

Report on the RSSA Neuroradiology and Body Imaging Advances Congress, Sandton, 28 - 30 August 2009

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The RSSA Neuroradiology and Body Imaging Advances Congress 2009 was a joint meeting between the RSSA, the RSNA, and the International Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine Global Outreach Programme (ISMRM). The RSSA also

secured the participation of three RSNA international visiting professors (IVPs).

During the congress planning stages, Professor Leon Janse van Rensburg, the RSSA congress chairman, consulted the academic heads of radiology departments in South Africa regarding the topics considered to be of the most educational value. The general consensus was that neuroimaging, advances in MRI, musculoskeletal MRI and coronary artery CT were the most appropriate from a topical and educational point of view.

With his customary drive, commitment and efficiency, Professor Janse van Rensburg organised an exceptional programme with an international faculty of 7 highly

distinguished radiologists: 3 from the RSNA IVP Programme, and 4 from the ISMRM Global Outreach Programme. Educational sponsors and exhibitors included a number of equipment vendors, pharmaceutical companies, medical book vendors and Discovery Health Care. The MISA - RSSA registrar sponsorships which were introduced this year, and which assist registrars from distant institutions in South Africa to attend congresses and workshops, have been greatly appreciated by the recipients.

The Sandton Sun venue had been booked a year in advance, and the facilities and catering were of a high standard. The distinctive and now familiar short film on The Big Five, projected onto the 2 large screens in the lecture hall, and accompanied by appropriate music, heralded the start of each session.

The neuroimaging programme included not only advanced imaging techniques such as functional MRI, tractography and perfusion imaging, but also commonly encountered clinical problems including epilepsy, cerebral infections, brain tumours in children, and neurodegenerative diseases, with the appropriate applications for diffusion-weighted imaging and MR spectroscopy. The MRA, musculoskeletal MRI and coronary CTA lectures were equally topical and valuable.

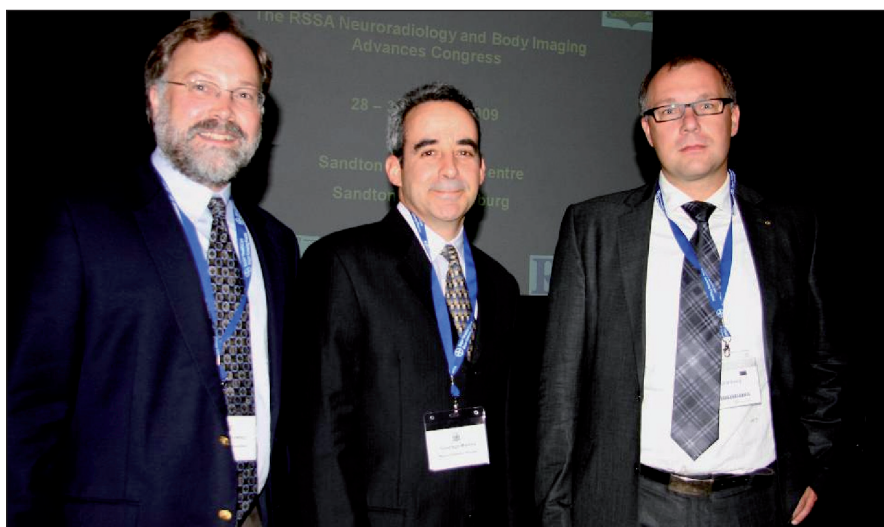
Without singling out specific speakers, because all were excellent, special mention must be made of Dr Howard Rowley's highly informative as well as humorous lectures on neuroradiology, not least of which were his cartoon images with audio accompaniment of a normal cow, followed by a cow suffering from Mad Cow Disease, whose hysterical laughter interspersed with rapid mooing, were highly amusing.

The international faculty kindly made their lectures available on CD to all participants.

In addition to the formal lectures, free papers were presented by 4 registrars from academic institutions in South Africa. Dr Pieter Janse van Rensburg from Tygerberg Hospital received the Maurice Weinbren Award of the College of Medicine of South Africa for the best publication in a peer-



(L to R) Professor Leon J van Rensburg (RSSA), Dr Aisne Stoker (RSSA), Professor Leanne Seager (RSNA), Stefan Schoenberg (ISMRM), Jill Jacobs (RSNA), Tim Leiner (ISMRM)



(L to R) Professors Howard Rowley (ISMRM), Santiago Medina (RSNA), Marco Essig (ISMRM)



(L to R) Dr Pieter Janse van Rensburg, winner of the RSSA Travel Award and Maurice Weinbren Medal; and Dr Nasreen Mahomed, winner of the Discovery Best Poster Award



Professor Leon J van Rensburg pays tribute to Professor Richard Hewlett (right) for his contribution to neuroradiology in South Africa.

reviewed journal in 2008 as well as the RSSA Travel Award for his presentation *Magnetic resonance imaging of miliary tuberculosis of the CNS in children with tuberculous meningitis*.

The poster competition was closely contested, with only a very small margin between the marks of the top 2 contenders. The winning poster was entitled *MRI diagnosis of Joubert's syndrome – antenatally and postnatally*, by Dr Nasreen Mahomed.

The RSSA's successful bid to host the RSNA IVPs was one of the major coups of 2009. Having submitted the required application forms, the University of Natal, Greys Hospital Pietermaritzburg; the University of the Free State Academic Complex; and the University of Stellenbosch were selected as host institutions, based on their geographical locations, residents in training and 'commitment and enthusiasm to benefit from the program'. A paediatric neuroradiologist, Dr Medina, a musculoskeletal radiologist, Dr Seeger, and a cardiac imaging radiologist, Dr Jacobs, visited the selected hospitals – 2 IVPs to each of the 3 institutions. Registrars from neighboring institutions as well as clinicians from other disciplines in the respective hospitals were invited to attend the programmes.

The IVP visits proved to be most beneficial to the departments concerned, where the IVP lectures, board reviews and case discussions were held over a period of several days before and immediately after the congress. The visitors also expressed their enjoyment of interacting with the South African radiologists and registrars, both academically and socially.

The RSSA's mandate to 'bring world leaders in imaging to South Africa for the benefit of the medical community and, subsequently, better patient care' was admirably fulfilled this year, as also happened during 2008. Further exciting RSSA radiological congresses and workshops have already been organised for 2010.

RSSA/Leuven ear imaging course

The first and exclusive RSSA/Leuven Ear Imaging Course will take place on 16 - 18 April 2010 at the Spier Estate near Stellenbosch, Western Cape.

This hands-on interactive teaching course on temporal bone imaging is currently in its fourth European cycle. The course is conducted by internationally renowned Belgium and Dutch radiologists, under the leadership of Professor Dr Robert Hermans of the Department of Radiology, University Hospitals, K.U. Leuven, Belgium.

The cost-effective, pragmatic and comprehensive imaging approach to patients with hearing loss is of particular importance to clinicians, audiologists and speech therapists caring for these patients. The human and social impact, as well as the financial implications of a 'lost ear', are far-reaching, especially in developing countries.

The aim of the course is to familiarise participants with the different state-of-the-art imaging methods of the temporal bone and related structures, to provide guidelines for optimal use of these methods, and to illustrate the effect of imaging findings on patient management.

Starting with normal radiological anatomy, the appearance of common and uncommon diseases of the temporal bone and related structures on imaging studies will be explained, and the relative value of the different available imaging modalities. Apart from lectures, practical teaching will be done during workshops where participants will have the opportunity to test and expand their knowledge by reviewing clinical cases, with direct feedback from the teachers.

The course will be held at the historic, beautiful and tranquil Spier Estate, against the backdrop of the verdant mountains and vineyards surrounding Stellenbosch. Due to the technical and infrastructural requirements in presenting such a course, enrolment is limited to 90 participants and exclusively RSSA members. Course and registration details are online at www.rssa2010earcourse.co.za.