

## **Endodontology at Olympian Heights!**

### **11th Biennial Congress of the European Society of Endodontology, Athens, Greece, October 2003**

The Olympic Games are returning to Greece, their ancient birthplace. In August 2004, Athens will host the Games of the 28th Olympiad and the city is busy preparing itself for the massive influx of visitors. However, in October 2003, the Hotel Athenaeum Intercontinental Athens was the venue for a meeting on a slightly smaller scale, 'Endodontology at Olympian Heights!', the 11th Biennial Congress of the European Society of Endodontology.

Delegates who arrived on Wednesday 1 October had a choice of three Pre-congress courses, variously on 'Laser applications in dentistry', 'Ni-Ti rotary instrumentation and obturation with Therafil' and 'Orthograde retreatment – from concept to practice'. Later, the same day the first of the social events took the form of a very well-attended 'Get together cocktail' evening.

The official opening ceremony took place on Thursday morning. Prof. Sotiris Sykaras, Congress Chairman and President of the European Society of Endodontology and Prof. George Siskos, Hellenic Society of Endodontics were invited to say a few words of welcome by Dr Panos Panopoulos, Chairman of the Scientific Committee and Congress Coordinator (Figs 1 and 2). Prof. Mahmoud Torabinejad, President of the American Association of Endodontists brought a gift for President Sykaras from his organization and an invitation to their own Conference in Anaheim, California 2004. He spoke briefly about the global role of endodontists, noted that our respective groups shared the same goals and urged greater collaboration in areas of common interest.

Prof. Wladimir Adlivankine delivered the keynote address. He described the first 20 years of the European Society of Endodontology from its beginnings before the first Congress in Venice, 1983 through previous Congress to the present day. Some of the faces he showed were still with us, others had sadly departed. We were reminded that Endodontology began around the Mediterranean some 2000 years ago when Claudius Galen (his Roman name because that is where the money was!) described the use of a

copper tube to protect the gum during operative procedures.

The sessions took the usual format of parallel Symposia covering 'Biology and technology for repair and regeneration in Endodontics', 'Controversial issues in achieving success with endodontic therapy', 'Pharmacologic principles in endodontic therapy', 'Pulpal and periapical disease process: aspects on pathology and clinical management', 'Root-canal system preparation: a critical approach on classic and modern techniques' and 'Aetiology, diagnosis and treatment of endodontic complications'. In addition, there were Oral Presentations on Freely Chosen Subjects and the Research and Clinical Poster Presentations. Quite fittingly, room VIP hosted four rising stars of endodontic research, competing at the highest standard across a range of clinical and basic disciplines for the coveted Wladimir Adlivankine Research Prize.

Delegates quickly settled into the routine of picking lectures of interest from the programme and moved freely between the rooms and trade show throughout the day.

If there was nothing inside the Congress venue that appealed, the weather outside the hotel was warm and dry. Everyone seemed to find the time to visit the areas of interest locally, either 'freelance' or as part of the official Congress guided tours (the Hotel Athenaeum Intercontinental is only 10–15 min walk from the Acropolis; being there as the sun rose was an unforgettable experience).

Some minor grumbles; for a nonsmoker, it would have been nice for the public and trade areas of the congress to have been smoke-free. The timing of the Poster sessions was unfortunate in that in order to present your work meant missing some of the Symposia; it was also quite a crush on the Poster balcony. The Registration desk was a victim of its own success; so many delegates trying to Register created a bottleneck effect, although this settled down quite quickly. In any event, the Congress is conducted in such a friendly atmosphere no-one seemed to mind too much.



**Figure 1** Prof. Sotiris Sykaras, Congress Chairman and President of the European Society of Endodontology opening the Congress.



**Figure 2** Panos Panopoulos (centre), Chairman of the Scientific Committee and Congress Coordinator, together with Wladimir Adlivankine (left) and Prof. George Siskos (right), Hellenic Society of Endodontics.



**Figure 3** Roland Weiger and Wladimir Adlivankine at the 'Dora Stratou' Folk Dance Theatre.

On Thursday night, we were taken by bus from the hotel a short distance to the Welcome Dinner at the open-air 'Dora Stratou' Folk Dance Theatre. Our hosts had warned us to take something to keep us warm but the weather was superb; sitting outside at night in shirtsleeves in October was quite a novel experience for some of us!

Two of the Society's awards were presented at the start of the evening (Fig. 3). Dr I. M. Saleh won the Wladimir Adlivankine Research Prize for her presentation 'Survival of *Enterococcus faecalis* in infected dentinal tubules after root-canal filling with different root-canal sealers' and Dr Linda Peters from Amsterdam won the Hans Genet Award for her outstanding contribution to the speciality. We were treated to an open-air buffet whilst the Greek Folk Dancers we had come to see got dressed and warmed up. During the following hour, a massed theatre was treated to a colourful and energetic pageant of regional dance, music and song from the regions of Macedonia, Cyclades and Salamina Islands, Crete and Roumeli-Moreas.

Friday opened with a bang as Kishor Gulabivala presented a comprehensively researched and rigorously argued overview of the challenges in managing microbial and soft tissue residues in the canal system. Challenging stuff for research and practice. Elsewhere, a further line-up of 34 oral presentations and 60

research posters left all comers spoiled for choice, and wondering where the day had gone. At 7.00 pm and still going strong, as delegates emerged satisfied from the stunning presentations of Martin Trope on novel thermoplastic filling materials and Mahmoud Torabinejad on MTAD, a new irrigant set to make its mark on the profession.

The remainder of Friday was 'free' and most people set off into the bustling streets of nearby Plaka or Monastiriki to eat, drink and share the company of friends late into the evening; do not even think of dining before 10.30 hours, just sit back, unwind and enjoy the pleasures of warm alfresco dining in October!

Saturday dawned cloudless once again, and with a series of lectures for the wet-fingered dentist. In Ballroom I, a challenging review of canal obturation, followed by nonsurgical versus surgical retreatment options and an overview of current practice. In Ballroom II, not to be outdone, authoritative reviews of crown/root fractures, the potential for pulp revascularization after injury and the relationships between root resorption and apical periodontitis.

Formal proceedings concluded with an entertaining description of noninstrumental root-canal treatment (surely everyone's dream) from the Swiss duo Adrian Lussi and Beat Suter.

Behind the scenes, various committee meetings conducted the business of the Congress and the Societies.

At the Gala Dinner, in the superb night-time setting of the Athens Golf Club it was announced that over 750 people had taken part in the 3-day Congress – a record for the ESE meeting. Time for the organizing committee to receive our thanks and take a welcome rest. A number of us North Europeans had early flights

to catch the next morning so we said our goodbyes and left on the early bus, but not before the Irish ESE Committee had invited us to Dublin in September 2005 for the 12th Biennial Congress of the European Society of Endodontology 'Discover your Roots'.

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