In Vienna we celebrated our 10th EFORT Congress – a landmark event in the success story that is EFORT. And reason enough to mark the occasion with our member societies! We decided to stage an exhibition with the theme of uniting the countries of Europe and celebrating their diverse cultures. It was to be a meeting point for North and South, East and West, a chance to teach and learn about cultural individuality, and a platform for communication free of any national borders. What’s more, this all reflected the idea behind EFORT: a European federation that provides its many different member societies with a framework for shared interests and joint endeavours. The individual panels created by our national societies illustrated our beliefs to great effect. Meanwhils, the tree in the middle of the lounge – emblazoned within the orthopaedic sector – represented the growth and flourishing of EFORT as a federation. The 10 panels, with their interactive screens, offered a tour through our past nine congress venues with some fascinating scientific facts and figures. They gave participants a clear impression of how these events have evolved in recent years. As the host city for our 10th Congress, Vienna has secured itself a place in EFORT history!

The Österreichische Gesellschaft für Orthopädie und Unfallchirurgie (OGU) is sure to remember the tenth EFORT Congress in Vienna as one of the highlights of its recent history. It was a great honor for our society that European national delegates to the congress in Lisbon chose Vienna as the venue for EFORT’s 10th Anniversary Congress. Thanks to outstanding organisational support from the Central Office in Zurich, as well as our exceptionally close working relationship with the Scientific Chairman Prof. Piero Hoffmann (for EFORT) and Prof. Alfred Engel (for OGU), our scientific programme ran virtually without a hitch. From my personal perspective, I looked at the congress with the idea of Vienna being at the heart of Europe – a city with a long tradition as a meeting point between East and West. As Europe becomes increasingly united, this role will become less and less important. Another guiding principle was that the congress should get to know Vienna as a capital of culture. The opening event in the ACV – at which attendance was gratifyingly high – was framed by performances from the Ballet of the Vienna State Opera. The uncontested highlight of the social programme was the Vienna Night, featuring a concert from the Johann Strauss Orchester at Vienna’s Konzerthaus. The orchestra played a programme similar to that of the Vienna Philharmonic’s world-famous New Year concerts. The members of the orchestra, under the baton of their conductor Alfred Esched, succeeded in enthralling an audience of almost 1,000 and presenting Vienna as a capital of music. The delicious buffet following the concert brought this unforgettable evening to a superb close.

My particular thanks go to EFORT President Prof. Dr. Karl-Göran Thorn-.green for his tireless calm and his great confidence in the choice of artists and venues for the social programme. It was of enormous support in organising EFORT’s biggest congress to date.

A further vote of thanks goes to our partners in the industry, without whose active support our congress would have been impossible. The magnificent exhibition covering an area of some 3,200 square metres was much appreciated by all participants and attracted high visitor numbers. With this in mind, it came as no surprise to receive entirely positive feedback from our industry partners too. In my view, EFORT’s 10th Anniversary Congress in Vienna offered a successful synthesis of outstanding scientific quality and a highly enjoyable social programme. It was a genuine honour for me to be able to serve this congress as its Local Organising Chairman. I am already looking forward to our next EFORT Congress in Madrid, which I am sure will be hallmarked by particularly splendid Spanish flair.

For more information about the 10th EFORT Congress Vienna, please contact the EFORT Central Office, e-mail: event@efort.org, phone: +41 44 448 4400

Vienna 2009

The Scientific Committee’s perspective

EFORT 2009 in Vienna was, without doubt, an accurate reflection of the state of the art, the science and practice of orthopaedics and musculoskeletal traumatology in Europe today.

This 10th EFORT Congress reunited over 6,000 participating orthopaedic surgeons from national and affiliated societies throughout Europe. The contributions of the members of these and the speciality societies were of an outstanding quality. The Scientific Committee, along with EFORT’s scientific advisors, painstakingly and rigorously reviewed and analyzed a total of 3,478 abstracts. Of these, 673 were accepted as podium presentations. This represents an acceptance rate of somewhat less than 20%. The criteria used for acceptance were the quality of the data and analysis. Studies using validated scoring systems will be favoured in the future. The e-poster sessions were extremely well attended and it was difficult at times to find a seat in front of one of the many screens. The free paper and e-poster presentations are the backbone of our congresses. This is where budding talent is identified and where the future leaders of our specialty emerge. The EFORT Scientific Committee will maintain its commitment to promoting and encouraging this activity. Today, a paper that is accepted for presentation at the EFORT annual meeting is a legitimate source of pride.

The Symposia and Instructional Lectures presented up-to-date and useful knowledge. The attendance rate in the rooms was exceptional. Some sessions had participants standing at the back owing to a lack of seats – a testament to the interest they generated. The Complex Case Discussions were animated and blessed with strong participation from their audiences. Speakers battled with justified and constructive criticism from attendees to present solutions to their difficult cases. The key message here was what is needed is practical knowledge, not just a theoretical approach.

Experts-meet-Experts sessions were well attended and permitted useful hands-on discussions. A close partnership with the industry is vital to the success of these events. The organisations are to be congratulated for their efforts.

The Speciality Societies’ symposia were, as usual, extremely well received by participants. This is where the practising orthopaedic surgeon can be exposed to the latest thinking in various specialties, and gain cutting-edge knowledge of the newest developments, as taught by the members of the most prestigious specialty societies in Europe. The advantages are enormous, with the practising surgeon being able to attend many sessions covering different specialised fields.

The Comprehensive Review Course was fully booked months in advance, and attended diligently up to the very last minute. Our thanks to the speakers for condensing their knowledge so effectively. We trust that the participants will have benefited from this concentrated and dense course covering the full range of our speciality.

The industry-sponsored Satellite Symposia
Going into detail
27th EFORT IC in Marseille will be about knee arthroplasty

MARSEILLE – The Mediterranean metropolis Marseille will host the 27th EFORT IC on 11-12 September 2009. The Centre for Arthritis Surgery, part of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the Sainte-Marguerite University Hospital, has gathered a faculty of renowned speakers from France, Italy, Switzerland, the UK and Sweden. Local Chairman Prof. Jean-Nicolas Argenson presents the highlights and topics of this Instructional Course.

Prof. Argenson, the 27th EFORT IC will focus on flexion and function of the knee after arthroplasty. What factors may influence them?

Prof. Argenson: The degree of flexion the patient has before the surgery will influence flexion after surgery. This is the most important factor. Other factors include the surgical technique, where it is important to remove any bone spurs, and also the design of the arthroplasty, which is important in increasing the lever arm and restoring normal kinetics. This is important for both the flexion and the function of the knee.

On Friday, 11 September, there will be two live surgery sessions. Which surgical techniques will be demonstrated in these sessions?

Prof. Argenson: The first live surgery will demonstrate the treatment of uncompartmental arthritis with unicompartmental knee arthroplasty. This is interesting for patients who have an osteoarthritis limited to one compartment of the knee. In such cases it is not necessary to replace the knee joint in full. The second live surgery will demonstrate high-flexion total knee arthroplasty, focusing on surgical technique and the importance of component position in order to restore correct kinetics and correct flexion. Another topic will be the evaluation of flexion in knee arthroplasty. What evaluation tool will be discussed?

Prof. Argenson: There are various tools to evaluate flexion following knee arthroplasty. First, there is clinical examination by a surgeon. There is then the three-dimensional evaluation of the component position. As I just said, the component position has a direct influence on kinetics and flexion. And there is also a kinetic evaluation, which is an individual examination based on a fluoroscopic analysis while the patient is flexing the knee after arthroplasty. Finally, there is also the assessment of the patient themselves with the help of questionnaires specifically dedicated to their quality of life as it relates directly to the state of their knee.

Prof. Thörneng will talk about the Swedish Knee Arthroplasty Registry. What role do registries play?

Prof. Argenson: It is important to evaluate survival rates for arthroplasty. The best way to do this is to include every arthroplasty in a national register. Scandinavian countries have the best experience with these registers.

"High flexion" is a keyword that will be heard frequently during the lectures. What are the advantages of high flexion, where do you see problems?

Prof. Argenson: The advantage of high flexion for patients is the ability to perform activities that may be important for their everyday life. What’s more, it is vital to cultural and social life in some countries, because it is important to be able to kneel or squat. In some countries, high flexion is also key to religious activities such as praying. But there are also potential problems with high flexion. These are the reduction of the area of contact, and the subsequent risk of increased polyethylene wear and also increased instability. This is why we took care to include high-flexion-related considerations with regard to surgical techniques and design in the programme of the IC. The long-term outcome is also important – this is why registries are so helpful.

The second day will be dedicated to different surgical techniques – what will participants learn during these lectures?

Prof. Argenson: The second day will focus on specific technical points such as patients with limb deformities, and patients who have had previous surgery such as an osteotomy or another arthroplasty. In every patient it is important to study not only bone but also soft tissue. In other words, we have to see what is around the bones, and also the extensor mechanism. These presentations will go into the technical details point by point.

Will this EFORT IC also provide any practical experience for the participants?

Prof. Argenson: In the first part of the second day we will have two workshops staged by companies. The companies will be free to organise more technical discussions by bringing technical materials or making presentations on specific points related to design and instrumentation, etc. Orthopaedic surgeons from Europe and the Middle East are invited to learn more about knee arthroplasty at this EFORT IC. How many participants are you you expecting?

Prof. Argenson: We are planning a course for around 80 participants. The course is specifically dedicated to surgeons interested in knee arthroplasty. So it will really go into depth on the various aspects of this subject.

For more information please refer to the EFORT Central Office, e-mail: office@efort.org, phone: +41 44 448 4400 or visit the EFORT portal at: www.efort.org

SAVE THE DATES
Forthcoming EFORT Congresses
11th EFORT Congress
Madrid, 2-5 June 2010
12th EFORT Congress
Copenhagen, 1-4 June 2011