4: & U = [t^5, 1, 0] = ((0)), \ V = [t^6, 1, 0] = ((\infty)), \ W = [0, 0, 1] = \\ ((0, 0)), \ I = [1, 1, 1] = ((1, 1)). \\ Case \ 5: & U = [t^5, 1, 0] = ((0)), \ V = [t, 1, 0] = ((\infty)), \ W = [0, 0, 1] = \\ ((0, 0)), \ I = [1, 1, 1] = ((1, 1)). \\ Case \ 6: \ U = [t^5, 1, 0] = ((0)), \ V = [0, 1, t] = ((\infty)), \ W = [1, 0, 0] = \\ ((0, 0)), \ I = [1, 1, 1] = ((1, 1)). \end{array}$ 

First, we consider Case 6. We want to determine the ternary function  $F: Q \times Q \times Q \longrightarrow Q$  corresponding to the coordinatization of the case. Since the line through the point [1, 0, 0] and the point [1, 1, 1] is  $L_1A^7 = \{[x, 1, 1] \mid x \in Q\} \cup \{[1, 0, 0]\}$  and the line through the point [0, 1, t] and the point  $[t^5, 1, 0]$  is  $L_{t^5}A^9$ , the coordinates ((x, x)) for  $x \in Q$  can be determined for example as follows:

$$((0, 0)) = [1, 0, 0], ((t^3, t^3)) = [0, 1, 1]$$
  
and  $((x, x)) = [x, 1, 1]$  for  $x \in Q - \{0, t^3\}.$ 

For the coordinates ((x, x)), all coordinates ((x, y)), ((z)), [[x, y]], [[z]] and the ternary function F can be uniquely determined by a computer research as follows:

			Ļ						
m	$\longrightarrow$	F(1,	m, k)						
	0	1	t	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$
0	0	1	t	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$
1	1	$t^7$	0	t	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^3$	-1	$t^2$
t	t	$t^5$	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	0	1	$t^7$	$t^6$
$t^2$	$t^2$	0	$t^5$	1	$t^6$	$t^3$	$t^7$	t	-1
$t^3$	$t^3$	$t^6$	$t^7$	0	t	$t^5$	-1	$t^2$	1
-1	-1	$t^3$	$t^6$	$t^5$	$t^7$	$t^2$	t	1	0
$t^5$	$t^5$	t	-1	$t^7$	$t^2$	1	$t^6$	0	$t^3$
$t^6$	$t^6$	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	1	$t^7$	0	$t^5$	t
$t^7$	$t^7$	-1	1	$t^6$	0	t	$t^2$	$t^3$	$t^5$

N. Nakagawa and C. Suetake

			k						
		E(+	↓ 						
m	$\rightarrow$ 0	$r(\iota, 1)$	m, k)	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$
0	0	1	t	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$
1	t	0	$t^3$	$t^6$	-1	$t^2$	$t^7$	1	$t^5$
t	1	$t^2$	$t^6$	0	$t^5$	$t^7$	-1	$t^3$	t
$t^2$	$t^3$	t	$t^7$	$t^5$	1	$t^6$	$t^2$	-1	0
$t^3$	$t^2$	$t^3$	$t^5$	-1	0	1	t	$t^7$	$t^6$
-1	$t^7$	$t^5$	-1	t	$t^6$	0	$t^3$	$t^2$	1
$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$	$t^2$	1	t	$t^3$	0	$t^5$	-1
$t^6$	$t^5$	-1	1	$t^3$	$t^7$	t	$t^6$	0	$t^2$
$t^7$	-1	$t^6$	0	$t^7$	$t^2$	$t^5$	1	t	$t^3$

		k
		$\downarrow$
m	$\longrightarrow$	$F(t^2,m,k)$

m		$\Gamma(\iota)$	, <i>ш</i> , к	)					
	0	1	t	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$
0	0	1	t	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$
1	$t^2$	$t^6$	1	$t^3$	$t^7$	t	-1	$t^5$	0
t	$t^7$	0	-1	$t^5$	1	$t^2$	$t^6$	t	$t^3$
$t^2$	$t^5$	-1	$t^6$	$t^7$	$t^2$	1	$t^3$	0	t
$t^3$	$t^6$	$t^7$	$t^2$	t	-1	$t^3$	0	1	$t^5$
-1	$t^3$	t	$t^5$	1	0	$t^7$	$t^2$	-1	$t^6$
$t^5$	t	$t^5$	$t^7$	-1	$t^6$	0	1	$t^3$	$t^2$
$t^6$	-1	$t^3$	0	$t^6$	t	$t^5$	$t^7$	$t^2$	1
$t^7$	1	$t^2$	$t^3$	0	$t^5$	$t^6$	t	$t^7$	-1

	:
1	

m	$\longrightarrow$	$F(t^3)$	m, k	;)					
	0	1	t	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$
0	0	1	t	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$
1	$t^3$	$t^5$	-1	1	0	$t^7$	$t^2$	t	$t^6$
t	-1	$t^3$	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^2$	t	$t^7$	1	0
$t^2$	$t^7$	$t^6$	1	t	$t^5$	0	-1	$t^2$	$t^3$
$t^3$	t	$t^2$	0	$t^5$	$t^7$	$t^6$	1	$t^3$	-1
-1	$t^5$	-1	$t^3$	$t^7$	t	1	$t^6$	0	$t^2$
$t^5$	$t^2$	0	$t^6$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	t	$t^7$	1
$t^6$	1	t	$t^7$	0	$t^6$	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$
$t^7$	$t^6$	$t^7$	$t^2$	-1	1	$t^3$	0	$t^5$	t

				k						
				↓ ↓	1.)					
	m		r(-1)	1, m, t	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$
Í	0	0	1	t	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$
	1	-1	t	$t^5$	0	$t^2$	$t^3$	$t^6$	$t^7$	1
	t	$t^6$	$t^7$	$t^3$	-1	t	1	0	$t^2$	$t^5$
	$t^2$	t	$t^2$	-1	$t^3$	0	$t^7$	1	$t^5$	$t^6$
	$t^3$	$t^5$	-1	$t^6$	$t^7$	1	t	$t^3$	0	$t^2$
	-1	$t^2$	0	1	$t^6$	-1	$t^5$	$t^7$	t	$t^3$
	$t^5$	1	$t^3$	0	$t^5$	$t^7$	$t^6$	$t^2$	-1	t
	$t^6$	$t^7$	$t^6$	$t^2$	1	$t^5$	0	t	$t^3$	-1
	$t^7$	$t^3$	$t^5$	$t^7$	t	$t^6$	$t^2$	-1	1	0

		k	
	_	$\downarrow$	

m	$\longrightarrow$	$F(t^5,$	m, k)	

m

0

1

t

 $t^2$ 

 $t^3$ 

-1

 $t^5$ 

 $t^6$ 

 $t^7$ 

 $\rightarrow$ 

0

0

 $t^6$ 

 $t^5$ 

-1

1

t

 $t^7$ 

 $t^3$ 

 $t^2$ 

	0	1	t	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$				
0	0	1	t	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$				
1	$t^5$	-1	$t^2$	$t^7$	$t^6$	1	t	0	$t^3$				
t	$t^3$	t	0	1	$t^7$	$t^6$	$t^2$	$t^5$	-1				
$t^2$	$t^6$	$t^7$	$t^3$	-1	t	$t^5$	0	1	$t^2$				
$t^3$	$t^7$	0	1	$t^3$	$t^5$	$t^2$	$t^6$	-1	t				
-1	1	$t^6$	$t^7$	0	$t^2$	t	-1	$t^3$	$t^5$				
$t^5$	-1	$t^2$	$t^5$	$t^6$	1	$t^7$	$t^3$	t	0				
$t^6$	$t^2$	$t^5$	-1	t	0	$t^3$	1	$t^7$	$t^6$				
$t^7$	t	$t^3$	$t^6$	$t^5$	-1	0	$t^7$	$t^2$	1				

 $t^2$ 

 $t^2$ 

-1

 $t^7$ 

0

 $t^6$ 

 $t^3$ 

t

 $t^5$ 

1

 $t^3$ 

 $t^3$ 

1

 $t^6$ 

 $t^7$ 

 $t^2$ 

 $t^5$ 

0

-1

t

 $t^5$ 

 $t^5$ 

0

t

 $t^6$ 

 $t^7$ 

1

-1

 $t^2$ 

 $t^3$ 

-1

 $^{-1}$ 

 $t^5$ 

 $t^3$ 

t

0

 $t^6$ 

 $t^2$ 

1

 $t^7$ 

 $t^6$ 

 $t^6$ 

 $t^2$ 

0

 $t^3$ 

 $t^5$ 

 $t^7$ 

1

t

 $^{-1}$ 

 $t^7$ 

 $t^7$ 

t

 $t^2$ 

1

 $t^3$ 

-1

 $t^5$ 

0

 $t^6$ 

k $\downarrow$  $F(t^6, m, k)$ 

t

t

 $t^7$ 

1

 $t^2$ 

-1

0

 $t^3$ 

 $t^6$ 

 $t^5$ 

1

1

 $t^3$ 

-1

 $t^5$ 

t

 $t^2$ 

 $t^6$ 

 $t^7$ 

0

			k										
			$\downarrow$										
m	$\longrightarrow$	$\longrightarrow F(t^7, m, k)$											
	0	1	t	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$				
0	0	1	t	$t^2$	$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^6$	$t^7$				
1	$t^7$	$t^2$	$t^6$	$t^5$	t	0	1	$t^3$	-1				
t	$t^2$	$t^6$	$t^7$	t	0	$t^5$	$t^3$	-1	1				
$t^2$	1	$t^3$	0	$t^6$	-1	$t^2$	t	$t^7$	$t^5$				
$t^3$	-1	$t^5$	$t^3$	1	$t^6$	$t^7$	$t^2$	t	0				
-1	$t^6$	$t^7$	$t^2$	-1	1	$t^3$	0	$t^5$	t				
$t^5$	$t^3$	-1	1	0	$t^5$	t	$t^7$	$t^2$	$t^6$				
$t^6$	t	0	$t^5$	$t^7$	$t^2$	$t^6$	-1	1	$t^3$				
$t^7$	$t^5$	t	-1	$t^3$	$t^7$	1	$t^6$	0	$t^2$				

Then, S is described by (\*) of Section 2. The elements  $a_1, \ldots, a_n, b_1, \ldots, b_n$  and the mapping f from Q to Q must satisfy the conditions (1), ..., (5) of Theorem 2.1. Let l(n) be the number of distinct elements in  $\{a_1, \ldots, a_n\}$  as in Lemma 2.2 and Lemma 2.3. Let  $Q = \{a_1, \ldots, a_n, a_{n+1}, \ldots, a_{9+n-l(n)}\} = \{b_1, \ldots, b_n, b_{n+1}, \ldots, b_9\}.$ 

Suppose that |S| = 20. Then, n = 3 and l(3) = 3 by Lemma 2.2. Therefore, by (2), ..., (5) of Theorem 2.1,  $Q = \{a_1, \ldots, a_9\} = \{b_1, \ldots, b_9\}$ , and we may assume that  $f(a_1) = b_4$ ,  $f(a_2) = b_5$ ,  $f(a_3) = b_6$ ,  $f(a_4) = f(a_5) = b_7$ ,  $f(a_6) = f(a_7) = b_8$ ,  $f(a_8) = f(a_9) = b_9$ . But there is no  $(a_1, \ldots, a_9, b_1, \ldots, b_9)$  satisfying the condition (1) of Theorem 2.1 using a computer.

Suppose that |S| = 21. Then, n = 4 and l(4) = 1, 2, 3 or 4. Assume that l(4) = 3. Then,  $Q = \{a_1 = a_2, a_3, a_4, \ldots, a_{10}\}$ , and we may assume that  $f(a_1) = b_5$ ,  $f(a_3) = b_6$ ,  $f(a_4) = b_7$ . There are the following two cases. The first case is  $f(a_5) = f(a_6) = f(a_7) = f(a_8) = b_8$ ,  $f(a_9) = f(a_{10}) = b_9$ . Then, we get (2) or (4) in Appendix as X(S) and S, where each S is an example. The second case is  $f(a_5) = f(a_6) = f(a_7) = b_8$ ,  $f(a_8) = f(a_9) = f(a_{10}) = b_9$ . Then, we get (1) in Appendix as X(S) and S, or (2), (4) in Appendix as X(S). By a similar argument, when l(4) = 4, we get (5) in Appendix. For the other cases, we can not get new X(S)'s.

Suppose that |S| = 22. Then, n = 5 and l(5) = 1, 2 or 3 by Lemma 2.3. When l(5) = 1, (7), (8), (10) or (12) in Appendix holds. When l(5) = 2, (9), (11) or (13) in Appendix holds except X(S) obtained already. When l(5) = 3, new X(S)'s do not hold.

Suppose that |S| = 23. Then, n = 6 and l(6) = 1 or 2 by Lemma 2.3. When l(6) = 1, (15), (16) or (17) in Appendix holds. When l(6) = 2, new

X(S)'s do not hold.

Case 1 yields (8), (11), (15), (16) or (17) in Appendix as X(S).

Case 2 yields (2), (3), (6), (8), (10), (11), (12), (13), (15), (16) or (17) in Appendix as X(S), where for example S of (3) or (6) in Appendix holds for X(S) of (3) or (6) in Appendix, respectively.

Case 3 yields (7), (8), (10), (11), (12), (13), (15), (16) or (17) in Appendix as X(S).

Case 4 yields (2), (8), (11), (15), (16) or (17) in Appendix as X(S).

Case 5 yields (8), (10), (11), (13), (14), (15), (16) or (17) in Appendix as S(X), where for example S in (14) in Appendix holds for X(S) of (14) in Appendix. Thus we have the following theorem.

**Theorem 3.2** Let S be a blocking semioval in the Hughes plane of order 9 with  $x_8 \neq 0$  and  $|S| \neq 24$ . The following hold:

- (1) |S| = 21, 22 or 23.
- (2) If |S| = 21, then
  - $$\begin{split} X(S) = (21, \ 43, \ 16, \ 6, \ 1, \ 3, \ 0, \ 1), & (21, \ 44, \ 14, \ 6, \ 3, \ 2, \ 0, \ 1), \\ (21, \ 44, \ 16, \ 0, \ 9, \ 0, \ 0, \ 1), & (21, \ 45, \ 11, \ 9, \ 2, \ 2, \ 0, \ 1), \\ (21, \ 45, \ 12, \ 6, \ 5, \ 1, \ 0, \ 1) & or & (21, \ 46, \ 8, \ 12, \ 1, \ 2, \ 0, \ 1). \end{split}$$

(3) If 
$$|S| = 22$$
, then

$$\begin{split} X(S) = (22,\ 33,\ 23,\ 6,\ 5,\ 1,\ 0,\ 1), & (22,\ 34,\ 20,\ 9,\ 4,\ 1,\ 0,\ 1), \\ (22,\ 34,\ 21,\ 6,\ 7,\ 0,\ 0,\ 1), & (22,\ 35,\ 17,\ 12,\ 3,\ 1,\ 0,\ 1), \\ (22,\ 35,\ 18,\ 9,\ 6,\ 0,\ 0,\ 1), & (22,\ 36,\ 14,\ 15,\ 2,\ 1,\ 0,\ 1), \\ (22,\ 36,\ 15,\ 12,\ 5,\ 0,\ 0,\ 1) & or & (22,\ 37,\ 12,\ 15,\ 4,\ 0,\ 0,\ 1). \end{split}$$

(4) If |S| = 23, then

X(S) = (23, 21, 32, 12, 0, 1, 1, 1), (23, 23, 27, 15, 1, 0, 1, 1)or (23, 24, 24, 18, 0, 0, 1, 1).

## 4. The nearfield plane

In this section, we completely determine blocking semiovals with  $x_8 \neq 0$ in the nearfield plane of order 9. Let Q = GF(9) with the new multiplication  $\circ$  and the field addition + be the nearfield of order 9 defined in Section 3. Then, the nearfield plane  $\Pi = (\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$  of order 9 is defined as follows:

$$\mathcal{P} = \{ (x, y) \mid x, y \in Q \} \cup \{ (a) \mid a \in Q \cup \{ \infty \} \}, \\ \mathcal{L} = \{ [m, k] \mid m \in Q \cup \{ \infty \}, \ k \in Q \} \cup \{ [\infty] \},$$

where  $[m, k] = \{(x, x \circ m + k) \mid x \in Q\} \cup \{(m)\}$  for  $m \in Q$ .

**Theorem 4.1** ([8], Section 8) Let H be the full collineation group of  $\Pi$ . (1) H acts transitively on  $[\infty]$ .

(2)  $H_{(\infty)} = H_{(0)}$  and  $H_{(\infty)}$  acts tansitively on  $[\infty] - \{(0), (\infty)\}$ .

(3) *H* acts 2-transitively on  $\{(x, y) \mid x, y \in Q\}$ .

(4) The translation group of  $\Pi$  acts transitively on  $\{(x, y) \mid x, y \in Q\}$ .

Let S be a blocking semioval with  $x_8 \neq 0$ . Let U, V, W, I be four points of  $\Pi$ , no three of which are collinear, and let  $S \supseteq UV - \{U, V\}$ . From Theorem 4.1, we may consider the following four coordinatizations by ((, )), (()) for the points and [[, ]], [[]] for the lines in  $\Pi$  (see Section 2). Namely we will take  $[\infty]$  as the 8-secant in the last two cases of the following.

Case 1:  $U = (0, 0) = ((0)), V = (0, 1) = ((\infty)), W = (1, 0) = ((0, 0)),$ I = (1, 1) = ((1, 1)).

Case 2:  $U = (0, 0) = ((0)), V = (\infty) = ((\infty)), W = (0) = ((0, 0)), I = (1, 1) = ((1, 1)).$ 

Case 3: 
$$U = (1) = ((0)), V = (\infty) = ((\infty)), W = (0, 0) = ((0, 0)), I = (1, 0) = ((1, 1)).$$

Case 4:  $U = (0) = ((0)), V = (\infty) = ((\infty)), W = (0, 0) = ((0, 0)),$ I = (1, 1) = ((1, 1)).

Then, S is described by (\*) of Section 2. The elements  $a_1, \ldots, a_n, b_1, \ldots, b_n$  and the mapping f must satisfy the conditions  $(1), \ldots, (5)$  in Theorem 2.1. By a similar argument as in Section 3, we have the following.

Case 1 yields (2), (8), (12), (10), (7), (13), (11), (15), (16) or (17) in Appendix as X(S) and S is for example

$$\begin{split} \{(t^7,\,1),\,(t,\,1),\,(1,\,t),\,(t^6,\,t^6),\,(t^2,\,1),\,(t^6,\,t^2),\\ (-1,\,t^3),\,(-1,\,0),\,(t^6,\,0),\,(t^2),\,(1,\,0),\,(t^3,\,t^5),\\ (t^5,\,t^7),\,(\infty)\} \cup \{(0,\,x)\mid x\in Q-\{0,\,1\}\}, \end{split}$$

$$\{(1, 1), (t^{5}, 1), (t^{7}, 1), (-1, 1), (t, 1), (t^{3}, 1), \\ (-1, t^{6}), (1, t^{2}), (t^{3}, t^{5}), (t^{7}, t), (t^{6}), (t^{6}, -1), \\ (t^{3}, 0), (1, 0), (\infty)\} \cup \{(0, x) \mid x \in Q - \{0, 1\}\}, \\ \{(t^{5}, t^{5}), (t^{3}, -1), (t^{6}, t^{2}), (t^{2}, t^{3}), (t, t^{7}), (t^{7}, 0), \\ (t^{3}, 1), (-1, t^{3}), (t^{7}, -1), (1, t^{7}), (t, -1), (t^{2}, t^{7}), \\ (t^{2}, -1), (t, t^{3}), (\infty)\} \cup \{(0, x) \mid x \in Q - \{0, 1\}\}, \\ \{(1, t), (-1, t^{6}), (t^{3}, -1), (t^{6}, t^{2}), (t^{2}, t^{3}), (t^{7}), \\ (t^{7}, t^{5}), (-1, t^{2}), (t^{5}, t^{3}), (1, t^{6}), (1, 1), (t^{3}, t^{3}), \\ (t^{6}, 0), (1, 0), (\infty)\} \cup \{(0, x) \mid x \in Q - \{0, 1\}\}, \\ \{(t^{5}, t^{5}), (t^{3}, -1), (t^{6}, t^{2}), (t^{2}, t^{3}), (t, t^{7}), (t^{7}, 0), \\ (t^{5}, 1), (t), (-1, t^{5}), (t^{3}, t^{5}), (t^{7}, t), (t^{5}, t^{7}), \\ (t^{5}, t^{6}), (t^{2}, t^{5}), (\infty)\} \cup \{(0, x) \mid x \in Q - \{0, 1\}\}, \\ \{(1, 1), (t^{6}, 1), (t^{7}, 1), (t^{3}, 1), (t^{6}, t^{2}), (0), \\ (t^{2}, t^{3}), (t^{7}, t^{5}), (-1, t^{2}), (t^{5}, t^{3}), (t^{3}, t), (t^{3}, t^{2}), \\ (t^{6}, t^{3}), (-1, t^{5}), (\infty)\} \cup \{(0, x) \mid x \in Q - \{0, 1\}\}, \\ \{(1, 1), (t^{5}, 1), (t^{6}, 1), (t^{7}, 1), (-1, 1), (t, t^{7}), \\ (0), (-1, t^{3}), (t^{6}, t), (t, t^{2}), (t^{5}, t^{6}), \\ (t^{7}, -1), (t^{2}), (1, 0), (\infty)\} \cup \{(0, x) \mid x \in Q - \{0, 1\}\}, \\ \{(1, 1), (t^{5}, 1), (t^{6}, 1), (t^{7}, 1), (-1, 1), (t, 1), \\ (t^{3}, 1), (t^{2}, t^{3}), (t^{5}, -1), (t^{5}), (t^{3}, t^{6}), (1, t^{5}), \\ (t^{3}, 0), (t^{2}), (1, 0), (\infty)\} \cup \{(0, x) \mid x \in Q - \{0, 1\}\}, \\ \{(1, 1), (t^{5}, 1), (t^{6}, 1), (t^{7}, 1), (-1, 1), (t^{2}, 1), \\ (t^{3}, 1), (t^{5}, 1), (t^{6}, 1), (t^{7}, 1), (-1, 1), (t, 1), \\ (t^{3}, 1), (t^{5}, 1), (t^{6}, 1), (t^{7}, 1), (-1, 1), (t, 1), \\ (t^{3}, 1), (t, t^{7}, t^{5}), (-1, t^{2}), (t^{5}, t^{3}), (t^{6}, 0), \\ (t^{3}, 0), (t^{2}), (1, 0), (\infty)\} \cup \{(0, x) \mid x \in Q - \{0, 1\}\}, \\$$

Case 2 yields (6), (3), (2), (8), (10), (7), (11), (9), (15), (16) or (17) in Appendix as X(S), where S is for example

$$\begin{split} \{(1,\,1),\,(t,\,t^7),\,(t^6,\,t),\,(t^5),\,(1,\,-1),\,(t,\,t^3), \\ (t^6,\,t^5),\,(t),\,(t^2,\,0),\,(t^3,\,0),\,(-1,\,0),\,(t^5,\,0), \\ (t^7,\,0)\} \cup \{(0,\,x) | x \in Q^*\}, \\ \{(t^5),\,(t^6),\,(t^7),\,(-1),\,(0),\,(1,\,1),\,(-1,\,-1), \\ (t,\,t^3),\,(t^5,\,t^7),\,(t^2,\,t),\,(t^6,\,t^5),\,(t^3,\,t^2), \\ (t^7,\,t^6)\} \cup \{(0,\,x) | x \in Q^*\} \quad \text{or} \\ \{(1,\,1),\,(1,\,t^5),\,(1,\,t^6),\,(t,\,t^2),\,(t,\,t^6),\,(1,\,-1), \\ (t,\,0),\,(t^3,\,t^5),\,(-1,\,t^6),\,(t^7,\,t),\,(t^2),\,(t^2,\,t^7), \end{split}$$

 $(t^5, 1), (t^6, t^3) \} \cup \{(0, x) | x \in Q^* \}$ 

for 
$$X(S)$$
 of (6), (3) or (9) in Appendix, respectively.

Case 3 yields (8), (15) or (17) in Appendix as X(S).

Case 4 also yields (8), (15) or (17) in Appendix as X(S). Thus we have the following theorem.

**Theorem 4.2** Let S be a blocking semioval in the nearfield plane of order 9 with  $x_8 \neq 0$  and  $|S| \neq 24$ . The following hold: (1) |S| = 21, 22 or 23.

(2) If |S| = 21, then

X(S) = (21, 44, 16, 0, 9, 0, 0, 1) or (21, 46, 8, 12, 1, 2, 0, 1).

(3) If |S| = 22, then

$$\begin{split} X(S) = (22,\ 33,\ 23,\ 6,\ 5,\ 1,\ 0,\ 1), & (22,\ 34,\ 20,\ 9,\ 4,\ 1,\ 0,\ 1), \\ (22,\ 34,\ 21,\ 6,\ 7,\ 0,\ 0,\ 1), & (22,\ 35,\ 17,\ 12,\ 3,\ 1,\ 0,\ 1), \\ (22,\ 35,\ 18,\ 9,\ 6,\ 0,\ 0,\ 1), & (22,\ 36,\ 14,\ 15,\ 2,\ 1,\ 0,\ 1) \\ or & (22,\ 36,\ 15,\ 12,\ 5,\ 0,\ 0,\ 1). \end{split}$$

(4) If |S| = 23, then

$$\begin{split} X(S) = (23, \ 21, \ 32, \ 12, \ 0, \ 1, \ 1, \ 1), \ (23, \ 23, \ 27, \ 15, \ 1, \ 0, \ 1, \ 1) \\ or \quad (23, 24, \ 24, \ 18, \ 0, \ 0, \ 1, \ 1). \end{split}$$

#### 5. The dual nearfield plane

In this section, we completely determine blocking semiovals with  $x_8 \neq 0$  in the dual nearfield plane of order 9. Let Q = GF(9) with the new multiplication  $\circ$  and the field addition + be the nearfield plane of order 9 defined in Section 3. Let  $\Pi = (\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$  be the nearfield plane defined using Q in Section 4. Let  $t \in GF(9)$  such that  $t^2 = 1 + t$ . Then  $GF(9)^* = \langle t \rangle$ . Set  $G = (\operatorname{Aut} \Pi)_{(0,0)}$ , and let T be the translation group of  $\Pi$ . Then,  $T = \{t(a, b) | a, b \in Q\}$ , where  $t(a, b) \colon (x, y) \longmapsto (x + a, x + b)$ , Aut  $\Pi = GT$  and T is a normal subgroup of Aut  $\Pi$ .

## **Theorem 5.1** ([8], Section 8)

- (1) Aut  $\Pi$  has two orbits  $\{[\infty]\}, \mathcal{L} \{[\infty]\}$  on  $\mathcal{L}$ .
- (2)  $(\operatorname{Aut} \Pi)_{[\infty, 0]}$  is transitive on  $\{l \in \mathcal{L} \mid l \ni (\infty), l \neq [\infty, 0], [\infty]\}.$
- (3)  $(\operatorname{Aut} \Pi)_{[\infty,0]}$  has two orbits  $\Gamma_1 := \{[m, k] \mid m \in Q^*, k \in Q\}$  and  $\Gamma_2 := \{[0, k] \mid k \in Q\}$  on  $\{l \in \mathcal{L} \mid l \not\supseteq (\infty)\}.$

*Proof.* Since G is transitive on  $[\infty]$ , (1) holds.

Since  $G((0), [\infty, 0]) = \{\varphi \in G \mid \varphi \text{ is a perspectivity with the center } (0)$ and the axis  $[\infty, 0]\} = \{(x, y) \mapsto (x \circ a, y) \mid a \in Q^*\}, (2)$  holds.

 $(\operatorname{Aut} \Pi)_{[\infty, 0]}$  fixes  $(\infty)$  and (0). Since  $\Pi$  is a translation plane,  $\{[0, k] \mid k \in Q\}$  is an orbit of  $(\operatorname{Aut} \Pi)_{[\infty, 0]}$ . Since  $G((\infty), [0, 0]) = \{(x, y) \mapsto (x, y \circ a) \mid a \in Q^*\}$  and  $\Pi$  is a translation plane,  $\{[m, k] \mid m \in Q^*, k \in Q\}$  is an orbit of  $(\operatorname{Aut} \Pi)_{[\infty, 0]}$ . Thus, (3) holds.  $\Box$ 

Let S be a blocking semioval in the dual plane  $\Pi^d$  of the plane  $\Pi$  with  $x_8 \neq 0$  and  $|S| \neq 24$ . Let U, V, W, I be four points of  $\Pi^d$ , no three of which are collinear, and let  $S \supseteq UV - \{U, V\}$ . From Theorem 5.1, we may consider the following four coordinatizations by ((, )), (()) for the points and [[, ]], [[]] for the lines in  $\Pi^d$  (see Section 2), namely four cases of  $V = [\infty], V = [\infty, 1], V \in \Gamma_1$  or  $V \in \Gamma_2$ .

Case 1:  $U = [\infty, 0] = ((0)), V = [\infty] = ((\infty)), W = [0, 0] = ((0, 0)), I = [1, 1] = ((1, 1)).$ 

Case 2:  $U = [\infty, 0] = ((0)), V = [\infty, 1] = ((\infty)), W = [0, 0] = ((0, 0)), I = [1, 1] = ((1, 1)).$ 

Case 3:  $U = [\infty, 0] = ((0)), V = [0, 0] = ((\infty)), W = [\infty] = ((0, 0)), I = [1, 1] = ((1, 1)).$ 

Case 4:  $U = [\infty, 0] = ((0)), V = [1, 0] = ((\infty)), W = [\infty] = ((0, 0)),$ I = [-1, 1] = ((1, 1)).

Then, S is described by (\*) of Section 2. The elements  $a_1, \ldots, a_n, b_1, \ldots, b_n$  and the mapping f must satisfy the conditions  $(1), \ldots, (5)$  in Theorem 2.1. By a similar argument as in Section 3, we have the following.

Case 1 yields (3), (8), (15) or (17) in Appendix as X(S) and S is for example

$$\begin{split} \{ [1, 1], [t, t^2], [t^2, t^3], [t^3, t], [1, -1], [t, t^6], \\ [t^2, t^7], [t^3, t^5], [-1, 0], [t^5, 0], [t^6, 0], [t^7, 0], \\ & [0, 0] \} \cup \{ [\infty, x] \mid x \in Q^* \}, \end{split}$$

$$\{ [0, 1], [0, t], [0, t^2], [0, -1], [0, t^3], [0, 0], \\ [1, t^3], [t, t^3], [t^2, t^3], [-1, t^3], [t^3, t^7], [t^5, t^7], \\ [t^6, t^5], [t^7, t^5] \} \cup \{ [\infty, x] \mid x \in Q^* \},$$

$$\{ [0, 1], [0, t], [0, t^2], [0, t^3], [0, -1], [0, t^5], \\ [0, 0], [1, t^6], [t, t^6], [t^2, t^6], [-1, t^6], [t^5, t^6], \\ [t^6, t^6], [t^3, t^7], [t^7, t^7] \} \cup \{ [\infty, x] \mid x \in Q^* \}$$
 or

$$\{ [0, 1], [0, t], [0, t^2], [0, t^3], [0, -1], [0, t^5], \\ [0, 0], [1, t^6], [t, t^6], [-1, t^6], [t^5, t^6], [t^2, t^7], \\ [t^3, t^7], [t^6, t^7], [t^7, t^7] \} \cup \{ [\infty, x] \mid x \in Q^* \},$$
 respectively

Case 2 yields (8), (15), (16) or (17) in Appendix as X(S), where S is for example

$$\{ [-1, 1], [t^5, t], [t^7, t^3], [1, -1], [t^2, t^6], [t^3, t^7], \\ [0, 0], [t^6, t^2], [t^7, t^2], [t^2, t^2], [t^5, t^2], [-1, t^2], \\ [t^6, t^5], [t^3, t^5], [1, t^5], [\infty] \} \cup \{ [\infty, x] \mid x \in Q - \{0, 1\} \}$$

for X(S) of (16) in Appendix.

Case 3 yields (6), (8), (10), (11), (15), (16) or (17) in Appendix as X(S), where S is for example

$$\{[0, t], [0, t^2], [0, t^3], [0, -1], [0, t^6], [1, 1], [-1, 1], [t^6, t^7], [t^2, t^7], [t^7, t^5], [t^3, t^5], [\infty, t^7], \}$$

$$\{ [1, 1], [t, t], [t^{2}, t^{2}], [t^{3}, t^{3}], [t^{5}, t^{5}], [\infty, -1], \\ [t^{6}, t^{7}], [t, t^{7}], [t^{2}, t^{7}], [t^{5}, t^{6}], [1, t^{6}], [0, t^{6}], \\ [1, -1], [t, -1] \} \cup \{ [x, 0] \mid x \in Q^{*} \}$$
 or 
$$\{ [1, 1], [t, t], [t^{6}, t^{6}], [t^{2}, t^{3}], [-1, t^{5}], [\infty, -1] \}$$

$$\begin{aligned} &\{[1, 1], [t, t], [t^{0}, t^{0}], [t^{2}, t^{3}], [-1, t^{3}], [\infty, -1], \\ &[t^{6}, t^{7}], [1, t^{2}], [t, t^{2}], [t^{6}, t^{2}], [t^{3}, t^{2}], [t^{6}, -1], \\ &[t, -1], [0, -1]\} \cup \{[x, 0] \mid x \in Q^{*}\} \end{aligned}$$

for X(S) of (6), (10) or (11) in Appendix, respectively.

Case 4 yields (8), (7), (13), (11), (15), (16) or (17) in Appendix as X(S), where S is for example

$$\begin{split} \{ [-1,\,1],\,[t^7,\,t^2],\,[t^6,\,t^3],\,[0,\,-1],\,[t^3,\,t^5],\,[\infty,\,-1], \\ [t^3,\,t^7],\,[t^7,\,t^7],\,[0,\,t^7],\,[t^2,\,t^6],\,[t^3,\,t^6],\,[1,\,t^6], \\ [t^3,\,t],\,[t^6,\,t] \} \cup \{ [x,\,0] \mid x \in Q - \{1\} \} \quad \text{or} \\ \{ [t^2,\,t],\,[t^7,\,t^2],\,[0,\,-1],\,[t^3,\,t^5],\,[t^7,\,1],\,[t^5,\,t^6], \end{split}$$

$$\{[t, t], [t, t], [0, -1], [t, t], [t, 1], [t, t], \\ [t^3, t^7], [\infty, t^6], [\infty, t^7], [\infty, t], [\infty, t^3], [\infty], \\ [t, t^3], [t^7, t^3]\} \cup \{[x, 0] \mid x \in Q - \{1\}\}$$

for X(S) of (7) or (13) in Appendix, respectively. Thus we have the following theorem.

**Theorem 5.2** Let S be a blocking semioval in the dual nearfield plane of order 9 with  $x_8 \neq 8$  and  $|S| \neq 24$ . The following hold:

- (1) |S| = 21, 22 or 23.
- (2) If |S| = 21, then

 $X(S)=(21,\,44,\,16,\,0,\,9,\,0,\,0,\,1) \quad or \quad (21,\,46,\,8,\,12,\,1,\,2,\,0,\,1).$ 

(3) If |S| = 22, then

$$\begin{split} X(S) = (22,\ 33,\ 23,\ 6,\ 5,\ 1,\ 0,\ 1), \ (22,\ 34,\ 20,\ 9,\ 4,\ 1,\ 0,\ 1), \\ (22,\ 35,\ 17,\ 12,\ 3,\ 1,\ 0,\ 1), \ (22,\ 35,\ 18,\ 9,\ 6,\ 0,\ 0,\ 1) \\ or \quad (22,\ 36,\ 15,\ 12,\ 5,\ 0,\ 0,\ 1). \end{split}$$

 $[\infty, t^3] \} \cup \{ [x, 0] \mid x \in Q^* \},\$ 

(4) If |S| = 23, then

$$\begin{split} X(S) = (23, \ 21, \ 32, \ 12, \ 0, \ 1, \ 1, \ 1), \ (23, \ 23, \ 27, \ 15, \ 1, \ 0, \ 1, \ 1) \\ or \quad (23, \ 24, \ 24, \ 18, \ 0, \ 0, \ 1, \ 1). \end{split}$$

## Appendix

$$\begin{array}{ll} (1) \quad X(S) = (21,\,43,\,16,\,6,\,1,\,3,\,0,\,1) \\ S = \{[t^2,\,1,\,1],\,\,[t^5,\,1,\,t^3],\,\,[1,\,0,\,t^6],\,\,[t^2,\,1,\,t^2],\,\,[t^3,\,1,\,-1],\\ [t^6,\,1,\,t^6],\,\,[-1,\,1,\,0],\,\,[1,\,0,\,t^3],\,\,[0,\,1,\,t^6],\,\,[-1,\,1,\,1],\,\,[t,\,1,\,1],\\ [1,\,1,\,t^7],\,\,[t^7,\,1,\,t],\,\,[t^3,\,1,\,1],\,\,[t^7,\,1,\,t^6],\,\,[t^2,\,1,\,t^3],\,\,[t^6,\,1,\,-1],\\ [1,\,0,\,1],\,\,[1,\,1,\,t^2],\,\,[-1,\,1,\,t^7],\,\,[t,\,1,\,t^5]\} \end{array}$$

(2) 
$$X(S) = (21, 44, 14, 6, 3, 2, 0, 1)$$

$$\begin{split} S &= \{ [t^6,\,1,\,t^2],\;[t^3,\,1,\,-1],\;[t^6,\,1,\,t^6],\;[1,\,1,\,t^5],\;[1,\,1,\,0],\\ &[t^3,\,1,\,t^2],\;[t^2,\,1,\,t^2],\;[0,\,1,\,t^7],\;[t,\,1,\,t^2],\;[1,\,1,\,t^7],\;[t^3,\,1,\,t],\\ &[t^5,\,1,\,t^2],\;[t^5,\,1,\,t^7],\;[t^3,\,1,\,1],\;[t^7,\,1,\,t^6],\;[t^2,\,1,\,t^3],\\ &[t^6,\,1,\,-1],\;[1,\,0,\,1],\;[1,\,1,\,t^2],\;[-1,\,1,\,t^7],\;[t,\,1,\,t^5] \} \end{split}$$

(3) 
$$X(S) = (21, 44, 16, 0, 9, 0, 0, 1)$$

$$\begin{split} S &= \{ [t,\,1,\,t^2],\;[t^2,\,1,\,t^6],\;[-1,\,1,\,t^5],\;[1,\,0,\,t^6],\;[t^7,\,1,\,-1],\\ &[t^6,\,1,\,1],\;[t^6,\,1,\,t^2],\;[1,\,1,\,-1],[1,\,1,\,0],\;[0,\,1,\,t^2],\;[0,\,1,\,t],\\ &[t^3,\,1,\,t^7],\;[t^3,\,1,\,t^2],\;[t^5,\,1,\,1],\;[t^5,\,1,\,t],\;[t^5,\,1,\,t^2],\;[t^5,\,1,\,t^3],\\ &[t^5,\,1,\,-1],\;[t^5,\,1,\,t^5],\;[t^5,\,1,\,t^6],\;[t^5,\,1,\,t^7] \} \end{split}$$

(4) 
$$X(S) = (21, 45, 11, 9, 2, 2, 0, 1)$$

$$\begin{split} S = & \{ [0,\,1,\,t^7], \ [0,\,1,\,t^3], \ [t^7,\,1,\,t^3], \ [t,\,1,\,1], \ [0,\,1,\,0], \\ & [t^5,\,1,\,t^2], \ [t^6,\,1,\,t^5], \ [t^3,\,1,\,-1], \ [1,\,1,\,t^6], \ [-1,\,1,\,t^3], \\ & [1,\,0,\,-1], \ [t^3,\,1,\,t^7], \ [t^2,\,1,\,t], \ [t^3,\,1,\,1], \ [t^7,\,1,\,t^6], \ [t^2,\,1,\,t^3], \\ & [t^6,\,1,\,-1], \ [1,\,0,\,1], \ [1,\,1,\,t^2], \ [-1,\,1,\,t^7], \ [t,\,1,\,t^5] \} \end{split}$$

(5) 
$$X(S) = (21, 45, 12, 6, 5, 1, 0, 1)$$

$$\begin{split} S = \{ [1, \ 1, \ 1], \ [t, \ 1, \ 1], \ [t^5, \ 1, \ t^3], \ [0, \ 1, \ 1], \ [t^7, \ 1, \ t^3], \\ [t^6, \ 1, \ t^5], \ [t^3, \ 1, \ -1], \ [0, \ 1, \ t^3], \ [t^2, \ 1, \ 0], \ [t^7, \ 1, \ 0], \end{split}$$

 $[-1, 1, 0], [t, 1, 0], [1, 0, 0], [t^3, 1, 1], [t^7, 1, t^6], [t^2, 1, t^3],$  $[t^6, 1, -1], [1, 0, 1], [1, 1, t^2], [-1, 1, t^7], [t, 1, t^5]$ (6) X(S) = (21, 46, 8, 12, 1, 2, 0, 1) $S = \{ [1, 1, 0], [t^3, 1, 0], [-1, 1, 0], [1, 0, 0], [t^6, 1, 0], \}$  $[t, 1, 0], [t, 1, t^6], [t^7, 1, t^2], [t^7, 1, t^6], [0, 1, -1], [0, 1, 1],$  $[t^2, 1, 1], [t^2, 1, -1], [t^5, 1, 1], [t^5, 1, t], [t^5, 1, t^2], [t^5, 1, t^3],$  $[t^5, 1, -1], [t^5, 1, t^5], [t^5, 1, t^6], [t^5, 1, t^7]\}$ (7) X(S) = (22, 33, 23, 6, 5, 1, 0, 1) $S = \{[0, 1, t^7], [0, 1, t^2], [0, 1, t^6], [0, 0, 1], [0, 1, t^5], [0, 1, t^5], [0, 1, t^6], [0, 1, t^6],$  $[0, 1, t^3], [t^6, 1, 0], [t^7, 1, 0], [1, 0, t], [1, 1, t^7], [t^7, 1, t],$  $[1, 1, t^3], [t^7, 1, t^5], [1, 1, 0], [t^3, 1, 1], [t^7, 1, t^6], [t^2, 1, t^3],$  $[t^6, 1, -1], [1, 0, 1], [1, 1, t^2], [-1, 1, t^7], [t, 1, t^5]$ (8) X(S) = (22, 34, 20, 9, 4, 1, 0, 1) $S = \{[-1, 1, t^6], [t, 1, -1], [t^5, 1, t^2], [t^2, 1, t^7], [t^3, 1, t^5], [t^6, 1, t^6], [t^$  $[t^6, 1, 0], [-1, 1, -1], [t^2, 1, 1], [0, 1, t^2], [t^3, 1, t^6], [t, 1, t^2],$  $[t^7, 1, -1], [t^3, 1, t^2], [1, 1, t], [t^3, 1, 1], [t^7, 1, t^6], [t^2, 1, t^3],$  $[t^6, 1, -1], [1, 0, 1], [1, 1, t^2], [-1, 1, t^7], [t, 1, t^5]$ (9) X(S) = (22, 34, 21, 6, 7, 0, 0, 1) $[1, 1, 0], [t, 1, t^3], [t^7, 1, t^2], [0, 1, t^5], [-1, 1, t^3], [t, 1, t],$  $[1, 1, 1], [t, 1, t^2], [t^6, 1, t^3], [t^3, 1, 1], [t^7, 1, t^6], [t^2, 1, t^3],$  $[t^6, 1, -1], [1, 0, 1], [1, 1, t^2], [-1, 1, t^7], [t, 1, t^5]$  $(10) \quad X(S) = (22, 35, 17, 12, 3, 1, 0, 1)$  $[t^6, 1, 0], [-1, 1, -1], [t^2, 1, 1], [0, 1, t^2], [t^3, 1, t^6],$  $[t^7, 1, t^5], [t^3, 1, t^7], [1, 0, t^6], [t^3, 1, t], [t^3, 1, 1], [t^7, 1, t^6],$  $[t^2, 1, t^3], [t^6, 1, -1], [1, 0, 1], [1, 1, t^2], [-1, 1, t^7], [t, 1, t^5]\}$ 

(14) 
$$X(S) = (22, 37, 12, 15, 4, 0, 0, 1)$$

$$\begin{split} S &= \{ [1,\,1,\,1], \ [t^6,\,1,\,-1], \ [-1,\,1,\,t], \ [t^7,\,1,\,t^5], \ [-1,\,1,\,-1], \\ & [t^7,\,1,\,t^2], \ [t^5,\,1,\,t^6], \ [t^7,\,1,\,t^7], \ [t^3,\,1,\,t^2], \ [-1,\,1,\,1], \\ & [t^2,\,1,\,-1], \ [t^3,\,1,\,t^3], \ [0,\,1,\,-1], \ [t,\,1,\,1], \ [0,\,1,\,0], \ [1,\,1,\,0], \\ & [t^2,\,1,\,0], \ [t^3,\,1,\,0], \ [-1,\,1,\,0], \ [t^6,\,1,\,0], \ [t^7,\,1,\,0], \ [1,\,0,\,0] \} \end{split}$$

(15) 
$$X(S) = (23, 21, 32, 12, 0, 1, 1, 1)$$

$$\begin{split} S &= \{ [1,\,1,\,1],\,\,[t^7,\,1,\,t^3],\,\,[t,\,1,\,-1],\,\,[t^5,\,1,\,t^2],\,\,[t^2,\,1,\,t^7],\\ &[t^3,\,1,\,t^5],\,\,[t^6,\,1,\,0],\,\,[t,\,1,\,1],\,\,[t^6,\,1,\,t^2],\,\,[0,\,1,\,-1],\,\,[t^3,\,1,\,t^3],\\ &[t^2,\,1,\,t^5],\,\,[1,\,0,\,t],\,\,[t^2,\,1,\,-1],\,\,[1,\,1,\,t],\,\,[t^3,\,1,\,1],\,\,[t^7,\,1,\,t^6],\\ &[t^2,\,1,\,t^3],\,\,[t^6,\,1,\,-1],\,\,[1,\,0,\,1],\,\,[1,\,1,\,t^2],\,\,[-1,\,1,\,t^7],\,\,[t,\,1,\,t^5] \} \end{split}$$

(16) 
$$X(S) = (23, 23, 27, 15, 1, 0, 1, 1)$$
  
 $S = \{[1, 1, 1], [t, 1, -1], [1, 0, t^3], [t^5, 1, t^2], [t^2, 1, t^7], \}$ 

$$[t^3, 1, t^5], [t^6, 1, 0], [t, 1, 1], [t^6, 1, t^2], [0, 1, -1], [t^3, 1, t^3],$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} t^2, 1, t^5 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} 1, 1, t^5 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^3, 1, t^6 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^6, 1, t \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^3, 1, 1 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^7, 1, t^6 \end{bmatrix}, \\ \begin{bmatrix} t^2, 1, t^3 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^6, 1, -1 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} 1, 0, 1 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} 1, 1, t^2 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} -1, 1, t^7 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t, 1, t^5 \end{bmatrix} \}$$

$$(17) \quad X(S) = (23, 24, 24, 18, 0, 0, 1, 1)$$

$$S = \{ \begin{bmatrix} -1, 1, t^6 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t, 1, -1 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} 1, 0, t^3 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^5, 1, t^2 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^2, 1, t^7 \end{bmatrix}, \\ \begin{bmatrix} t^3, 1, t^5 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^6, 1, 0 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^2, 1, t^6 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} -1, 1, t^5 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} 0, 1, t^7 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t, 1, t^2 \end{bmatrix}, \\ \begin{bmatrix} t, 1, t^7 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} 1, 1, t^5 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^3, 1, t^6 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^6, 1, t \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^3, 1, 1 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^7, 1, t^6 \end{bmatrix}, \\ \begin{bmatrix} t^2, 1, t^3 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t^6, 1, -1 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} 1, 0, 1 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} 1, 1, t^2 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} -1, 1, t^7 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} t, 1, t^5 \end{bmatrix} \}$$

## References

- Buekenhout F., Characterizations of semiquadrics. A survey. Teorie Combinatorie (Rome, 1973), vol. I, Atti Accad. Naz. Lincei 17 (1976), 393–421.
- [2] Dover J.M., Semiovals with large collinear subsets. J. Geom. 69 (2000), 58–67.
- [3] Dover J.M., A lower bound on blocking semiovals. Europ. J. Combinatorics 21 (2000), 571–577.
- [4] Hughes D.R. and Piper F.C., Projective Planes. Springer Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, 1973.
- [5] Kallaher M.J., Affine Planes with Transitive Collineation Groups. North-Holland, New York, Amsterdam, Oxford, 1982.
- [6] Lam C.W.H., Kolesova G. and Thiel L., A computer search for finite projective planes of order 9. Discrete Math. 92 (1991), 187–195.
- [7] Lüneburg H., Translation Planes. Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, 1980.
- [8] Suetake C., Two families of blocking semiovals. Europ. J. Combinatorics 21 (2000), 973–980.
- [9] Thas J.A., On semiovals and semiovoids. Geom. Ded. 3 (1974), 229–231.
- [10] Zappa G., Sui gruppi di collineazioni dei piani di Hughes. Boll. Un. Mat. Ital. 12 (1957), 507–516.

N. Nakagawa and C. Suetake

N. Nakagawa Department of Mathematics Faculty of Science and Technology Kinki University Higashi-Osaka, Osaka 577-8502, Japan E-mail: nakagawa@math.kindai.ac.jp

C. Suetake Department of Mathematics Faculty of Engineering Oita University 700, Dan-noharu, Oita 870-1192, Japan E-mail: suetake@csis.oita-u.ac.jp