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Meeting Summary of the 15th International Congress of Head and Neck Radiology

Mutsumasa Takahashi

MEETING SUMMARY

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The 15th International Congress of Head and Neck Radiology was organized at the New Sky Hotel in Kumamoto, Japan on October 18–21, 2000. Professor Mutsumasa Takahashi was the president of this international congress, which was jointly sponsored by the American Society of Head and Neck Radiology, the European Society of Head and Neck Radiology, and the Asian and Oceanian Society of Neuroradiology and Head and Neck Radiology (Fig 1). There were 386 participants, including 80 international participants representing 18 countries. Registrants enjoyed not only the scientific presentations, but also the social aspects of the meeting and the sightseeing of the cultural and historic city of Kumamoto.

Opening Ceremony

On the evening of the first day, the opening ceremony, "Kagami Biraki", of the congress was performed. After a short welcome speech by Professor Takahashi, four distinguished guests expressed their best wishes for the meeting's success at the opening ceremony. Dr. Goro Eguchi, the President of Kumamoto University, welcomed all guests and participants of the congress to Kumamoto. Dr. Anton Hasso, the President of the American Society of Head and Neck Radiology, congratulated the organizing committee on having orchestrated this meeting in Kumamoto and delivered a message from each society. Dr. Peggy J. Frizsche, a board member of the Radiological Society of North America, also gave warm greetings.

Following the opening ceremony, the sake barrel breaking session with representatives of European, American, and Japanese head and neck radiologists, Kampai or a toast ceremony was given by Dr. Shimpei Tada, a professor at Jikei University (Fig 2). A 2-hour party was started after Kampai. Charlie Nagatani and his country and western band performed followed by young women dressed in traditional kimonos and with paper lanterns on their heads who performed Toro Odori, lantern dances. Participants enjoyed the opening ceremony and reception.

Scientific Programs

The scientific programs were organized so that the meeting could fulfill the important aspects of a scientific meeting: 1) exchange of scientific information, 2) education of delegates, and 3) promotion of friendship and international partnership. The postgraduate educational programs included six re-

fresher courses, three each of panel discussions, symposia, and luncheon seminars as well as three special lectures. A session of image interpretation was also organized. All programs were planned to acquaint the participants with the recent technical developments, especially the application of CT, MR, nuclear medicine, and image analysis in head and neck radiology (Fig 3). Vascular interventional radiology was also an important topic in this congress. Other miscellaneous topics related to head and neck radiology were also included in the educational program. As refresher courses, conventional imaging diagnosis of the head and neck, including the oral cavity, pharynx, larynx, temporal bones, and skull base were discussed.

There were 109 proffered papers: 24 oral and 85 poster presentations. Guided poster tours were planned for discussion of posters (Fig 4). The major topics highlighted included application of multidetector helical CT, MR hydrography (heavily T2-weighted images of the salivary glands), interventional radiology, noninvasive vascular imaging, posttreatment imaging, and pediatric imaging in head and neck radiology.

Technical Exhibits

More than 15 companies participated in the technical exhibits, and they displayed new equipment and recent technical advances. Since the coffee service was provided in the technical exhibition area, the participants enjoyed discussions with company representatives during break periods.

Social Programs

Since the organizing committee considered the social programs to be an important aspect of the meeting, two parties were held in addition to the reception following the opening ceremony on the first day. All the performances at the parties were organized in order to present traditional Japanese culture, customs, and history for the registrants. On the second day of the conference, Koto performances, the music of a Japanese string instrument (Fig 5), and Kangura, an ancient dance made as an offering to a god in a well-known Japanese myth and held only in local shrines, were shown at the stage. The party on Friday, October 20, featured with "En-nichi" which is connected to certain Shinto or Buddhist deities; a crowd of people usually gather on these occasions and enjoy street stalls, while many historical Japanese games and nostalgic Japanese foods are served. Participants

FIG 1. *From left to right,* Jan W. Casselman, Francis Veilon, Mutsumasa Takahashi, Nicole J.M. Freling, and Larissa T. Bilaniuk.

FIG 2. Kagami Biraki ceremony.

FIG 3. Scientific session.

FIG 4. Guided poster tour.

FIG 5. Koto performance at a party.

Mount Aso, an active volcano within the largest crater basin in the world, and a third to Seiwa bunraku, a traditional Japanese puppet play. Participants enjoyed the optional tours and developed insight into Japanese culture.

Closing Ceremony

The meeting ended with a short speech by the congress president, Professor Mutsumasa Takahashi, who announced that the next congress is to be held in Europe in 2 years. Participants left Kumamoto with fond memories of the city and with the education imparted at the meeting. The organization of the congress in Kumamoto had a great impact on the development of head and neck radiology in the Asian and Oceanian regions.

MUTSUMASA TAKAHASHI

enjoyed all programs as if they had been at the "En-nichi".

Two optional tours were organized; one was the excursion to the Kumamoto castle, another to