



forum

Volume 12, Number 2

March/April 2002



Review of the 9th Annual Meeting of the ISHRS * Puerto Vallarta *

James Arnold, MD *Saratoga, California*

The 9th Annual Meeting of the ISHRS was almost canceled at the last minute. Although the meeting Chairperson, Marc Avram, MD, expected last minute complications, who would have ever planned for the tragic events of September 11th. A significant number of registered members, including important speakers, abruptly canceled their plans to attend after 9/11. Suggestions to cancel the entire meeting were voiced, however, the meeting was held as scheduled. Despite early moments of anxiety, the meeting was a grand success and quite entertaining.

Many attendees arrived early to attend pre-conference seminars. There was a review course for the ABHRS exam and the Beginner's Workshop. The Beginner's program, organized by William Parsley, MD, and John Cole, MD, has become very popular for both beginning surgeons and experienced surgeons wishing to learn the latest techniques of hair transplantation. The workshop was well received, and of great value was the workshop manual given to each attendee. The *Beginner's Program Training Manual* is available for purchase through the ISHRS central office and is highly recommended.

Drs. Parsley and Cole received an abundance of gratitude and recognition for their contributions to this workshop.

The main conference began with Richard Shiell, MBBS, giving a short historical perspective of hair transplantation. Dr. Shiell emphasized the similarity of the original work performed in Japan with the surgery of today. The Japanese pioneers used 1-3 hair grafts placed in needle incisions for almost 20 years prior to the rediscovery of hair transplantation in the West.

The first clinical report on the schedule was reserved for a joint study performed by Walter Unger, MD, and David Seager, MD. They investigated hair survival rates of both follicular unit grafts and 2mm round grafts. Both types of grafts allowed good survival but what was most interesting, or confusing, to the audience was the surplus of hairs found after transplantation. For example, with some of the follicular unit grafts, for each 100 hairs transplanted they found 133 hairs growing 11 months later. An explanation for the additional hairs was elusive for everyone despite much speculation. Michael Beenher, MD, also reported an excess of post-transplant hairs (111%) in a few follicular grafts, although other

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Hair Transplant Forum International Volume 12, Number 2

Hair Transplant Forum International is published bi-monthly by the International Society of Hair Restoration Surgery, 930 North Meacham Road, Schaumburg, IL 60173-6016. First class postage paid at Schaumburg, IL and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Hair Transplant Forum International*, International Society of Hair Restoration Surgery, Box 4014, Schaumburg, IL 60168-4014. Telephone: 847/330-9830; Fax: 847/330-1135.

President: Bobby L. Limmer, MD

Executive Director: Laura Musgraves

Editors: Michael L. Beehner, MD, and William M. Parsley, MD

Surgical Assistants Corner Editor:
To Be Announced

Managing Editor & Graphic Design:

Cheryl Duckler, cduckler@atbi.com

Advertising Sales (Interim): Lisa Rafael,
847/330-9830; lrafael@aad.org

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Hair Transplant Forum International is a privately published newsletter of the International Society of Hair Restoration Surgeons. Its contents are solely the opinions of the authors and are not formally "peer reviewed" before publication. To facilitate the free exchange of information, a less stringent standard is employed to evaluate the scientific accuracy of the letters and articles published in the *Forum*. The standard of proof required for letters and articles is not to be compared with that of formal medical journals. The newsletter was designed and continues to be a printed forum where specialists and beginners in hair restoration techniques can exchange thoughts, experiences, opinions, and pilot studies on all matters relating to hair restoration. The contents of this publication are not to be quoted without the above disclaimer.

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The ISHRS Golden Follicle Award sculpture, as seen on the cover of this issue, was designed by Francisco Abril, MD. Dr. Abril offers for sale, copies of a small bronze hair follicle sculpture (10" high). For more information, please contact: Clinica Dr. Francisco Abril, PO dela Habana, 137, 28036 Madrid, Spain. Phone: 34-1-359-1961; Fax: 34-1-359-4731.



President's Message



Bobby L. Limmer, MD
San Antonio, Texas

The International Society of Hair Restoration Surgery is the premier educational society in hair restoration surgery in the world today. Because of the free exchange of information provided by the annual scientific meetings and by the *Hair Transplant Forum International*, the world of hair restoration has progressed more in the past 10 years than the totality of the preceding 45 years of the modern era of our field. Without the openness of exchange created by these forums, the rate of exchange of scientific information would have progressed at a much slower pace. To all of you who have made this possible, we say "Thank you!" I take this opportunity to single out O'Tar Norwood, MD, who, as founder of the *Hair Transplant Forum International* and as ISHRS co-founder with Dow Stough, MD, deserves our special appreciation. O'Tar's spirit of

"openness to change" created an environment that propelled this freedom of exchange. O'Tar, we all wish you the best of things.

The ISHRS creates a forum for the free exchange of concepts that are reinforced by scientific research. These concepts set the standards for all to strive to achieve. Unfortunately, some outside the ISHRS have been active critics, most notably on the Internet, deriding the ISHRS for not taking a proactive role in policing the practice of hair restoration surgery by individual surgeons. Our educational body is not a police force, a point that seems to have escaped the critics. Those who have working personal and business relationships with such creative individuals need to actively educate them relative to who we are and what we represent. We are the premier educational organization in the world, committed to the promotion of the highest ethical and scientific standards for the benefit of those we serve—our patients. ♦

Bobby L. Limmer, MD

The ISHRS Is Moving!

Please note this change of address for the International Society of Hair Restoration Surgery, effective **April 1, 2002:**

**International Society of Hair
Restoration Surgery
930 East Woodfield Road
Schaumburg, IL 60713, USA**

Our phone, fax, e-mail, and Website all remain the same. Only our mailing address is changing.

Co-Editors' Messages



Michael L. Beehner, MD
Saratoga Springs, New York

It is with a great deal of excitement and trepidation that I take on this new post as Co-Editor of the *Forum*. As many past commentators have often stated, the *Forum* is truly

the life-blood of our Society. We are uniquely privileged as a surgical subspecialty to have such a wonderful vehicle of instant communication and sharing of knowledge and ideas.

In many lengthy conversations over the years with Dr. Richard Shiell, I have

gained a healthy respect for how much time and effort is necessary to put out a high-quality *Forum*. I feel very lucky to share the fun and labor of this assignment with my good friend of many years, Bill Parsley. In order to ration our energies over the long haul and not "burn out," Bill and I will be alternating primary responsibility for each *Forum* edition (this one being Bill's). We will jointly evaluate every article submitted, but funnel all e-mailed articles through Bill's office the first year and a half (see directions for article and photo/figure submission on page 59).

I believe strongly that the diversity of our Society is its biggest strength, both in the multiple nations represented and also in the variety of ways

hair restoration is accomplished. While no one can deny the tremendous evolution toward transplant sessions of large numbers of small grafts being the dominant trend in our field, I think it is very important that we all continue to keep our minds and pages of the *Forum* open and welcome to differing opinions on all subjects. New ideas should always be given a fair hearing and trial. The "hearing" occurs here in the *Forum*, with pro and con opinions vigorously batted back and forth, and in presentations at our Annual Meeting; research to back up any new ideas is particularly valuable to share with our membership. The final "trial" for

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William M. Parsley, MD
Louisville, Kentucky

The Power of Communication

The past decade has brought an explosion of developments in hair transplantation making the first 30 years look sluggish by

comparison. The cause for this sudden advance is the result of many people contributing in various ways. Dr. Bobby Limmer's work with follicular unit grafting certainly stands out as a highlight but there are other very significant contributions that may not be so obvious. In my

opinion, the real push behind all this advancement is communication.

In 1989, O'Tar Norwood began publishing the *Hair Transplant Forum*. The first issue was a modest four-page publication that certainly did not create a great stir. It turned out that it was the acorn that gradually grew into the oak tree. For the first time, we had a publication devoted to hair restoration and hair restoration only. The publication was informal and allowed for informal opinions as well as scientific papers. The advantage here was the rapidity of exchange—instead of waiting for approval of a paper and then waiting in line for publication, submissions could find their way to the readership within two months or

less of their arrival to O'Tar. Richard Shiell, MBBS, took over editorship from O'Tar in 1996 and used his great energy and knowledge of the field to continue its progress. Richard, one of the most admired men in the profession, created great unity and intellectual openness to help continue the momentum. Dow Stough, MD, and Russell Knudsen, MBBS, took over in 1999 and further developed the *Forum*. They never shied away from controversy—in fact, they used it as a tool to stimulate great interest and to expand the knowledge of hair restoration surgery. Mike Beehner, MD, and I, following this group of heavyweights, have a great challenge

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To Submit an Article or Letter to the *Forum* Editors

Please send submissions via a 3½" disk or e-mail, double space and use a 12 point type size. Remember to include all photos and figures referred to in your article as separate attachments (JPEG, Tiff, or Bitmap). For e-mail submissions, be sure to ATTACH your file(s)—*DO NOT* embed it in the e-mail itself. **We prefer e-mail submissions with the appropriate attachments.** Send to:

William M. Parsley, MD
310 East Broadway, Suite 100
Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1745
E-mail: bparsley@bellsouth.net

Submission deadline for the May/June issue April 10; for July/August, June 10.



Notes from the Editor Emeritus



Richard C. Shiell, MBBS
Melbourne, Australia

Meetings

As you read this column, "Matt's Meeting" in Orlando, Florida, will be but a memory. Those who missed it and have a bent for foreign climes

may like to consider meetings in London, Florence, or the Aegean as the venue for their next intellectual stimulus.

The Aegean Meeting, organized by the dhi Clinic in Athens for June 10–14, is somewhat less exhausting than many others. Over four days you and your partner visit beautiful and historic Mykonos, Kussadasi (Turkey), Patmos, Rhodes, Heraklion (Crete), and Santorini. Lectures are restricted to the three to four hours that are available daily as we cruise between islands. On docking, you disembark and see the sites on offer at each romantic location. Apart from the pleasure of socializing with your colleagues, there is the convenience of being able to ask all those questions of the expert faculty for which there is never enough time at the bigger meetings. The final day is spent in Athens where eight live surgery cases have been scheduled.

I have organized this program along with John P. Cole, MD, and we have placed special emphasis on techniques for patient recruitment and practice management, two important features that receive little attention at most meetings. The faculty is not yet finalized as of the time of this writing but it will include a number of very experienced hair restoration practitioners and business consultants. Fax 30-109-249-387 or e-mail info@dhi.gr for further details.

Brave New World

Congratulations to Gerry Seery for yet another stimulating article (*Forum*,

Vol 12, No. 1; front cover). Gerard is using his retirement in a very worthwhile fashion by writing a number of excellent papers discussing various aspects of scalp surgery, including the much neglected Alopecia Reduction procedure. As one of the "dinosaurs" who still occasionally uses this procedure, I applaud his courage and literary skills in revisiting this area

I also agree with Dr. Seery and with surgical assistant Malcolm Misir (*ibid*, pp. 23–24) that there is overemphasis on follicular unit hair transplantation (FUHT) as the only "right" way to perform hair restoration surgery. While FUHT may be the "gold standard" so far as naturalness with all hair types and colors, under all lighting conditions, it is extremely labor intensive, costly, and frequently unnecessary. Simpler techniques of micro and minigrafting will produce high patient satisfaction on white, grey, light brown, or blonde hair but these techniques are often denigrated to new patients during consultation. While FUHT specialists see many patients who are unhappy with "unnatural" minigrafts, they may be surprised to know that many FUHT patients are unhappy with the hair cover they have received after massive financial expenditure on their scalps.

There is no "right" way to perform Hair Restoration. There are many alternate ways and it is up to the physician to carefully decide what will be "right" for the patient considering his hair type, personality, desires and finances.

Slits versus Holes

This topic has once again been raised in an excellent article by Bradley Wolf (*ibid*, pp. 5–6). It has been discussed loud and long for the past two decades and, while theoretical arguments may be tossed back and forth, most of us older transplanters have long concluded that it generally "don't matter a damn either way." We have used both methods over the years and mostly cannot

tell the difference providing that the implanted units are small.

Wide Scars

Those who would like to attribute our occasional wide donor scars to a fancy syndrome rather than genetic variation or poor surgery will be delighted with the article on Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome by Robert Bernstein (*ibid*, pp. 9–10). Before you get too excited, I would like to point out that Harrison's textbook gives the incidence at 1:5,000 so even if you are doing 500 new patients a year you may have to wait 10 years before a case comes along. I have certainly seen only a couple of cases over the past 35 years. (Dr. Bernstein gives an incidence of 1:440,000, which I take to be a typographical error as at that incidence we would only see one case every 1,000 years or so.)

I have no doubt that most cases of wide scarring are due to genetic skin type as even with years of experience and meticulous standardized suture technique I still see 4–5mm scars from time to time among my patients. Avoidance of the lower regions of the neck and over-wide donor strips will, however, greatly reduce the frequency of these problems. It does not seem to matter whether you use a one- or two-layer closure. Sutures and staples give very similar results in my hands. Although staples are faster for the surgeon, patients who have tried both methods tend to prefer sutures from the point of comfort and ease of removal in my experience.

Follicular Unit Extraction (FUE)

This, the "Wood's Method" of Internet fame, seems to have emerged from the back blocks of Sydney, Australia, in recent years and I have had innumerable e-mails from colleagues about it. Unfortunately, little detail is

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