

REPORT ON THE 9TH ANNUAL CONGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF SPORT SCIENCE

Clermont-Ferrand, France, July 3 – 6, 2004

If we wish to present the 9th Annual Congress of the European College of Sport Science, held in Clermont-Ferrand, France, 3-6 July, 2004, through figures or statistical data, then the picture would look like this: 1,176 participants from 60 countries from all over the world, more than 1,320 abstracts submitted, more than 250 Young Investigator Awards' applicants under 32 years of age, exactly 2,847 entries in the Index of Authors at the end of the Proceedings, three plenary sessions and 100 invited and thematic sessions, 683 poster presentations, over 200 working hours. Few meetings of sport science researchers and scholars in the world can be proud of such statistics!

The importance of a scientific meeting or event, even scientific achievements and contributions is usually expressed in figures or statistical indices. The rationale is: if a meeting is important, of a high quality, and useful, it will attract a lot of participants. The ECSS congresses have the world's most prominent invited speakers who present the most recent advances in the field of kinesiology thus enriching and facilitating an exchange of ideas and findings.

Besides the presentations of distinguished and well-experienced researchers, the high quality contributions of a lot of young researchers were noticed at this year's ECSS Congress. The presidents of the Congress Emmanuel Van Praagh and Jean Coudert accentuated this fact in the introduction to the Proceedings. Slightly over 200 researchers younger than 32 years of age participated in the work of the Congress competing for the Young Investigators Awards in the categories of poster and oral presentations. The most prominent European scholars, like Thomas Reilly and Paavo Komi, were the members of the Young Investigators Awards' jury. This year's winner in the category of oral presentations was Wolfgang Taube from Germany for the work under the title *Influence of motor cortex control on reflex stimulating postural tasks*, whereas in the category poster presentations the winner was Pierre Lemyre from Norway with the work under the title *Overtraining and athlete burnout: a psychophysiological perspective*.

The variety of actual topics presented in the poster and podium presentations was the crucial characteristic of this year's Congress and, undoubtedly, a quality enhancing factor. For two and a half days, in 100 parallel topic-oriented sessions a large variety of topics were addressed, among them the ones that have not been frequently represented so far, like: Truth and Doubt in Sport Sciences, Car Racing, Animal Athletes, Bone and Exercise, Oxidative Stress, Going to the Extreme, Disabled Child, Sprint Efficiency, Energetical Efficiency, Microgravity and Physical Activity, Critical Power, Archery, etc. The area of physiology had 19 section sessions, sports medicine 4, biomechanics 5, nutrition 2, molecular biology 2, biochemistry 2 and epidemiology 3. This is an evidence that the biomedical aspects of sport science still predominate in the annual congresses of the European College of Sport Science. Some of the sections were dedicated to humanities in sport, sport history, philosophy of sport, sport pedagogy and sport sociology. An insufficient number of works from the areas of training and testing, or coaching and sport performance was evident.

The most prominent world scientists presented their works related to health promotion, motor control and education through sports in the plenary sessions. Claude Bouchard's presentation suggested that the genetic approach and results of genetic research would be more and more interesting for all areas of applied *kinesiology*.

The Congress was held in the new and impressive building of the Polydome Congress and Exhibition Center. The facility was big enough to host all the participants, but interest for individual sessions was not predicted correctly. Therefore, the audience in certain sessions was scarce in the big halls, whereas the smaller halls were overcrowded.

Eleven Croatian kinesiologists, eight from the Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Zagreb: Zrinko Čustonja, Stjepan Heimer, Goran Marković, Dragan Milanović, Marija Rakovac, Lana Ružić, Sanja Šimek and Dinko Vuleta participated in the 9th Annual Congress of the European College of Sport Science.



A part of the Croatian delegation (from the left): Prof. Dinko Vuleta, PhD; Marija Rakovac, MD; Prof. Stjepan Heimer, PhD; and Prof. Dragan Milanović, PhD

Several works were presented orally (Dragan Milanović *Trend of the Olympic Games' shot put results*, Sanja Šimek *Structure and characteristics of injury prevention system in elite sport* and Zrinko Čustonja *The grassroots of vocational training of personnel for physical education in Croatia*), whereas others were presented as posters (Dinko Vuleta *Scoring efficiency and final outcomes of handball matches*, Stjepan Heimer *Differences in some indicators of psychosomatic characteristics of*

active vs. inactive menopausal women, Goran Marković *Plyometric training effects on leg spring stiffness in physically active men* and Lana Ružić *"Two results method" of critical velocity determination in swimmers – which two results?.* The presentations were well attended and attracted considerable interest.

Several hundreds leaflets with the initial information on the 4th International Scientific Conference on Kinesiology, that will be held in Opatija, Croatia, 7-11 September, 2005, and several dozens of the journal *Kinesiology* were handed out to the participants of the 9th Annual Congress of the European College of Sport Science.

The first three authors of the report have participated in all nine of the ECSS congresses and they have concluded that the ECSS is constantly expanding on more and more fundamental and applied disciplines of sports science. In that light we are in anticipation of the 10th Annual Congress of the European College of Sport Science which is being held in the period 13 - 16 July, 2005 in Belgrade (Serbia and Montenegro). We believe that the members of the Faculty of Kinesiology will present their works at the Congress in a greater number and in a more quality way.

*Dragan Milanović, Stjepan Heimer,
Dinko Vuleta, Zrinko Čustonja,
Goran Marković and Sanja Šimek*