

## **SECEC Asia / Europe Travelling Fellowship Report**

Fellows: Prof. Hyun Seok Song (South Korea), Dr. Yohei Ono (Japan)

Fellowship Period: September 6<sup>th</sup> – October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Locations: Dublin, Ireland; Reading, UK; Zoetermeer, Netherlands; Madrid, Spain;  
Milan, Italy; Rennes, France; Hamburg, Germany

Host Surgeons: Drs. Ofer Levy, Just van der Linde, Alexandre Laedermann, Emilio Calvo,  
Pietro Randelli, Alessandro Castagna, Philippe Collin, and Jörn Kircher

I am writing this report for the SECEC Asia / Europe Travelling Fellowship on behalf of the two fellows, Prof. Song from South Korea and myself from Japan.

It was a great honor and pleasure to be selected as SECEC Asia / Europe Travelling Fellows in 2022. This fellowship was originally scheduled 2 years prior, in 2020, however was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Fortunately, thanks to the improvement of the situation, it turned out that we could enjoy the opportunity to participate in this fellowship this year, in 2022, while there had already been many changes in the environment from 2020. These included behavioral restrictions against COVID, price increases in oil & gas and other products, decreased number of flights and route changes, etc. However, personally the biggest impact on me at that moment was the fact that I had opened my own clinic in 2021, hiring about 15 staff workers. Under this circumstance, it took a while for me to decide whether leaving my clinic for 5 weeks would be acceptable, although finally I decided to go for it.

Now, after all that we have been through during this travelling fellowship, I sincerely feel my decision was totally right. There are too many to report especially on how nice the doctors and their colleagues were, how beautiful the countries were, and how different in the culture, economy, medical system, foods & drinks, and the way of enjoying life. However, it would take forever to report everything, therefore I assume I should summarize it in brief.

First, during the fellowship travelling around 8 countries, we enjoyed observing varieties of shoulder procedures, such as arthroscopic rotator cuff repair and instability repair, open Latarjet, primary/revision total joint replacement, and tendon transfer. The most important fact was that these procedures were more or less very similar to what we regularly do in our practice, which helped us easily recognize the differences in details and the excellent tips and tricks that we could bring back home. Participating in the SECEC meeting in Dublin and the scientific meetings at each stop was another fun part, where we got to know both similarities and differences in the understanding and treatment of shoulder pathologies among the countries. There were opportunities for us to present our papers at

several centers we visited, where very educational discussion was held every time. This helped us recognize how European surgeons generally consider the procedures originally from Asian countries. We were also impressed to know that there were many corroborating study projects going on between the host surgeons in different countries in Europe.

In addition, I also had an opportunity to get involved in the studies by some host surgeons and to help writing up manuscripts. I hope we can carry on these and make them larger projects, which will eventually bring us together again sometime in the future. I believe it is extremely important to keep learning for yourself but keep sharing what you have already learned with others is even more critical for continuous progress and improvement in our medical field. This should not be limited within a country or a region in this globalized world. I deeply appreciated the roles and benefits of this fellowship.

Furthermore, the very best achievement during this fellowship was that we could make many special friends. We had a lot of fun together in ORs and clinics, meetings, restaurants, and cafes. Some host surgeons invited us to their houses and introduced their beautiful families to us. In Reading, UK, Prof. Levy kindly had each of us sit on the back seat of his airplane and even let us hold the stick to control it when flying in the sky!! Riding a bike in Geneva with Dr. Lädemann for 30-40 minutes between his house and hospital, in early morning (it was still dark and kind of cold) and late evening (it was already dark and kind of cold), was quite an intense exercise. Eating tasty Dutch herring (i.e. salt soaked raw fish, which I liked a lot) in the morning with Dr. van der Linde was such a fabulous experience. One of the residents of Prof. Castagna's advised me where to go for a motorcycle touring when I rented a Ducati in Milan. Although just riding a Ducati in Italy was already one of my dreams, riding through very tight hairpin corners in the steep mountains would become my greatest memory as a rider. Prof. Kircher also kindly let me ride his Triumph when we were at his home in Hamburg, Germany. These are the highlights of this fellowship beside other academic learning opportunities.

Lastly and personally to note, when I got back home after traveling around Europe, my clinic had survived and was still standing there. This was achieved by all the efforts of my clinic staffs and the supporting doctors who took care of the patients in my clinic. Without their help, I don't think I could travel to Europe and am able to write up this report now.

We would like to thank SECEC and all the host doctors and their families, fellows, residents, and staffs, and Ms. Sylvie Noel for organizing this special travelling fellowship and for the support. Also, I would like to thank Prof. Hyun Seok Song from Seoul, South Korea, as my fellowship "buddy", who spent majority of time with me during this fellowship.

For us, this SECEC travelling fellowship was truly a precious and unforgettable "once in a lifetime experience".