Europe’s collective knowledge
ExMEx Forum, Berlin, March 26 to 28: Minimally invasive orthopaedic therapy

A special attraction in Berlin awaits European hip and knee surgeons in March: The EFORT-ExMEx (Experts meet Experts) will gather and discuss experiences from across the continent relating to state-of-the-art, minimally invasive orthopaedic therapy. Participants can expect best-practice models as well as future trends and time frames for work-in-progress solutions to the common inclusion-site problem.

For orthopaedic and trauma surgeons, Berlin will most certainly be a worthwhile visit this coming spring. From March 26th to 28th, the cosmopolitan capital between the Spree and Havel Rivers will host the EFORT ExMEx Forum on the theme of minimally invasive hip and knee surgery. Although due to the exciting themes and wealth of information presented at the EFORT ExMEx Forum, participants may find the time to absorb the vastness of the German capital limited by their desire to attend the stimulating discussions.

“The ExMEx Fora constitute the highest and most demanding level of EFORT’s advanced training programs,” explained Prof. Fritz Uwe Niethard, director of the University Clinic for Orthopedics and Traumatology in Aachen, Germany. “Experienced orthopedists and traumatologists are offered a forum here for the exchange of knowledge and frank discussions of their experiences, from which the lecturers as well as the surgical-specialist audience can profit enormously. Knowledge from throughout Europe, accumulated among the most diverse countries and health systems, will be quasi synchronized this way. When we diodiscuss, each will be aware of the current status in the various regions. Best-practice-models will crystallize out of this and it will become clear as to which of the potentially very different approaches will be best solution for an individual health-care system.”

Minimally invasive hip and knee surgery for exploratory reasons has established itself in some areas but not in others. "Ambiguity exists not only with regard to indications, but also in regard to general economic conditions, so that navigation and robotics within the EU are implemented very differently," according to Prof. Niethard. "It will be extremely worthwhile to find out how this is viewed and is being dealt with elsewhere. Medical as well as economically. If it is a question of whether the acquisition of expensive navigation technology is reasonable, or rather, which modifications might at best make them commercially sustainable.”

That ExMEx has been invited to Berlin as a tribute to one of the most exciting projects in the field of navigation. “OrthoMIT — the orthopedic operating room of the future” is being developed at a number of German universities under the direction of Prof. Niethard. “The acronym stands for ‘minimal-invasive orthopedic therapy’ and is a joint research project, under German public research sponsorhip, with a goal to develop an integrated platform for minimal invasive interventions. Flexible modules for hip, knee and spinal surgery should make it possible to adapt therapeutic procedures to individual situations,” Prof. Niethard said. At the beginning of the ExMEx Forum, previous orthoMIT results will be introduced in three subgroups:

• Smart Intraoperative Imaging (themes, inter alia: Zero-Dose-C-Arm-Navigation; robot-supported C-arm X-ray imaging; 3D ultrasonic imaging and referencing of MRI data for the completion; and updating of intraoperative information)

• Smart Knee and Hip Surgery (themes, inter alia: marker- and tracking-free knee endoprosthetics, ultrasonic-based identification of landmarks for individual biomechanical planning models; modular sterilizable SSDR-minirobot for minimally invasive hip-ressection prosthesis, knee endoprosthesis; and endoscopic spinal surgery

• Smart Integration (themes, inter alia: OP table steering for the reduction of performance limiting body posture; and innovative operating concept through remote pointer).

“The heading over this could read: optimization through integration,” Prof. Niethard suggested. “It is a matter not just of an ultra-modern OP table itself, but rather of all the encompassing processes that unfold prior to the operating room as well. Technically it is one of the greatest challenges — and concomitantly one of the greatest expected advancements — to create optimized interfaces.

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Previously, for instance, equipment for knee endoprosthesis and for hip endoprosthetic surgery were incompatible, as was much else. Because of that, we are working together with the engineering branch in making far-reaching progress toward creating a common basis — a theme that has to be resolved if we are to integrate further technical advancement in an economically supportable way.”

Therefore the ExMEx-Meeting could appeal not just to surgeons, but to the budget-conscious hospital manager as well. The latter will be able to find out when integrated — and therefore cost-unique — navigation systems will be ready for action. “They could significantly lower the threshold from which the moment and most patient-favored state of orthopaedic surgery also becomes economically feasible,” Prof. Niethard emphasizes.

For more information please visit the EFORT portal: www.efort.org/exmex/berlin2010

The Sum of European Experience

The EFORT 2010 Congress in Madrid

MADRID – BOLOGNA. The forthcoming EFORT Congress, already the 11th of its kind, will once more bring together the extensive European Family of Orthopaedists and reaffirm its position as the leading scientific community in the world, according to Professor Maurilio Marcacci. Prof. Marcacci is full professor at the University of Bologna Medical School and head of the IX Orthopaedic Divi-

sion and Biomechanics Laboratory at the Rizzoli Orthopaedic Institute. By sharing and discussing a variety of approaches to orthopaedics that historically evolved in different parts of Europe, Congress participants will benefit from an EFORT event that focuses on hard scientific data derived through evolutionary more than revolutionary developments in all the subspecialties of orthopaedics and trauma medicine.

Prof. Marcacci, why should an orthopaedist or traumatologist with his or her already crammed schedule reserve June 2nd – 5th, 2010 for a trip to Madrid?

Marcacci: The answer is very simple: All the specialties and subspecialties of orthopaedics and traumatology from throughout Europe will be represented there under the umbrella of EFORT. In many of these fields, not just one but a variety of solutions to the same problems have been developed, a reflection of the many different medical and social cultures historically grown on our continent. This treasure will be brought together, shared, and discussed once more in Madrid, presenting the sum of the experience of European medicine of the last 50 years, both in theory and practice.

A variety of solutions seems to be a contradiction to uniform standards which are a strong tendency throughout the medical world...

Marcacci: We have to discern between a standard of quality and standard methods. Different circumstances may call for different methods of the same quality. But EFORT is the most vivid forum in the world to discuss different approaches, sometimes controversial but always according to the highest standards of scientific evaluation. Thus, exploiting European diversity does also yield higher common standards, since the comparison of approaches naturally leads to the shaping of best practice models. And if a plurality of methods competes, there is always a greater chance for an optimal outcome than if only one single track is followed.

What may participants expect in detail? Marcacci: This list could be endless. In sum, you will be presented the latest findings and advancements of all the fields of our discipline at the highest possible scientific level. Four topics of general interest have been chosen for the plenary sessions: trauma care in Europe; metastasis disease; prevention and treatment of infections; and the building and the use of orthopaedics registries. Apart from those, each surgeon or traumatologist will find what he or she needs to improve his/her knowledge and skills: experts will be able to share opinions with their equals; young resident doctors can discuss their problems and needs with older, more experienced colleagues; generalists will be able to learn new methods.

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A new educational programme in the form of a course in EPOS Educational Programme BAT, Traumatology was held in Vienna during the last EFORT congress.

The primary aim was to improve knowledge in children’s orthopaedics for general orthopaedic surgeons, particularly those at the beginning of their careers. The syllabus should contribute to knowledge-sharing and a further understanding of children’s orthopaedics.

Orthopaedisch Spital Sprüngli in Vienna chose as a venue for the course because of its excellent facilities and geographical position. Nearby low-rate accommodations, 55 J Night, were secured for the participants. The educational faculty represented highly recognized specialists in children’s orthopaedics throughout Europe, including: Manuel Cassiano Neves, Portugal; Jaroslaw Czubak, Poland; Franz Grill, Austria; Yoram Hemo, Israel; Pierre Lascombes, France; Mark Patte- son, United Kingdom; Annemie-Martina Weinberg, Austria; and Thomas Wirth, Germany.

The course was held over three days, starting Thursday October 8th 2009. Registration fee was 200 for residents, which included receiving all PowerPoint presentations on a USB drive. The course was highly rated amongst the participants (56) on a preformed evaluation form. The course was designated for a maximum of 16 hours of European external CME credits.

EPOS Educational Committee highly appreciated the professional support given by EFORT Central Office. A special thank you goes to Patrick Collet.

This Traumatology course in EPOS Educational Programme BAT will be followed by obligatory courses in Children’s orthopaedics week 41, October 2010 at Orthopädisches Spital Sprüngli in Vienna. Furthermore advanced courses on specific topics will be launched. For further details please go to the EFORT Website and go to EPOS Website on a regular basis.

Portrait about EPOS: European Pediatric Orthopaedic Society

EPOS, European Pediatric Orthopaedic Society, was founded when Europe was politically split. Despite the political situation due to the cold war, a very small group of colleagues decided courageously to found EPOS. The society has been created under the imper- tuss of Professor Bennewitz in March 1962. The founders decided, at its inception, that EPOS would be devoted to the entire geographic basis of Europe. To try to separate the wheat from the chaff and avoid present- ing solutions and techniques which are not appropriately tried and proven.

As for your own field of expertise, what are the hot topics and big news?

Marcucci: As you know, my main personal experience is in joint and tissue recon- struction and high level sports medicine. And as a very curious clinician, I try to favor evolution instead of revolution, meaning that advancements proceed step by step and usually not in sensational leaps. Therefore, my colleagues and I will not present anything newsworthy, but will con- centrate instead on very strong and reliable information. One of the hottest topics will be the new methods of regenerative treatments for damanged or worn-out cartilage. Instead of cell cultures, they work with artificial tissues able to guide the formation of new tissue by the body’s own adult stem cells. Here too, we must still be careful in our statements, but the data so far are very promising.

What is your personal message to your colleagues concerning EFORT 2010?

Marcucci: EPOS is Europe, and that means: all of us! We should establish Europe as the world’s best and most inno- vative region in understanding and treating musculoskeletal lesions – for the reasons already mentioned. So come and get the most advanced update available in any field of orthopaedics or traumatology that you’re involved in!

What’s new in Madrid? New and exciting formats are being launched and familiar ones improved with this congress cycle.

Are you way past the deadline but still would like to present a non-reviewed paper?

Your communication is not adapted to any of the proposed EFORT formats? You would like to present a short technical trick?

Pre-register online on: www.efort.org/madrid2010/hydeparkcorner

– 3 June 2010: One full day dedicated to: Tribology. Wear to the articulating material in total hip arthroplasty is still one of the most challenging topics that has not yet been entirely resolved... read more on: www.efort.org/madrid2010/tribology

– Plenary Sessions focus on major top- ics in Orthopaedics and Traumatology: Presented in English, with simultaneous translation into Spanish.

– 3 June 2010: An exciting new Nurse- Day programme has been established and invites qualified orthopaedic nursing.

– Special sessions for Orthopaedic Resi- dents and Trainees.

– Our Compute- hensive Ortho- paedic Review Course is back!

– Earn up to 21 CME credits!