

***The 34th Meeting of the Scandinavian Sarcoma Group – 30 Years Jubilee.
May 6-8th, 2009***

The Scandinavian Sarcoma Group was founded in 1979, and the 34th plenary meeting held in Oslo May 6-8th was organized to specifically celebrate the 30 years anniversary. In total, 216 delegates visited this meeting, among them several foreign guests. Number of participants from the various countries: Sweden: 80, Norway: 84, Denmark: 25, Finland: 11, France:2, Netherland:1, Germany:3, Iceland:1, Italy:4, Spain: 1, Switzerland:1, England: 1, USA: 8. The excellent venue for the meeting was selected to be Hotel Opera in the centre close to the railway station. Furthermore, the extraordinary neighbour, the new Oslo opera, was the site for the main cultural event at the second night of the conference, the opera “Carmen” by Bizet.

The scientific program was enlightened by many international “sarcoma stars” representing different disciplines and interests within the sarcoma field. In the following, a short summary of the subjects dealt with is presented.

The scientific program consisted of 56 oral presentations and 15 posters. The abstracts can be found on the homepage of SSG www.ssg-org.net.

Already early in the morning a special symposium, “The Pathology of Sarcoma”, was started. Several items regarding basic sarcoma research, e.g., sarcoma progenitor cells, mesenchymal stem cells, cytogenetics, oncogenes, p53, receptor tyrosine kinases, biomarkers and inflammation, were presented by experts from the Nordic countries, Italy and Switzerland.

In parallel, meetings were held with the SSG board (see below) and the SSG central register, see separate protocol attached.

In the late afternoon, the 34th meeting was officially opened by the SSG chairmen, and this was followed by a minisymposium on the use of trabectedin in the treatment of soft tissue sarcoma; a lecture given by dr Jean-Yves Blay from Lyon.

The main conference dinner at the Hotel Opera closed the day with a nice folk music performance by Karl Seglem and his band.

Thursday May 7th

The day was saturated with interesting lectures, many of them by international experts. Thus, D. Vanel from Bologna discussed conventional and functional imaging, H. Jürgens from Münster presented his view of current standard and future aspects of Ewings sarcoma, P. Hogendoorn educated the audience on chondromatous tumors, A.K. Raymond from Houston describe the pathologist’s perspective on osteosarcoma, and P. Picci from Bologna presented a demographic study of 1500 osteosarcoma patients. Different aspects on treatment were delivered by R. Schwarz from Hamburg regarding radiotherapy, S. Patel from Houston on chemotherapy, and A. Abadu from Birmingham on endoprosthetic replacement in children. A. Gilsenan presented characteristics of patients in a US osteosarcoma surveillance study.

The day also included many interesting presentations from the Scandinavian delegates. Thus, resection of the spine for primary tumours was discussed by B. Gunterberg. The SSG experiences on bone sarcomas in general and of the intergroup study EURAMOS-1 in

particular was supplied by S. Smeland, and the experiences in soft tissue sarcoma by K. Sundby Hall. Short presentations of SSG thesis, concluded and ongoing, were given by J. Engellau, K. Engström, K Svarvar, N. Jebsen, and B. Widhe. Some well presented free papers ended the scientific program of the day: B. Bjerkehagen discussed prognosis of radiation-induced sarcoma, P. Lindholm increased our knowledge on PET in musculoskeletal tumours, and finally, M. Kolberg presented new prognostic markers for MPNST.

Friday May 8th

The morning started with a session on visceral and retroperitoneal sarcomas, and J. Åhlén presented the new SSG recommendations for the diagnosis and treatment of these tumours (SSG XVII, version 2). The international GIST expert H. Joensuu from Helsinki clearly discussed the scope of adjuvant treatment in this disease. This was followed by a free paper session including presentations on GIST in a neonate (Å. Jakobson), aspects on hyperthermia in ILP (L.E. Podleska from Essen), fruit drinks and methotrexate elimination (K. Sundby Hall), P53/HDM2 interaction in synovial sarcoma (B. Brodin), and gene expressions profiles of MPNST and neurofibroma (T.H. Ågesen). A poster session, effectively run by Ø. Bruland, included 15 posters on very different topics, and ended the morning session of the last day. Three of the posters received prizes. 1. prize: Danielsen SA et al. Methylation of RASSF1A-a prognostic biomarker in NF1-patients with Malignant Peripheral Nerve Sheath Tumors. 2. prize: Sampo MM et al. A web-based prognostic tool for extremity and trunk wall soft tissue sarcomas and its external validation. 3. prize: Sellevold S et al. Saddle prosthesis after resection of periacetabular tumors.

After lunch we had a joint session with the nurses and physiotherapists, and this was started by G. Ottaviani from Milan, who with a dynamic powerpoint-show discussed late events in osteosarcoma survivors. A presentation on the same topic was given by L.H. Aksnes who presented data from her recently defended thesis on health status in bone sarcoma survivors. L. Våde presented interesting data from a Scandinavian survey on practical procedures when giving high-dose methotrexate; further exchange of knowledge and perhaps also common standards seem highly appropriate. Two papers from Stockholm ended the session; P. Pergert discussed transcultural caring relationships, and M. af Sandeberg delivered a lecture on health-related QoL during childhood cancer treatment.

The last session, only for SSG members, discussed organizational questions under the heading “SSG matters”, see comments in the SSG board protocol.

The successful meeting was closed with the hope to meet again in two years for the 35th meeting which will be organized in Malmö, Sweden, in May 2011.