

STAR — advances in oncological imaging

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On the weekend of 30th August - 1 September 2002 the STAR meeting was held in the BOE Auditorium in the clock tower complex of the V & A Waterfront in Cape Town. The meeting was attended by almost 200 delegates. Radiologists, radiographers, clinical oncologists, radiation oncologists and surgeons attended the meeting. Several professionals working for medical aid companies also attended.

The meeting was aimed at discussing current and possible future trends in imaging of cancer patients, with emphasis on the chest, abdomen and pelvic malignancies. As such the meeting addressed a wide range of topics, all of which were enthusiastically received.

STAR is the acronym for 'Schering/Siemens Training in Advances in Radiology' and is an international programme sponsored by Schering AG in Berlin and Siemens AG, Medical Division in Erlangen, Germany. The programme is co-ordinated by Mr Ludwig Hahn from Schering and Mr A Lortz from Siemens, and has as a scientific director the legendary Professor Alexander Margulis. STAR is hosted in various countries around the world every year and South Africa was indeed lucky to be able to host such a meeting.

The meeting was organised by Dr Jan Labuscagne from the Radiological Society of South Africa together with Professor Hedvig Hricak from New York. Professor Hricak is Chairman of the Imaging Department of the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre in New York. She is a world renowned expert in pelvic imaging.

In addition to Professor Margulis and Professor Hricak, a team of internationally acclaimed experts in radiology was invited. Professor Philip Grenier from Paris, Professor Maximilian Reiser from Germany and Professor Lawrence Schwartz from New York, USA, formed the rest of the faculty.

Professor Philip Grenier is Chairman of the Department of Radiology at the Hospital Pitié-Salpêtrière of the University of Paris and is a leading expert in chest imaging.

Professor Reiser is Chairman of the Department of Radiology at the Grosshadern Hospital and Ludwig-Maximilians University of Munich. He is an expert in musculo-skeletal imaging as well as a leader in developments in cross-sectional imaging.

Professor Schwartz is a gastro-intestinal radiologist with a special interest in medical informatics and is also associated with the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre in New York.

The programme comprised basic topics such as the imaging of the unknown primary and measuring therapeutic response to futuristic outlooks on imaging in oncology. The programme was enthusiastically received by all concerned and the overall impression was one of a superbly organised conference.

Radiologists involved in imaging of cancer patients sat through four sessions of highly informative lectures. Old friends met again and new acquaintances were made.

This STAR meeting was also very well attended by clinical colleagues and three clinically oriented lectures were delivered. These were given by an oncologist, Dr Graham Cohen from Pretoria who spoke about therapy response, Professor Johan van Wyk from Stellenbosch who gave an overview of surgical needs in imaging, and Professor Lynn Denny from Cape Town who spoke on pelvic malignancies in women. These lectures were well integrated into the rest of the programme and provided an interesting backdrop for the international guests.

As noted above, STAR is the acronym for Schering/Siemens Training and Advances in Radiology. The programme is therefore sponsored by Schering and Siemens and the local subsidiaries of these companies were also involved in the organisation and funding of the meeting. The Radiological Society and all the delegates are deeply indebted to these companies.

Use of the beautiful auditorium facility at the BOE Auditorium was sponsored by BOE corporates and sincere thanks also go out to them.

Special mention must be made of the contributions of Mr Gert Wilke from Schering, Mr William Sikes from Siemens, and Mr Trevor Cronje and Mr Mark Seedy from BOE for their personal involvement.

Reprints of the extended abstracts from the syllabus of the STAR meeting appear in this issue of the *Journal*.

The rest of the syllabus may be reprinted in future issues.

J H Labuscagne

Editor