

State of the Art Lectures

Third World Veterinary Orthopaedic Congress

Featured at the Third World Veterinary Orthopaedic Congress in Bologna in September 2010 will be the State of the Art Lectures. These congress highlights will be delivered by three prominent orthopaedic surgeons who are recognised as the authorities in their respective fields.

- **Professor Frank Barry** is Director of the Regenerative Medicine Institute at the National University of Ireland, Galway, and he will address the topic of “Tissue engineering with mesenchymal stem cells in human orthopaedics – what do we know today?”
- **Professor Tim Briggs**, who is the Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon and Medical Director at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, UK will address the very challenging problem “Cartilage resurfacing with autologous cartilage implantation (ACI) and Matrix-induced ACI (MACI) – have they stood the test of time?”
- **Professor Stefan Lohmander** is Professor of Orthopaedics at Lund University Hospital in Sweden and Editor-in-Chief of *Osteoarthritis and Cartilage*. He will provide an update on his research on “The fate of the post-traumatic knee – what do we know today?”

These three special lectures promise to be very informative for congress delegates because they address orthopaedic issues that can touch us at different levels, thus emphasising the comparative aspects of orthopaedics. Even if we have been lucky enough to personally avoid the suffering of a knee injury or arthritic joint, these are everyday problems that can affect a family member, friend or star athlete. Thus all of us are interested to learn about the most promising treatments and expected prognoses.

Developments in human medicine and surgery inevitably have come after extensive research involving animals. It is very rewarding when the knowledge gained from

use of animals in research in development of new therapies in human medicine, can be usefully returned and applied to solving clinical problems in animals under our care. Unfortunately this does not always transpire. The cost of the technology used in human orthopaedics can prohibit its direct transfer to treatment of animals. Also the clinical problems in humans and animals can be different; for example anterior cruciate ligament rupture is usually the result of trauma, whereas this is rarely the case in the dog. However, even if the causes of osteoarthritis in humans and animals are different, the pathophysiology of articular cartilage degeneration in osteoarthritis seems to be quite similar across species. Having emphasised the value of inter-species comparative studies in orthopaedic research, one does have to be cautious about the relative ranking of evidence used for surgical decision making. By way of example, if we were treating articular cartilage defects in horses, then the results of a well-designed randomised controlled trial of a new cartilage resurfacing technique in humans (non-target species) would have less evidentiary value than case studies of a cartilage resurfacing technique conducted in Thoroughbred horses (target species) (1). I am sure that those of you who are fortunate to be attending the Third WVOC will be inspired by the State of the Art Lectures, because they will no doubt cause one to reflect on the various facets and values of comparative orthopaedic study.



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References

1. Evans R: Evidence-based orthopaedics or ‘superstition in the pigeon’. *Vet Comp Orthop Traumatol* 2009; 22: 346–350.



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