



DECEMBER 2009

A.S.S.I.

NEWS

FROM THE **SECRETARY'S DESK**

Dear Colleague,

The year 2009 has been an eventful year for the A.S.S.I. in more ways than one. Dr. S. Rajasekaran took over as President from Dr. Arvind Jayaswal, with Dr. G. D. Sundararaj as Vice-President. The A.S.S.I. is on the threshold of moving into its Silver Jubilee Year (Estd: 1985). The theme of "Safe Spine Surgery" proposed and propagated by the A.S.S.I. is gaining momentum and needs your support to achieve its final goal.

As the Secretary & Treasurer, it has been a matter of great honour to have served this esteemed organization for the past three years and I hope to see this association grow even further.

The present newsletter is a secretarial report of the major activities for the year 2008-09.

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I invite you to whole heartedly participate in the forthcoming events of the A.S.S.I.:

- ASSICON – 2010 – Nagpur – Hotel Sun-N-Sand – January 22-24, 2010 – Dr. Sajal Mitra
- ICS – 2010 – August 2010, Mysore – Dr. Rajgopalan
- ASSICON – 2011 – Silver Jubilee – January 2011 – Mumbai

Best regards,

(Ram Chaddha)

President's Message

The XXIII Annual Conference of Association of Spine Surgeons of India meeting in Nagpur is just around the corner and on behalf of the Organizing and Executive Committee; I extend a warm welcome to all our members. Over the past 23 years, our Association has grown and matured into a very strong academic body and our annual meetings are noted for its rich academic content and deliberations. I am sure that the meeting at Nagpur would be no exception and am confident of the rich academic feast awaiting us.

It is a matter of pride that our association is entering the 25th year. To commemorate this milestone, numerous activities are being planned to increase the academic and research activities amongst our members. Two research awards have been instituted – 'ASSI Award for Clinical Studies' and 'ASSI Award for Basic Sciences'. These will be open to all members of the A.S.S.I. and will carry a prize of Rs. 50,000 each. The award will be for research done in India and will be selected from research submissions by a committee in a blinded fashion. A 'Young Investigator Award' for original research conducted by surgeons less than 35 years is also being instituted to foster research amongst young surgeons. This again will be for a research done in India. An award

presentation session would be planned following the Presidential Oration where all the award papers will be presented. Undoubtedly, this session will be one of the highlights of our meetings.

To foster our academic and research activities, an 'ASSI Education Foundation' will be created so that funds earmarked for research and education can be separately channelised. Profits from our annual meetings and donations from industry will help to boost the funds of the foundation. At this juncture, I should express our gratitude to our industry for being our ever willing partners in our academic activities.

The Organising Committee under the stewardship of its Organising Chairman, Dr. Sajal Mitra and Organising Secretary, Dr. Ashok Lawange are making extensive arrangements for a useful and enjoyable meeting and our gratitude for all their efforts.

I look forward to meeting all of you in Nagpur.

Dr. S. Rajasekaran, Ph.D.
President – A.S.S.I.



Report of ASSICON – 2009, Chennai

January 23-25, 2009

Taj Coramandel, Chennai

The 22nd Annual Conference of the Association of Spine Surgeons of India, ASSICON - 2009, was held at the prestigious "Taj Coramandel" in Chennai from 23rd to 25th January, 2009. Dr. Sajan K. Hegde (Head of the Department – Orthopaedics, Senior Consultant Spine Surgeon, Apollo Hospital) was the Organizing Chairman and Dr. Appaji Krishnan was the Organizing Secretary. The Organizing committee included Dr. Ram Chaddha (Secretary, A.S.S.I.), Dr. Abhay Nene, Dr. Karunakaran, Dr. Manimaran, Dr. Mallikarjun & Dr. Ashok.

We would like to thank Dr. K.V. Menon & Dr. Raghav Dutt who along with Dr. Sajan Hegde were the judges for the free papers.

The overseas faculty members included eminent senior spine surgeons, Dr. John Kostuik, Dr. Edward Benzel, Dr. Paul McAfee, Dr. Richard Balderston, Dr. Kern Singh, Dr. Noordeen Hilali, Dr. Colin Natali, Dr. Sivaraman, Dr. Am Rai, & Dr. Gilles Perrin. Dr. Juergen Harms participated in the conference via video conference.

The program was attended by 330 delegates and had many significant "firsts" to its credit. These included:

- Interactive website with provisions for registration, booking accommodation and submitting abstracts.
- Maximum number of free papers (158) & posters (29). The free papers were evaluated independently and allotted 8 mins of presentation time in the main deliberations of the conference. Besides the

V.T. Ingalhalikar Gold Medal, additional "Critics Awards" were given to the best free paper & best poster and were adjudged by Dr. Ram Chaddha & Dr. S.K. Srivastava.

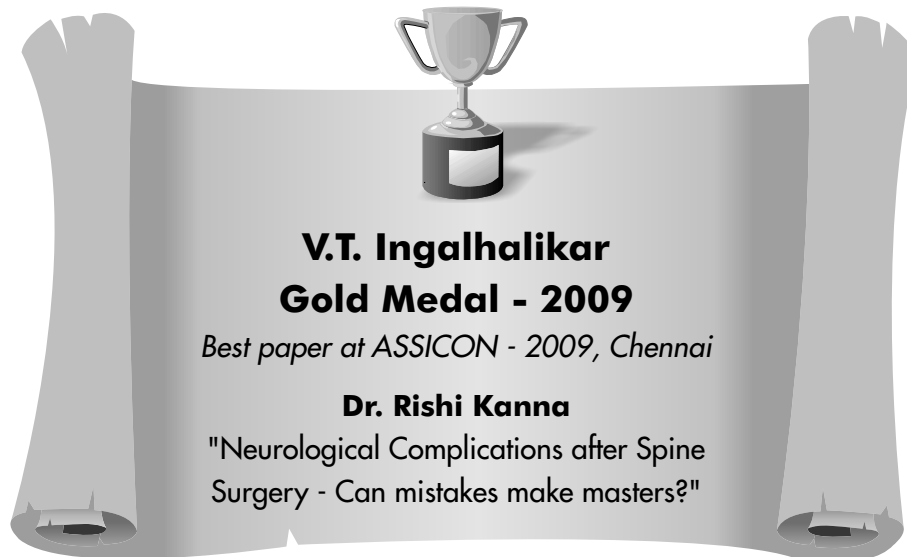
- We had international participants from UK, Singapore, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Oman, Kuwait & Bangladesh.
- Even though Dr. Juergen Harms could not be physically present for the conference, he was able to deliver 3 Guest Lectures via webcasting and he was also able to answer questions from the delegates.
- Prof. K. Sriram delivered the A.S.S.I. Oration
- An interactive DVD containing the live recorded conference presentations was sent to all the delegates who attended the conference.

The conference would not have been a huge success but for our industry support from Globus Medical, K2M, Medtronics, Synthes, Depuy, Scientx, Pfizer, Eli Lilly, Pharmed, Kimberly Clark, GESCO, Sushrut & Jayon.

The organizing committee would like to thank and place on record the significant contributions of Mr. Anand, Mr. Rajendran (Delta Pro Systems, Web Designer), Marundeshwara Enterprises, Event Organizers (Gautam Rai & Mrs. Lalitha) & Mr. Pradeep Bagdi.

Dr. Sajan Hegde

Dr. Appaji Krishnan



Minutes of the Annual General Body Meeting of the "Association of Spine Surgeons of India" held at Hotel Taj Coramandel, Chennai, on Saturday, January 24, 2009

The Annual General Body Meeting of the Association of Spine Surgeons, of India was held on January 24, 2009 at the Hotel Taj Coramandel, Chennai during the ASSICON 2009. The attendees were as per register. Dr. Arvind Jayaswal, President A.S.S.I. was in the chair and called the meeting to order.

- 1. Condolences:** The house stood in silence for two minutes to mourn the demise of our senior member & Past President, Dr. T.K. Shanmugasundaram. Dr. S. Rajasekaran, Vice-President A.S.S.I. delivered a condolence speech sharing aspects of TKS his mentor and guide with the house. The house resolved to send a condolence letter to the bereaved family.
- 2. Minutes of Past GBM:** The minutes of the AGBM held at Coimbatore during ASSICON 2008, were passed, proposed by Dr. Rajagopalan, seconded by Dr. Samir Dalvie. The minutes of the Extra-ordinary GBM held at Chail, during ICS 2008, were passed, proposed by Dr. Abhay Nene seconded by Dr. S. K. Srivastava.
- 3. Secretarial Report:** The report of Dr. Ram Chaddha, Secretary A.S.S.I. , as published in the ASSI newsletter was passed, proposed by Dr. Jitendra Jamdar seconded by Dr. Vilas Jog.
- 4. Accounts & Income Tax status:** The balance sheets of the previous financial years were being sorted out by Dr. H. S. Chhabra, Treasurer A.S.S.I. The balance from Coimbatore was to be transferred to Mumbai S.B.I. account of the A.S.S.I. and the house decided that most of the savings should be put in Fixed Deposits, keeping a small working corpus for day to day activities of the A.S.S.I. The details of the same would be presented at the Extra-ordinary G.B.M. of the A.S.S.I. at ICS - 2009, Khajuraho., proposed by Dr. Jitendra Jamdar, seconded by Dr. Abhay Nene.
- 5. Constitutional Reforms, Logo & Protocols:** The Committee of Dr. V.T. Ingalthalikar, Dr. Arvind Jayaswal and Dr. Ram Chaddha would circulate their suggestions to all the members and it could be passed in the G.B.M. at a later date. The house felt that a change in the logo of the A.S.S.I. should be considered with inputs from members who could garner their artistic skills to redesign the logo. Dr. H.S. Chhabra and Dr. Abhay Nene offered to use their good offices for the same.
- 6. Academic Protocols:** Dr. Raghav Dutt Mulukutla communicated to the house that both he and Dr. Gautam Zaveri had taken inputs from the younger members of the A.S.S.I. who felt that academic programs were too tightly packed and needed to be eased. He was to make a presentation of their plans in near future.
- 7. A.S.S.I. website:** Dr. Samir Dalvie informed the house that the website had been updated and members could log in. He asked members to make suggestions to improve the same. He also suggested fellowships, jobs etc. to be advertised on the website.
- 8. Research Projects:** The status of the three research projects were to be presented officially at the ASSICON – 2009, Chennai the next day. The three projects needed more support and contributions from all members.
- 9. Awards & Fellowships:** The A.S.S.I.- Depuy Travelling fellowship stipend has now been increased to Indian Rupees 25,000/- each due to the efforts of Dr. Arvind Jayaswal & Dr. Ram Chaddha. This should encourage younger members to take the benefit of this fellowship. The house appreciated the efforts of its two members and the kind gesture of Depuy Spine India to increase the fellowship stipend.
- 10. ICS – 2009 – Khajuraho:** Dr. J. Jamdar invited all to Khajuraho and promised an academic feast along with a good non-academic program. The dates were August 14-16, 2009 and the venue was Hotel Clarkes. The focus would be "Minimally Invasive Spine".

11. **ASSICON – 2010 – Nagpur:** In the absence of Dr. Sajal Mitra, Dr. Lawange invited all members to attend in large numbers. The dates suggested were January 22-24, 2010 and the venue proposed could be VCA club or Hotel Imperial.
12. **A.S.S.I. Orator – 2010:** Dr. Arvind Jayaswal proposed as the A.S.S.I. Orator for 2010 at Nagpur.
13. **Election of Office Bearers for 2009-10:** Dr. Ram Chaddha explained the logistics of the Executive committee of the A.S.S.I. The President Dr. Arvind Jayaswal completed his tenure of two years. Dr. S. Rajasekaran completed his tenure as Vice- President. Dr. Raghav Dutt Mulukutala & Dr. S.K. Srivastava completed their terms as executive committee members. The house thanked the outgoing members of the executive for their honorary service to the association. Dr. Arvind Jayaswal was the last of the founder members of the A.S.S.I. who moves ahead after completing his Presidential term. The new executive of the A.S.S.I. was unanimously selected as follows:
- **Dr. S. Rajasekaran:** *President (2009-2011):* proposed by Dr. Arvind Jayaswal & seconded by Dr. Shekhar Bhojraj
 - **Dr. G.D. Sundararaj:** *Vice-President (2009-2011):* proposed by Dr. Venkatesh & seconded by Dr. Ravi
 - **Dr. Abhay Nene:** *Member (2009-2012):* proposed by Dr. Raghav Dutt & seconded by Dr. Samir Dalvie
 - **Dr. Karthik Kailash:** *Member (2009-2012):* proposed by Dr. Abhay Nene & seconded by Dr. Surya Prakash Rao
 - **Dr. V. K. Jain,** *senior neurosurgeon* was co-opted from the floor of the house.

The Executive Committee of the Association of Spine Surgeons of India for 2009-2010 is as follows:

President: Dr. S. Rajasekaran (2009-2011)

Vice- President: Dr. G.D. Sundararaj (2009-2011)

Secretary & Treasurer: Dr. Ram Chaddha (2007-2010)

Joint Secretary: Dr. H. S. Chhabra (2007-2010)

Members: Dr. Amit Jhala (2007-2010)
Dr. Anil Jain (2007-2010)

Dr. Shashank Kale (2008-2011)
Dr. R. Sivakumar (2008-2011)
Dr. Abhay Nene (2009-2012)
Dr. Karthik Kailash (2009-2012)

Co-opted members: Dr. Jitendra Jamdar
Dr. Sajal Mitra
Dr. Samir Dalvie
Dr. V.K. Jain

14. **Ratification of Members:** 39 new members were ratified as life members of the A.S.S.I.
15. **ICS – 2010 Venue & Theme:** Dr. Rajagopalan of Bengaluru proposed for ICS-2010 at Mysore/ Coorg. The house accepted the proposal and suggested – Adult Lumbar Spine or Iatrogenic Problems in Spine as the theme
16. **ASSICON-2011:** Dr. S. Rajasekaran & Dr. Arvind Jayaswal proposed that since this would be the “Silver Jubilee” conference of the A.S.S.I., it should be held in Mumbai, where the A.S.S.I. was conceived and established. The “Bombay Spine Club” represented by Dr. S.Y. Bhojraj, Dr. Ram Chaddha et al accepted the honour and promised to hold a memorable conference.
17. **Sub-specialty meeting at IOACON – 2009 – Bhubaneswar:** The theme of “Lumbar disc herniation – Current Concepts” was proposed by Dr. Ram Chaddha. It was approved by the house. It was proposed that Dr. Shankar Acharya be the co-ordinator of the same during IOACON – 2009, November at Bhubaneswar. Members desirous of participating were invited to correspond with the secretary and the local co-ordinator.
18. **Chapter of A.S.S.I.:** The secretary, Dr. Ram Chaddha asked the opinion of the house regarding a proposal of Dr. Chinmoy Nath et al from West Bengal to for a separate chapter of the A.S.S.I. It was suggested that at present the Association was not forming separate chapters and the group of surgeons could form a “Kolkata Spine Club” rather than a chapter of the A.S.S.I.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair and all members.

Report of ASSI-Dartmouth Spine Fellowship for 2008

Fellow:

Dr. Bhavuk Garg,

MBBS, MS, Fellow in Arthroplasty (J&J), Fellow in Orthopaedics & Trauma Surgery (Germany), ASSI Spine Fellow 2008

Senior Research Associate

Department of Orthopaedics, All India Institute of Medical sciences, New Delhi-29

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I sincerely thank the Association of Spine Surgeons of India, Prof. Arvind Jayaswal, Dr. S. Rajasekaran, Dr. Ram Chaddha and Dr. H. S. Chhabra for giving me the opportunity to visit Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Hanover, USA as spine fellow. It was a wonderful and unforgettable experience of my life and I am honored.

I started my fellowship on 13th October 2008 and finished on 15th November 2008. I will keep on relishing the taste of wonderful hospitality and affection, which I received there from Dr. Dilip Sengupta and his family. The extent to which he went to take care of me is unimaginable. I got a fatherly affection from him. He was my mentor and guide throughout my fellowship.

I also sincerely thank Prof. Weinstein, Dr. Sohail Mirza, Dr. Abdu, Dr. Moen, Dr. Bernini, Dr. J. D. Lurie and all other faculty members for giving me so much attention and care. I also express my cordial gratitude to the staff of Orthopaedics Department and Spine Center at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center including Mrs. Michelle Roth, Mrs. Karen Gollegly, Mrs. Megan Linn, Mrs. Tracy Pope, Mr. Kevin and all other staff members who helped me in all possible ways. I also want to thank the computer department of DHMC, who taught me to work on their clinical information system. I also express my heart-deep gratitude for Mr. Haiboo, who taught me the biomechanic testing of spine.

From 13th October 2008 to 17th October 2008

I attended the North American Spine Society (NASS) meeting in the beautiful city of Toronto, Canada. I attended the plenary, free paper sessions and various symposia. This meeting helped me in understanding various future prospects in the field of spine surgery.

From 18th October 2008 to 15th November 2008

I joined the Department of Orthopaedics, Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, Hanover, New Hampshire on 18th October 2008. I was attending the spine centre in the department. First day, I underwent an extensive orientation program regarding medical centre. It was really amazing to attend their well organized orientation program. Next day I attended computer classes to learn their CIS (clinical information system). I also underwent an OR work-training the same day.

I attended out patient clinic along with Dr. Sengupta on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays. It was amazing to see their organized way of conducting the OPD. I also learnt about "Functional Restoration Program." I also learnt about patient surveys, which included Oswestry disability index and SF-36 and its mental and physical components.

I was scheduled for OR on Wednesdays and Thursdays along with Dr. Sengupta. I saw as well as scrubbed in lot of surgeries which included:

1. Scoliosis surgery: 2
2. Transforaminal Interbody fusion with posterior instrumentation: 6
3. Posterior lumbar Interbody fusion with posterior instrumentation: 3
4. Anterior cervical discectomy and fusion: 6
5. Discectomy including one cauda equine syndrome: 3

I presented **"A randomized prospective study comparing the results of Microendoscopic discectomy with that of**

Open discectomy” at the Clinical Grand Round of Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, which is also available on their website at present.

I worked on two areas of research:

1. Correlation of MRI grading with Diskogram classification and their combined influence on outcome
2. Various patterns of mental component score (MCS) and physical component score (PCS) of SF-36 survey and their correlation with outcome

I also attended daily meetings, Grand rounds and various academic activities of the department and they enlightened me a lot. It is also worth watching their pain clinics and physical therapy sessions.

It was wonderful to have Dr. Vijay Goni, as a co-fellow from Indian Orthopaedic Association (IOA). We shared many lifetime memories during our fellowship. It is nice to have a co-fellow to fully enjoy the period.

The Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Centre provided full airfare as well as my NASS registration fee. Dr. Sengupta arranged our stay at his own home. We also got a card for food from DHMC. I did not receive any other grant from either USA or India.

I again want to thank A.S.S.I., DHMC and Dr. Dilip Sengupta for this wonderful opportunity to visit one of the best spine centers of USA, in Dr. Dilip Sengupta's words- 'A place, where science originates'.

A.S.S.I.-Depuy Traveling Fellowship - 2009

15-02-2009

To

The Secretary,

Association of Spine Surgeons of India

From

Dr. Janardhana Aithala,

ASSI - Depuy Traveling Spine fellow - 2009

Subject: Report of the ASSI Depuy Traveling Spine Fellowship 2009.

Sir,

I, Dr. Janardana Aithala (KMC Manipal) and Dr. Kamran Farooque (AIIMS Delhi) started our traveling fellowship from January 23 at ASSICON 2009. It was a great conference with high quality scientific content. We participated in all scientific sessions, and benefited largely from scientific deliberations on various topics related to spine surgery with relevance to current practice. All talks were excellent, particularly the lecture on artificial cervical disc by Dr. S. Rajasekaran and the debate on interspinous devices by Dr. Ram Chaddha were really good as well as lectures by Dr. Juergen Harms and Dr. John Kostuik on deformities. Dr. Appaji Krishnan looked after our accommodation and local conveyance very well.

I also presented a paper in the V. T. Ingalthalikal gold medal session.

From Chennai, we traveled to the Ganga Hospital, Coimbatore on 25th January night and commenced our actual fellowship from 26th January. Being an alumni of Ganga Hospital, it was home coming for me after 7 years. There were a lot of new things that happened over the last 7 years including the new hospital which is a state-of-the-art 400 plus bedded hospital (with 5 full-fledged operating theatres exclusively for orthopedics) compared to the old 150 bedded hospital. Irrespective of so many new facilities, work culture remained the same which was the one thing that I was always trying to adapt in my practice. It was a great experience for me for I could refresh my knowledge and learn a lot about spine surgery as during my earlier residency in Ganga Hospital I was a DNB student and my priorities were different, while now I have taken to spine surgery actively. We were exposed to plenty of spine surgeries as well as academic activities. We worked under Dr. S. Rajasekaran Sir who explained all surgeries in detail and also involved us in lot of academic activities.

On Monday, first we saw a case of L4-5 canal stenosis; bilateral microscopic decompression was done from one side only. Next, we saw a case of PLIF with pedicle screw system and cages. This was followed by a case of L5-S1

microscopic discectomy. Dr. S. Rajasekaran demonstrated beautifully, discectomy and decompression of nerve root preserving ligamentum flavum. It was very impressive to see the clarity with which one can visualize the structures and nerve roots under microscope making the surgery much more comfortable than the naked eye surgery. Tuesday, we had plenty of academic activities. Morning we had a case presentation and discussion on thoracolumbar scoliosis. After that, we saw a surgery on tethered cord syndrome. Next, we went to microsurgery lab. which was a specialized lab. set up for training spine surgeons on microscopic spine surgery. There was training on microscope with hands on experience on animal spine. On Wednesday, we saw a case of degenerative disc disease with instability treated by decompression and PLIF. Next, we saw a case of C5-6 microscopic anterior discectomy. Dr. S Rajasekaran discussed and showed the steps in anterior approach to cervical spine before shifting to microscope. Third case of the day was a case of thoracolumbar kyphoscoliosis treated by a combination of pedicle screw and sublaminar wire systems. We saw the technique of putting pedicle screws both with the help of navigation as well as free hand technique. We also saw the techniques of reduction used in correcting the deformity, as well as understood the importance of not being overzealous while reducing the deformity during our discussions with Dr. S. Rajasekaran. The day was not over yet; we had the opportunity of seeing one more microdiscectomy of lumbar spine.

Thursday morning, we saw a case of L4-5 microdiscectomy, and then I attended Dr. S. Rajasekaran's OPD, wherein, I saw some interesting cases like operated C2-3 fracture dislocation, Hemi vertebrae with scoliosis etc. After this, Dr. Ajay Prasad Shetty, took us for detailed ward-rounds and discussed all spine related cases in detail. On Friday, we saw a case of two level PLIF followed by double level microdiscectomy of lumbar spine. This was followed by a case of extradural cyst causing nerve root compression treated by microscopic cyst excision. Then, we saw a case of cervical myelopathy C2-4 level with instability, treated by posterior laminectomy and C2-4 instrumentation with pedicle screw fixation. It was a long day and we saw a case of discitis treated by debridement and fusion with instrumentation, L4-5 TB Spine biopsy, and a case of

vertebroplasty. The amount of workload here is phenomenal and yet same high standard and meticulousness is being maintained even for the last case at the fog end of day. Saturday was our last working day at Ganga Hospital; I saw a case of D12 burst fracture fixed with posterior instrumentation. This was followed by a guest lecture on chronic pain management with special emphasis on backache arranged by department of anesthesiology. Followed by this, Dr. S. Rajasekaran took us to a wonderful dinner along with fellows from Kenya. Throughout our stay, Dr. S. Rajasekaran explained in detail about all surgeries and also explained in detail about management of thoracolumbar trauma. He also explained about various research activities going on in Ganga Hospital including endplate properties. We also had the opportunity of scrubbing for all cases and I and my colleague Dr. Kamran were able to assist alternate surgeries. I would love to come to this place again and again, whenever I feel I need some refreshing of my knowledge and skills in spine surgery.

From Coimbatore, we traveled to Mumbai. It was another great week in Mumbai. We were exposed to different spine surgeons from Mumbai as well as exposed to different type of spine surgeries. First day, we saw a vertebroplasty with Dr. Abhay Nene. Then, we saw a case of two level anterior corpectomy and cage fixation for cervical myelopathy done by Dr. Samir Dalvie. Followed by this, we saw a case of ankylosing spondylitis with pseudoarthrosis and Dr. Gautam Zaveri did a posterior stabilization and anterior fusion through thoracotomy. He was kind enough to allow me scrub and work as first assistant. Second day, we went to Lilavati hospital where we met Dr. Shekhar Bhojraj, a big name in spine surgery. He showed us congenital hemivertebrae with scoliosis; there was a discussion on management options. Then he did an anterior convex epiphysiodesis and posterior stabilization with Hartshill clamps and sublaminar wires. We also saw a case of PLIF with pedicle screw system. Third day, we went to KEM Hospital, where we saw an anterior cervical discectomy and fusion done with the help of loop and then a case of congenital CV junction anomaly presenting as myelopathy, treated by C1 arch excision and occipito axial fusion with transarticular screws. Dr. Ashok Rathod and his assistant Dr. Kshitij discussed cases in detail and explained

the management options. On Thursday, we were with Dr. Abhay Nene, who showed us posterior stabilization with pedicle screws, decompression and interbody fusion for TB spine in L4-5 region, then another case of TB spine of T2-3 stabilised with Hartshill rectangle. At this point I would like to mention that, Dr. Abhay Nene looked after us very well for the whole week, as he was our convener, he arranged our plans also for the week, despite his busy schedule he was kind enough to spare some time to us guiding us in Mumbai.

On Friday, we had the privilege of meeting Dr. V.T. Ingalthalikar; it was an important day for us. Soon we realized that we were with one of the greatest teacher of spine surgery. He explained the principles of decompression in lumbar spine surgery in a very simple way with special emphasis on lateral canal decompression, then the preparation of interbody area for fusion in interbody fusion, and then demonstrated with a case of degenerative disc disease with instability and canal stenosis wherein he did a decompression and PLIF without cages but with posterior stabilization. I was very much impressed as I also do not use cages for fusion but always had a doubt whether I should change. Then, he and his assistant Dr. P.V. Prabhu gave us two power point presentations on fundamentals of lumbar disc surgery and relevant surgical anatomy of lumbar spine. We would have loved to meet him again but unfortunately, Mumbai is a such a big place with so many spine surgeons, it was difficult to spend some more time with him as our fellowship was only for a week in Mumbai.

In the evening, we attended Bombay Spine Club meeting where there was high level discussion and presentation of difficult cases by all the members. The discussion was of high class and we have discussed about more than 20 cases including gross deformities, cervical spine problems and complications arising from surgery. We had the opportunity to listen to Dr. Ram Chaddha, Dr. Mihir Bapat and Dr. Arvind Kulkarni whom we could not meet earlier due to congested workload as well as traffic. Dr. Abhay Nene then treated us to a wonderful dinner.

Saturday, we went again to KEM; this time to meet Dr. S. K. Srivastava, who is also a great teacher. He explained in detail about the technique of anterior disc surgery and showed us a case of anterior cervical discectomy and fusion

without the help of microscope. He also discussed management options in cervical fracture dislocation. Then he showed us a case of TB spine T12-L1 wherein anterior decompression and bone grafting with instrumentation was being done. From there we returned to our respective places.

It was wonderful 2 weeks and I felt it went so fast. We learned a lot about fundamentals of spine surgery, different concepts, and different techniques of spine surgery. We also thank anesthesiologists at both places who discussed various issues like positioning, BP control during surgery and wake up test with us.

Our special thanks to

1. A.S.S.I. and its executive members including Dr. Ram Chaddha for selecting us and giving us a great opportunity.
2. Dr. S. Rajasekaran for training us very well during our stay in Ganga Hospital, for not only he showed surgeries but also involved us in teaching sessions like clinical discussion, ward rounds, OPD and exposed us to microlab training. He also stimulated us to have some research attitude in our practice.
3. Dr. V.T. Ingalthalikar for teaching us the basics of lumbar spine surgery and showing great enthusiasm teaching us.
4. Dr. Abhay Nene for coordinating our itinerary in Mumbai.

Suggestions: Mumbai is such a big place that one week was very short and we could not interact with all spine surgeons. We could spend only one day with Prof. V.T. Ingalthalikar and other senior surgeons. It could be worth to consider increasing the duration of fellowship to 3 weeks. Also, it would be better if timing of fellowship can be conveniently kept after discussion with the candidate and the conveners of centers to which he is going. But, despite this, it was a great experience; I thank once again A.S.S.I. for giving me this great opportunity.

Thanking you,

Dr. Janardhana Aithala P.

Associate professor, KMC Manipal

A.S.S.I.-Depuy Traveling Fellowship - 2009

To

The Secretary, A.S.S.I.

Sub: A.S.S.I. Depuy Travelling Fellowship 2009

Respected sir,

I am immensely grateful to the A.S.S.I. for awarding me this two weeks fellowship and giving me the opportunity to learn from the experience and expertise of eminent spine surgeons of the country.

The fellowship began on 26th Jan, after a highly academic ASSICON 2009 at Chennai.

I along with my co-fellow Dr. Janardana Aithala were placed under the supervision and guidance of Dr. S Rajasekaran at Ganga Hospital, Coimbatore for the first week of the fellowship.

At Ganga Hospital, we saw sixteen cases of spine surgeries performed by the spine team, headed by Dr. S Rajasekaran and Dr. Ajoy Shetty.

We were exposed to a wide spectrum of spine cases at the Ganga Hospital.

I found Dr. S. Rajasekaran a teacher par excellence. He would explain all the pros and cons about each case and clarify all our queries in a rational and logical manner.

We were very fortunate to have one session of hands on training in the microsurgical cadaveric lab. I found it extremely valuable and I am looking forward to initiate the use of microscope in my practice in near future.

Dr. S. Rajasekaran also demonstrated a dorso lumbar scoliosis correction using the navigation system which is available in very few spine centres of the country.

Dr. Rajasekaran also gave us brief overview of the research activities being conducted at Ganga Hospital.

I am extremely grateful to Dr. S. Rajasekaran and the entire spine team at Ganga Hospital for the cordial atmosphere and the warm hospitality extended to us during our stay at Coimbatore.

We arrived in Mumbai on 1st Feb., Dr. Abhey Nene was our fellowship coordinator at Mumbai.

We were very fortunate to be associated with a galaxy of

eminent spine surgeons at Mumbai.

On Monday, we started the day early morning with Dr. Abhey Nene at Hinduja Hospital, where he demonstrated a Vertebroplasty. Then, we went to Bombay Hospital, where Dr. Samir Dalvie, demonstrated microscopic two level cervical corpectomy. Then, at Joy Hospital

Dr. Gautam Zaveri operated an ankylosing spondylitis case - Dorso Ventral instrumented fusion. After the case, we attended the Spine Clinic at Wockhardt Hospital with Dr. Zaveri and discussed each case in detail. We ended the day with a lovely dinner hosted by Dr. Zaveri.

On Tuesday, we were placed under the guidance of Dr. Shekhar Bhojraj at Lilavati Hospital. Dr. Bhojraj demonstrated a congenital scoliosis and a listhesis surgery.

Next day, we were at KEM Hospital with Dr. Ashok Rathod and Dr. Kshitij and observed a cervical discectomy and a C1 decompression with instrumentation.

On Thursday, we were with Dr. Abhey Nene at Hinduja Hospital for a TB Spine decompression and instrumented fusion.

On Friday, we travelled to Thane and were attached with Dr. V.T. Ingalthalikar for the day. Dr. Ingalthalikar demonstrated a Listhesis decompression and instrumented PLIF. After the surgery, there was a teaching session by Dr. Ingalthalikar and Dr. Prabhu on fundamentals of lumbar spine surgery and clinical anatomy of spine respectively.

On Friday evening, we had an extremely enthusiastic and academic Bombay Spine Club meet for four hours at Hinduja Hospital, where some of the most difficult and challenging cases were discussed.

After the spine club meet, we attended the banquet hosted by the Bombay Spine Club.

On the final day of the fellowship, we were at KEM hospital with Dr. S Srivastava where Dr. Srivastava demonstrated an ACDF.

The fellowship ended on 7th Feb and I flew back to Delhi on 7th Evening.

I am grateful to the A.S.S.I. for awarding me this fellowship. It gave me a golden opportunity to interact at a personal

level with a whole galaxy of outstanding spine surgeons in the country. The fellowship gave me an exposure and understanding to a wide spectrum of spine pathologies. It gave me an opportunity to clarify my doubts and queries with the experts. Overall the fellowship has enhanced my understanding of spine as a specialty and broadened my outlook in spine surgery and given me an impetus to develop proficiency in certain areas of spine surgery such as the cervical spine and microscopic spine surgery.

I would like thank Prof. A Jayaswal, Dr. Ram Chaddha, Dr. S Rajasekaran, Dr. Ajoy Shetty, Dr. Abhey Nene, Dr. Samir Dalvie, Dr. Gautam Zaveri, Dr. Shekhar Bhojraj, Dr. Ashok Rathod, Dr. Kshitij, Dr. V.T Ingalhikar, Dr. S.K. Srivastava, for their guidance, support and hospitality during the course of this fellowship.

Last but not the least; I would like to thank Dr. Janardhan Aithala, for being a wonderful co- fellow.

Dr. Kamran Farooque, M.S, MRCS,
Assistant Professor Orthopedics
JPN Apex Trauma Centre, AIIMS, New Delhi.

APPENDIX: LIST OF CASES

Ganga Hospital, Coimbatore

- 26th Jan 1) L5-S1, Listhesis- Grade I.
 PLIF with 2 cages + L5 & S1 instrumentation
- 2) Microdiscectomy L5/S1- Left Sided
- 3) Microdiscectomy L4/5-Left Sided
- 27th Jan 1) Tethered Cord Syndrome- 9 months
 Microscopic Detethering of Cord
 Microsurgery training Lab-cadaveric goat spine
- 2) Levels of lumbar discectomy
- 3) Cervical Discectomy
- 28th Jan 1) Listhesis L5-S1+ PIVD L4/5
 PLIF for L4/5+PLIF for L5/S1
- 2) PIVD- C5-6. ACDF- Microscopic
- 3) PIVD-L4/5- Mini open Discectomy
- 4) Burst # D12-Posterior instrumentation
 D11-12-L1+fusion
- 5) Neuromuscular Dorsolumbar scoliosis

- Posterior Instrumentation & fusion with Navigation guidance.
- 29th Jan 1) Failed Back Syndrome with recurrent Disc at L4/5 & L5/S1
 - Discectomy at L4/5 and L5/S1- Microscopic
 Afternoon Session: Ward rounds of spine patients.
- 30th Jan 1) Listhesis L4/5
 - PLIF with 2 Cages + Post instrumentation at L4 & L5
- 2) PIVD at L4/5 & L5/S1
 - Two level discectomy at L4/5 & L5/S1- Microscopic
- 3) Discitis L3/4
 - Discectomy at L3/4 and bone on bone fusion with posterior instrumentation
- 4) Vertebroplasty for compression fracture L1 with bone cement
- 5) Cervical Myelopathy at C3 & C4
 - Laminectomy at C3 & C4 with pedicle screw fixation at C2 & C4 using the navigation system.

31st Jan Coimbatore sight seeing

Mumbai - Total Cases: 10

- 2nd Feb 1) Vertebroplasty for # D12 under LA (Dr.A. Nene)
- 2) Cervical mylopathy-C4,5,6 (Bombay hospital- Dr. S. Dalvie)
 - Double level microscopic corpectomy of C 5 & 6 with cage and plate fixation at C4 & C7.
- 3) Ank Spond with pseudoarthrosis of D10 D11 (Joy Hosp.- Dr. G. Zaveri)
 posterior fixation at 6 levels + ant discectomy of D10-D11 & anterior fusion with graft
 Clinics of Dr. G. Zaveri at Wockhardt Hospital & Zaveri Clinic.
- 3rd Feb: Lilavati Hospital (Dr. Shekhar Bhojraj)
- 1) Congenital Scoliosis with hemivertebra at D12.
 Ant. Hemivertebra resection & post.

- fixation and fusion with sublaminar wires from T4 to L3
- 2) Spondylolisthesis L5/S1 with lysis at L5 Post decompression at L4 and L5 with fixation with pedicle screws at L4, L5 & S1 and posterolateral fusion
- 4th Feb KEM Hospital (Dr. Rathod & Dr. Kshitij)
- 1) Adjacent level disease at C6-C7 with Myelopathy
Anterior discectomy C6/7 with tricortical grafting
 - 2) Cervical Myelopathy at C0-C1 with C-V junction anomaly-
Decompression at C1-Laminectomy with transarticular C1-C2 screw fixation with C0-C2 fusion with bone graft with wiring (Occipito Cervical fusion from Occiput to C2)
- 5th Feb Hinduja Hospital (Dr. A. Nene)
TB Spine at L4/5 level
Postero lateral decompression at L4/5 level with interbody fusion with graft and posterior instrumentation at L3, L4, L5 & S1 level.
- 6th Feb Thane (Dr. V. T. Ingalthalikar)
- 1) Degenerative Listhesis at L4/5
Decompression with interbody fusion- PLIF with bone graft and posterior fixation using Hartshill rectangle at L4 and L5
- Faculty Lectures:**
1. Principles of Lumbar spine surgery-
Dr. Ingalthalikar
 2. Clinical anatomy of spine – Dr. Prabhu
- Evening:**
Bombay Spine Club Meet and banquet
- 7th Feb KEM HOSPITAL (Dr. S. K. Srivastava)
- 1) C6-7 Disc prolapse- traumatic
Anterior C6-7 discectomy with tricortical graft fusion and plating.

Report of sub-specialty meeting of the A.S.S.I. at IOACON – 2009, Bhubaneswar

The 54th Annual Indian Orthopaedics Conference held at Bhubaneswar, Orissa from 24th to 29th Nov. 2009 was a great success and proved that even non metros have the capability and the resources to hold such a large event with fine precision. Since it was held in the temple city and was in close proximity to the world famous Lord Jagannath temple at Puri and world heritage Sun temple of Konark, families had extra enthusiasm and children loved to be on the Puri beach. The A.S.S.I. subspecialty meet and free papers were held on 28th of November, 2009 in the main hall and had the distinction of having 100% attendance of faculty. However, the attendance of delegates was poor. There were about 70 odd people.

The 1st session, which was chaired, by Dr. Arvind Jayaswal and Dr. Shankar Acharya had speakers Dr. R. S. Chahal, Dr. Upendra, Dr. Manoj Sharma, Dr. Arun Bhanot, Dr. Arvind Kulkarni & Dr. Rajasekaran discussing lumbar disc pathology and various treatment options in detail.

Prof. P T Rao & Dr. Madan Sahu chaired the 2nd session and had speakers Dr. Saumyajit Basu, Dr. Shankar Acharya, Dr. Arvind Jayaswal, Dr. Harsh Bhargava, and Dr. Abrar Ahmed discussing fusion and non-fusion techniques and complications of surgery.

Both the sessions were followed by discussions and the best part was that every one stuck to allotted time.

The basic spine workshop was held on 28th Nov from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and best part was that it had maximum attendance of all the conference workshops and all the people stayed till the end and practised their skills on saw models under guidance of the experienced faculty.

We feel it was a good academic event well-organised and shows the resolve of the A.S.S.I. to spread basic spine knowledge to the general orthopaedic community at large, but delegate attendance needs to be addressed seriously as it is a lot of effort from our side. We must have the IOA input on this.

We thank Organisers of IOACON 2009 for their valuable help.

Dr. Shankar Acharya et al

Ganga Operative Spine Course

Under the aegis of A.S.S.I.

30th April to 3rd May, 2009

The 'Ganga Operative Spine course' was a prestigious event conducted under the aegis of the Association of Spine Surgeons of India.

The course was conducted from 30th April to 3rd May 2009 and was one of the important meetings of the A.S.S.I. with 305 participants from 18 countries. The unique feature of the course was that it focused entirely on operative techniques demonstrated live by experts in the field. Particular emphasis was laid in discussing the indications for surgery, choice of the procedure and the techniques rather than on any particular instrumentation. The A.S.S.I. and the organizers were quite particular to keep the course 'patient and technique' oriented rather than 'industry or implant' oriented.

The surgical procedures demonstrated ranged from the simplest to the challenging and showcased various options in the successful treatment of the same disease. In all, 26 important and difficult spinal surgeries were demonstrated by nine international and eight national experts in the field over a period of 3 ½ days.

The successful conduct of such a course was a challenge as more than 50 spine patients with different etiologies had to be kept ready for surgery. This allowed the faculty members

to choose patients and procedures with which they are entirely comfortable. Although only three surgeries were transmitted live simultaneously, five operating theatres were utilized to avoid wastage of time and overcome delays of anesthesia induction, positioning, preparation and surgical exposure. Facilities to transmit live from five theatres to three halls at various permutations and combinations obviously need a huge inventory of audio visual equipments and trained personnel. Availability of this expertise is essential for success of such conferences.

The faculty were most co-operative to demonstrate techniques clearly even while operating in a new atmosphere. The support of the industry in sponsoring a huge budget and subsidizing the implants used was also very vital to a course of this nature. Our special thanks are due to AOSpine International and Synthes for being the Diamond Sponsors for the event.

In summary, it was hard work for everybody but very satisfying and worthwhile as judged from the tributes and feedbacks that were obtained from all the faculty members and delegates alike.

Dr. S. Rajasekaran



Report on Instructional Course in Spine, Khajuraho

14th to 16th August, 2009

Even before I start this report, on behalf of Jabalpur Spine Society (JaSS) I would like to present my gratitude towards A.S.S.I. for providing us the opportunity to organize this conference.

The academic programme revolved around the two themes which are as follows:

1. Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery and
2. Challenges in spine surgery in the next decade.

The conference venue was Hotel Clarks, Khajuraho. Delegates and faculty participated in extensive discussion during the academic sessions including wine and spine and breakfast seminars at the venue. Independence Day function, Inauguration as well as Valedictory functions were brief and organized at Hotel Clarks, Khajuraho as well. The other venue for breakfast seminar and cultural activities was Hotel Radisson. The total number of delegates was 102 and additionally another 35 joined them as accompanying delegates from various parts of the country. Dr. Tshewang flew down from Bhutan to participate and actively interact during the conference.

The academic activity was well complimented by cultural activities on all days. Conventional cricket match had to be abandoned due to heavy showers. For the first time in I.C.S. A. R. S. was used!

The breakfast seminars also were introduced for the first time and were well attended.

Trade exhibition and hands on workshop on spine models were appreciated by the younger surgeons.

The faculty who contributed during the academics were Dr. A. Nene, Dr. A. Ranajan, Dr. A. Bhanot, Dr. A. Kulkarni, Prof. A. Jayaswal, Prof. A. Jain, Dr. A. Krishnan, Dr. B. Garg, Dr. B. Sethi, Dr. B. Upendra, Dr. D. Patel, Dr. H. S. Chhabra, Dr. K. Badani, Dr. M. Kaushal, Dr. N. Babu, Dr. R. Dutt, Dr. Rajasekaran, Dr. R. Chaddha, Dr. R. Parasnis, Dr. R. Prasad, Dr. R. Deshpande, Dr. S. Bhojraj, Dr. S. Dubey, Dr. S. Mathur, Dr. S. Rohidas, Dr. S. K. Srivastava, Prof. V. T. Ingalthalikar, Dr. V. Gupte, Dr. Venkatesh, Dr. Y. Pithwa,

The Indian faculty was duly supported by two stalwarts from European Spine Society namely Prof. A. Korge and Prof. F. Jorg.

Unfortunately there is a long list of speakers who could not attend the conference!! Inspite of the fact that each of them had repeatedly confirmed their participation resulting in large no. of unutilized rooms and expenditure.

They are as follows:

- Prof. F. Christensen (Spine Society of Europe)
- Dr. A. Jhala
- Dr. G. D. Sundararaj
- Dr. K. Kailash
- Dr. M. Sharma
- Dr. Rajamani
- Dr. S. S. Kale
- Dr. S. Gore
- Dr. Sivakumar
- Dr. U. Pawar

Finally there are some suggestions which I would like to pass on which I have enumerated below;

1. Updated list of A.S.S.I. Members including their address, emails and phone numbers.
2. In view of late cancellation by faculty, the scientific committee had great difficulty to finalize the programme.
3. Ways and means to enhance greater participation by the industry.

Finally, I once again thank the A.S.S.I. and apologise for the shortcomings and inconvenience caused to the faculty and delegates during the conference.

Dr. Asheesh Tandon

Organizing Secretary, ICS 2009

Minutes of the Extra-ordinary General Body Meeting of the Association of Spine Surgeons of India held on August 15, 2009 at 18.30 hrs at Hotel Clarks, Khajuraho

An Extra-ordinary G.B.M. of the A.S.S.I. was held at the Hotel Clarks, Khajuraho on August 15, 2009 at 18.30 hours. The President Dr. S. Rajasekaran was in chair and the attendance was as per register.

AGENDA:

- 1. A.S.S.I. accounts:** Dr. H. S. Chhabra presented the accounts and verified that the income tax status of the A.S.S.I had been updated and audited accounts were submitted to the Income Tax authorities. A request for use of the A.S.S.I. PAN number by all future conferences beginning from ASSICON – 2010, Nagpur was made.
- 2. Proposal of Event Managers from New Delhi:** Dr. S. Rajasekaran informed the house of a proposal from New Delhi – Event Managers – Ms. Ritu Sehgal et al who had successfully managed the SRS event with Dr Arvind Jayaswal. The house agreed in principle to allow this event manager a two year trial period on suitable terms as deemed by the executive committee of the A.S.S.I. The new team would help give a professional touch to the following:
 - Website
 - Membership details
 - Members' dues
 - Future meetings – ICS 2010, ASSICON 2011
 - Silver Jubilee Year Plans – 2010-2011
 - Safe Spine Surgery – Theme propagationDr. V. T. Ingalthalikar felt that this proposal will enhance our output. He seconded the same and it was passed.
- 3. ASSICON – 2010 – Nagpur:** Dr. Sajal Mitra informed that the website would open in 10 days. He proposed a large number of free papers. The scientific committee proposed to help the local organizers was: Dr. Raghav Dutt Mulukutla, Dr. H. S. Chhabra and Dr. Abhay Nene. A suggestion was made to try and combine the international faculty with the POSICON – 2010. It would be considered. Dr. Anil Jain suggested that the mailers should be sent to the I.O.A. database and would get better circulation. Public awareness programs on osteoporosis, transport and triage post trauma etc. were also proposed. “Safe Spine Surgery” was proposed as the Presidents' Theme for the Silver Jubilee year and Dr. Ashok Lawange suggested that as a build up for the ASSICON and the Silver Jubilee, events on the theme could be organized at Nagpur and Jabalpur. He proposed the President and other office bearers of the A.S.S.I. should travel to attend such events.
- 4. ICS – 2010 – Mysore:** Dr. Rajgopalan's regrets to attend the meeting were accepted and the venue of Mysore was passed for ICS – 2010. A presentation for the same was expected at ASSICON – 2010, Nagpur.
- 5. A.S.S.I. textbook of Spine Surgery:** Dr. S. Rajasekaran proposed that about 100 committed authors were needed for this book to see the light of day. It was proposed that the book could come out in volumes dedicated to specific topics. The primary topics proposed were “Infections” & “Trauma”. Interested authors were requested to contact Dr. S. Rajasekaran for the same.
- 6. A.S.S.I. approved centres for surgical training:** A three member committee was appointed including Dr. V.T. Ingalthalikar, Dr. S. Y. Bhojraj & Dr. Arvind Jayaswal to identify centres for training of selected fellows. Rules regarding the fellowship including logbook maintenance, definite teaching program, exit exam etc. were to be planned by the committee. An estimated expenditure would be about INR 3,00,000/- per fellow per year. It was proposed that the A.S.S.I. could start with two such fellows in the first year.
- 7. A.S.S.I. – Industry partnership:** A meeting had been held at ASSICON – 2009, Chennai with the Spine

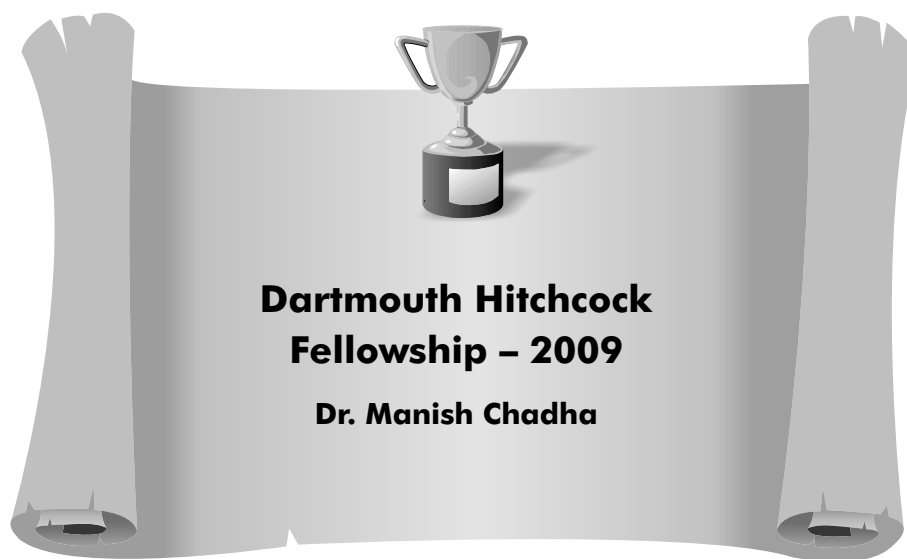
Industry including instrument & implant manufacturers & vendors and the pharmaceutical companies. The Industry felt that they needed a better understanding regarding the support the A.S.S.I. desired for its activities in advance to help them with their financial planning for the year. They also felt that the ASSI should take the initiative in encouraging the use of FDA approved or CE certified products rather than encourage the non-certified industry. This was brought to the notice of the general body by Dr. Ram Chaddha and seconded by Dr. Arvind Jayaswal.

8. **A.S.S.I. education foundation:** The A.S.S.I. should form a separate education foundation which would look after the fellowships, research activities and training programs of its members. The financial contributions for this foundation could come from individuals, societies and the industry. This motion was proposed by Dr. S. Rajasekaran and seconded by Dr. Ram Chaddha.
9. **Silver Jubilee activities:** The activities to be propagated as suggested by the executive committee and approved by the general body included
 - Safe spine surgery – propagation of theme
 - Regional programs every two months by senior surgeons

- Legal opinion with I.O.A. regarding Ortho Surgeon doing Spine

10. The house expressed concern about the court cases going against orthopaedic trained surgeons doing spine surgery. Dr. Jamdar was to correspond with his legal contacts and inform the general body about options to confront the issue. Dr. Arvind Jayaswal was to correspond with Dr. Sudhir Kapoor, Secretary I.O.A. and plan a joint action. Dr. V.P. Singh proposed that the E.C. of the A.S.S.I. should be empowered to take decisions in the interest of its members. Dr. Sajal Mitra seconded.
11. Dr. Jitendra Jamdar & Dr. Asheesh Tandon, organizers of ICS – 2009, Khajuraho, presented a cheque of Indian Rupees One lakh to the A.S.S.I. as per convention. The Secretary accepted the same and promised to deposit it after all the pending bills of the excellent conference were settled. The entire general body applauded the effort of the local organizing team for an excellent job done.

The Secretary thanked the members for having attended the meeting and the President Dr. S. Rajasekaran called the meeting to a close.



A.S.S.I. Awards & Fellowships for 2010

(Application protocols)

A.S.S.I. - CLINICAL RESEARCH AWARD – 2010

The A.S.S.I. encourages clinical research projects undertaken by its members.

Three copies of the complete report of a research project finished in 2009, including the treatise, yet unpublished, is to be submitted for the award by Saturday, December 19, 2009 to the Secretariat.

The A.S.S.I. – Clinical Research Award is a certificate of honour and Indian Rupees 50,000/- (Fifty thousand) which will be presented at the inaugural function of ASSICON – 2010 at Nagpur.

The judges would be three senior A.S.S.I. members.

A.S.S.I. – BASIC SCIENCES AWARD – 2010

The A.S.S.I. encourages research on “Basic Sciences” undertaken by its members.

Three copies of the complete report of the project finished in 2009, including the treatise, yet unpublished, is to be submitted for the award by Saturday, December 19, 2009 to the Secretariat.

The A.S.S.I. – Basic Sciences Award is a certificate of honour and Indian Rupees 50,000/- (Fifty thousand) which will be presented at the inaugural function of ASSICON – 2010 at Nagpur.

The judges would be three senior A.S.S.I. members.

A.S.S.I. – YOUNG INVESTIGATORS AWARD – 2010

The A.S.S.I. encourages research projects undertaken by its young members less than 35 years of age.

Three copies of the complete report of a research project finished in 2009, including the treatise, yet unpublished, is to be submitted for the award by Saturday, December 19, 2009 to the Secretariat.

The A.S.S.I. – Young Investigators Award is a certificate of honour and Indian Rupees 25,000/- (Twenty-five thousand) which will be presented at the inaugural function of ASSICON – 2010 at Nagpur.

The judges would be three senior A.S.S.I. members.

A.S.S.I. PUBLICATION AWARD – 2010

The A.S.S.I. acknowledges & recognizes the member who has made the most substantial contribution to published literature in the year 2009.

The award includes a certificate and an award of Indian Rupees 12,500/- (Twelve thousand five hundred) to be presented at the inaugural function of ASSICON – 2010 at Nagpur.

The applicant has to send three copies of all his published material to the Secretariat by Saturday, December 19, 2009.

The A.S.S.I. Publication award is judged by a three member committee namely - President, Vice President and Secretary (or any other senior member like a Past President of the A.S.S.I., if applicant for the award is also one of the above office-bearers)

The following point scale is used:

International Journals

- First author of invited review articles/
full original papers 10
- First author of case report 7
- Co-author 4

Indian Journals

- First author of invited review articles/full papers 7
- Co-authors of any of above 3

The applicant who gets the maximum amount of marks for publications published in 2008 gets the award. If there is a close call, the award may be shared to recognize and encourage members.

A.S.S.I. – TRAVELING FELLOWSHIP FOR 2010

The A.S.S.I. awards two traveling fellowships from amongst the A.S.S.I. members. The duration of the fellowship is three weeks and will begin with the ICS – 2010 attendance at Mysore and then visiting two/ three spine surgery centres in different parts of India.

The registration fee and local hospitality for ICS – 2010, Mysore for the selected fellows will be borne by the local organizers of ICS - 2010. Each A.S.S.I. traveling fellow will receive Indian Rupees 25,000/- (twenty-five thousand) as a grant on completion of and receipt of a written report of the fellowship from the selected fellow.

The travel to Mysore and thereafter to the two/ three centres in India and back home as well as local subsistence including stay and travel will have to be arranged by the selected fellows. The local organizers will surely offer organizational support. The applicant has to be a life member of the A.S.S.I. and should send three copies of his/her curriculum vitae with an application stating what the expectation from this fellowship is.

The application should reach the Secretariat by **Saturday, January 16, 2010**. The selected candidates would be informed by January 31, 2010.

A.S.S.I. – DARTMOUTH SPINE FELLOWSHIP – 2010:

The A.S.S.I. announces its annual fellowship in spine surgery in collaboration with the Dartmouth Medical School, New Hampshire, USA. The selected fellow will work in the spine surgery unit of the Department of Orthopaedics of the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in May – June 2010 for a period of 4-6 weeks.

Though the fellowship will have no stipend, the selected fellow will receive travel and stay allowance from the Dartmouth – Hitchcock Medical Center. Applications are invited from interested A.S.S.I. life members.

Please submit your applications to the Secretariat by **Saturday, January 16, 2010**.

Requirements:

1. A.S.S.I. life member
2. Age less than 45 years at the time of application

3. Applicant must have a US visa valid for at least a year from date of travel

Applicant must indicate:

- Current professional position
- Current work profile including percentage of spine work in practice
- Special spine interests
- Contribution to A.S.S.I. as regards conferences attended, papers/posters presented, meetings organized etc
- Contribution to academics as regards international/ national/ regional papers/ publications/ podium presentations etc
- Specific expectations from the Dartmouth fellowship (in 50 words)

The applicants would be assessed based on the following criteria:

DARTMOUTH FELLOWSHIP POINT SYSTEM

(A) A.S.S.I. related achievements:

1. Research award / publication award: 6 pts
2. Best paper award: 5 pts
3. Traveling fellowship: 4 pts
4. Organized ASSICON/ ICS (org sec or org chairman only) - 4 pts
5. Paper read at best paper session: 2 pts
6. Paper read: 1 pt
7. Poster: half pt
8. Each ASSICON/ICS attended: 1 pt

(B) Publications:

1. International (A grade): 3 pts
2. International (B grade): 2 pts
3. Indian A grade: 1 pt

(C) Presentations: (only spine topics)

1. International podium: 2 pts
2. National podium: 1 pt
3. Posters: half pt

(D) Age:- 35-40yrs : 1 pt

(E) Extras:

1. International recognitions/awards (spine related): 3 pts
2. Other national spine awards (non A.S.S.I.): 2 pts

Notice of Annual General Body Meeting of The A.S.S.I.

The Annual General Body Meeting (A.G.B.M.) of the Association of Spine Surgeons of India will be held on **Saturday, January 23, 2010** at 17.00 hrs I.S.T. at the Hotel Sun-n-Sand, Nagpur, India. All the life members of the A.S.S.I. are requested to attend.

The following matters are on the agenda:

1. Condolences
2. Passing the minutes of the A.G.B.M.: Chennai & EGBM: Khajuraho
3. Secretarial Report: Dr. Ram Chaddha
4. Accounts & Income Tax status: Dr. H. S. Chhabra
5. A.S.S.I. Education Foundation: Dr. S. Rajasekaran
6. A.S.S.I. Centres for Surgical Training – Dr. V.T. Ingalthalikar, Dr. Arvind Jayaswal, Dr. Shekhar Bhojraj
7. A.S.S.I. textbook of Spine Surgery: Dr. S. Rajasekaran
8. Legal opinion on “Spine Surgery by Orthopaedic Surgeons”: Dr. Jitendra Jamdar
9. Plans for “Silver Jubilee Year 2010-11”: Dr. S. Rajasekaran, Dr. Arvind Jayaswal, Dr. Ram Chaddha
10. ICS – 2010 – Mysore: Dr. Rajagopalan
11. ASSICON – 2011 (XXIV) - Mumbai: Dr. Samir Dalvie, Dr. Gautam Zaveri, Dr. Abhay Nene et al
12. A.S.S.I. Orator - 2011
13. Research Projects: Dr. Shekhar Bhojraj, Dr. Abhay Nene, Dr. H.S. Chhabra
14. Introduction of “Association Management Professional Team”:
 - Website
 - Member registry
 - Event planning
 - Safe Spine Surgery – propagation
15. Ratification of New members
16. Election of Office Bearers
17. ICS – 2011 – Venue & Theme
18. ASSICON – 2012 (XXV) – Venue
19. Any other matter with the permission of the chair

A.S.S.I. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 2009-2010

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