EDITORIAL

Celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Japan Shoulder Society

Established in 1974, the Japan Shoulder Society is the oldest shoulder society in the world. Shoulder societies on other continents were formed much later: North America in 1982, Europe in 1987, South Africa in 1990, and South America in 1994. The original founding members of our society were Dr. Hisao Endo, Dr. Katsuya Nobuhara, and Dr. Nagao Adachi, and a year later, the following four members joined this team: Dr. Ryuji Yamamoto, Dr. Hiroaki Fukuda, Dr. Motohiko Mikasa, and Dr. Kiyohisa Ogawa. The first Society Congress was held on October 18, 1974, in Tokushima City with Dr. Hisao Endo as the first Congress President. He is well known for his sophisticated clinical work on “loose shoulder” or so-called multidirectional instability. His first report of multidirectional instability and the effectiveness of pectoralis major transfer was published in Japanese in 1971 and recently published in English as a Classic Article in the Journal of Shoulder and Elbow Surgery in 2012.

In 2013, we had the 40th Annual Meeting of the Japan Shoulder Society in Kyoto with Dr. Masao Kurokawa as the Congress President, and this year, 2014, we are celebrating the Society’s 40th anniversary. We would like to convey our sincere appreciation to all the shoulder and elbow societies in the world and their members for their continuous support. We would also like to thank all the founding members for starting our society and the current members for building up our society.

The uniqueness of the Japan Shoulder Society is that it is probably the only society focusing on the shoulder alone, not on the elbow. We also have the Japan Elbow Society, which is an independent society from us, but the majority of the members of the Japan Elbow Society are hand surgeons. In addition, most patients have isolated problems of the shoulder or the elbow, except throwing athletes, who might have both problems. Because of these reasons, we have not found an urgent need to combine the two societies despite the world trend. We are independent but cooperative at the same time. For example, both societies hosted the 12th International Congress on Shoulder and Elbow Surgery in Nagoya in April 2013, which had 1,150 attendees from 48 countries who actively participated. The meeting was a great success both academically and socially because of the collaboration of the two groups.

Since its establishment in 1974, the Japan Shoulder Society has had a Congress President each year with a 1-year term and about 30 Executive Board members to support the Congress President. In 2012, we started a new system to have a Society President with a 2-year term, beside the Congress President, and a newly formed Board of Directors composed of nine members including the Society President. With this new system, we are in the process of making our Society a general incorporated association, which makes our corporate social responsibility clearer and allows us to take responsible actions more appropriately and promptly toward various issues of the Society. With this transformation, all the members of our Society, now more than 1,600, are subscribing to the online edition of the Journal of Shoulder and Elbow Surgery.

The Japanese are sometimes criticized as being introverted, and the number of Japanese students who want to study abroad is now gradually decreasing as opposed to most other countries, where the numbers are increasing. We need to educate and train young physicians to acquire an international mode of thinking and to improve their English ability to an international level. Since 1994, the Japan Shoulder Society and the European Society for Surgery of the Shoulder and the Elbow have exchanged traveling fellows, and since 2007, the Japan Shoulder Society and the Korean Shoulder and Elbow Society have exchanged traveling fellows. Now, we are in the process of starting a new traveling fellowship between the American Shoulder and Elbow Surgeons and, it is hoped, with the Latin American Shoulder and Elbow Society in the future. As the globalization process spreads, the societies of different areas and continents will become closer and closer. Accordingly, the interactive exchange of knowledge and experience among these societies will be essential to promote the strong bonds among us and to provide the highest standards of patient care. This is one of the main aims of the Japan Shoulder Society.

As we celebrate the 40th anniversary, we would like to thank all of you very much for your continuous support to the Japanese Shoulder Society.

1058-2746/$ - see front matter © 2014 Journal of Shoulder and Elbow Surgery Board of Trustees.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jse.2013.10.008