

## REPORT FROM ICRS 2016–13<sup>TH</sup> WORLD CONGRESS, SORRENTO



*The Home Team Welcome's you to Sorrento*

The ICRS World Congress, held in Sorrento, one of the most beautiful parts of Italy, with a rich cultural and gastronomic heritage is now history. The local team, headed by Donato Rosa, Stefano Della Villa, Lisa Kon and Alberto Gobbi have put a huge effort in turning this event into an unforgettable experience, with one of the largest attendance ever! In fact there were more than 1100 participants from all over the world. On the academic side the scientific programme was outstanding and well appreciated. Social highlights included the Presidents dinner with a concert at St Francisco Cloister and a wonderful farewell dinner, an evening with traditional dancing and entertainment was organized in the lemon garden at the Hilton Sorrento. The combination of the academic, the social and the tourist aspects of this World Congress has made it the one of the best ever! Many brilliant picture souvenirs can be found at the ICRS website/picture gallery. On the following pages, you find detailed reviews, comments and interviews from our most memorable world congress.



### Interview with Henning Madry, Homburg, DE & Bill Bugbee, San Diego, USA, Chairs of the 2016 Scientific Programme Committee



*Henning Madry*



*Bill Bugbee*

*Interview by Stefan Nehrer, Krems, Austria*

#### What was your scientific experience in Sorrento?

We were extremely happy about the high quality of basic and clinical science presented in Sorrento. We tried to design a scientific program reflecting the dynamic nature of cartilage injury and repair, the growing importance of the ICRS as a preeminent organization and the tremendous efforts of its members in both basic scientific and clinical endeavours. Our program was built on the overwhelming popularity and success of previous ICRS meetings and reflected our desire for scientists and clinicians to collaborate and share ideas. Therefore, particularly in the special plenary sessions on Cartilage and Meniscus Repair Update 2016 in the beginning of the congress, we put basic scientists and clinicians speaking in one room. Our idea was to reflect the spirit of the first ICRS meeting in Fribourg, Switzerland, allowing for a real, direct and fast interaction between basic scientists and clinicians, which we think is one of the biggest values of the ICRS. Personally, these two concurrent sessions on cartilage and meniscus made it impossible to attend both, but we felt this was not so much of a problem because there were many other sessions focusing on both tissues.

#### Did your conception and design of the scientific program work?

When looking through the results of the post congress survey, there were a lot of compliments and just a few complaints. The Battlefield sessions were (of course!) highly rated, and also individual sessions such as the Plenary and Special Sessions. Some attendants sought more basic science, some wanted to have more clinical science. Some preferred classical poster presentations, not the electronic poster format chosen by the ICRS. In the end we think we did well by the two principles we agreed in the beginning: Bringing scientists and clinicians together and expand the program into OA and regenerative medicine topics. We think that this congress allowed everyone to enjoy a program that truly reflected the "state of the art" in science and clinical practice of cartilage repair.

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### Interview with Henning Madry & Bill Bugbee (Continued)

#### What were the highlights?

This is a difficult question because there were so many great talks so it is difficult to name some and not mention the others. Both Honorary Lectures, the one on “Osteoarthritis as Organ Failure” by Virginia Kraus and on the “Role of Stem Cells and Tissue Engineering in Cartilage Repair” by Johnny Huard were really very popular and received a high rating. Henning found the talks about “Lessons Learned from a Lifetime” in cartilage repair to be very informative and also entertaining. Also, sessions on the osteochondral unit, synovial joint pathophysiology and osteoarthritis, reflecting the growing recognition of their importance. Cartilage repair in specific anatomic situations was also addressed, such as in the patellofemoral joint, ankle, hip and upper extremity. The practical “how to” sessions covering fundamentals of basic research including study design and peer reviewed publication as well as advice on patient evaluation and surgical technique from leading experts were well attended.

#### Why was the number of participants so high?

We think that the number of participants was so high because the ICRS meeting is just so popular. This is probably because of the focus of ICRS on always bringing basic scientists and clinicians together, which makes this meeting truly exceptional. Of course the venue was exceptional, who would not want to come to the Amalfi coast? The Italians were such great hosts!

#### How was the interest of the industry to be present?

Judging from previous congresses, we believe that the interest of the industry to be present was on a very high level. Also, the industry exhibition was easily accessible, allowing for a good exchange between the participants and industry. The ICRS is a venue for industry to interact with leading clinicians and scientists in the field of cartilage.

#### What was new or hot?

We tried to reflect the move of the society into the field of osteoarthritis, being the next frontier in cartilage repair, as this is still the unresolved question on how good our clinical procedures are doing over the long term. The talks on stem cells were very interesting and allowed for a great exchange. I personally liked the session “Moving from bench to the bedside” where the speakers gave an impressive update on the emerging fields of proteins, small molecules and gene therapy for cartilage repair.

#### Was it difficult to fill the programme?

We decided very early on to choose speakers essentially merit based, first and foremost. We tried to be very strong on this as it reflects the ICRS and the scientific rigor we wished to achieve. We did brainstorm

a lot of names and searched their recent publications. That actually seemed to work quite well since we got remarkably few complaints. We also tried to include younger people and especially people who helped grading the abstracts as moderators. So, actually, filling the program with content was the easiest part because everybody was so happy to have a spot. We wish we could have more content and more speakers, but we have already communicated with the next ICRS program chairs, Christian Lattermann and Susan Chubinskaya, on topics and we could not fit in this time. By the way, we and many others found the slim line pocket program to be a very useful tool – this was Stephan Seiler’s idea.

#### What was your personal motivation?

Henning: my personal motivation was to re-capture again the spirit of the first ICRS congress in Fribourg in Switzerland which I was lucky to attend. Also, this was a payment of a small part of the debt I owe the ICRS because I learnt so much in the past congresses and established lifelong friendships. Bill and I also tried to put the meniscus more into the spotlight, and this worked out nicely - for example the special session on meniscal repair and replacement by ESSKA.

Bill: I felt it was important to serve the organization in some way. I feel so fortunate to be a part of this great field and the ICRS has been an important way further my career and knowledge. The ICRS has been responsible for many of the great friendships I have made with people from around the world

#### What is the future of ICRS congress?

We see the future of the ICRS congress to be very bright. This is probably partly because of the great ICRS leadership, our members supporting the society, the fact that ICRS has a great journal -Cartilage- and finally the choice of top congress locations such as Macao in 2018.

#### What should be addressed more?

Future congresses will show more long-term data on cartilage repair, together with randomized controlled clinical trials. Yet, if you scan through the program, there are already lots of such trials ongoing. Probably in the future, there will be also more talks focusing on osteoarthritis and regenerative medicine

#### What was your personal experiences in Sorrento?

It is probably impossible to find better space in the world for hosting this congress in such a beautiful scenery. Sorrento, especially the Convento di San Francesco and the views on the Golfo di Napoli with the Vesuvio were breath-taking. The fact that, as always, the congress was taking place in a hotel where many of the attendees were staying made the interaction among all participants, even until late in the night, very convenient.