



European
Knee
Society

Travelling Fellowship Report 2023

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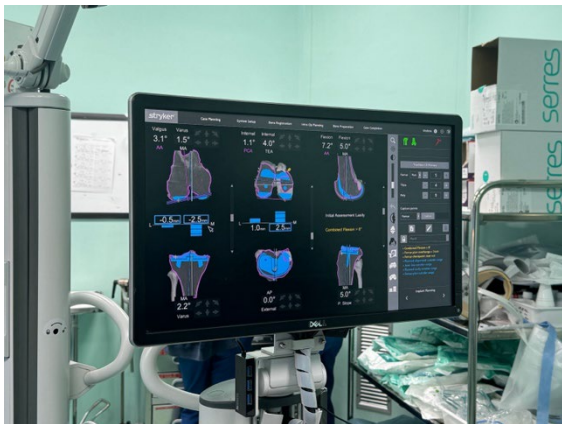
Marco Pungitore

Nils Meissner

Rudy Sangaletti

Stop 1: Modena – October 29th 2023 - November 2nd 2023

Our fellowship journey started in Modena, Italy, under the guidance of Professor Catani and his team. The first evening was a memorable introduction for us, the fellows: Rudy and Marco from Italy, Angelo (the first Greek EKS Fellow), and Nils from Germany. United by our passion for orthopedics and eagerness for the learning ahead, we discussed not only potential topics over dinner, we also got to know each other.



The application of the Mako Robot for tibia-based functional alignment in knee arthroplasty was a highlight in Modena. This not only provided us with a firsthand observation of the Mako robotic assisted total knee arthroplasty (TKA) and unicompartmental knee arthroplasty (UKA) but also sparked a broader understanding of alignment strategies. Our discussions delved into various alignment strategies, different from those practiced in our home institutions. Which lead to new knowledge and discussions between surgeries and over dinner.

Our experiences outside the operating room were equally impactful. Visiting the Ferrari Museum allowed us to appreciate Modena's legacy in speed and innovation, drawing parallels to the precision we strive for in our surgical practices. The camaraderie developed through shared meals and interactions with our hosts deepened our appreciation for Italian culture and the universal language of medicine. Our heartfelt thanks go to Professor Catani and his



team for their warm hospitality and for making our stay in Modena truly memorable as we prepared for our journey to Turin.

Stop 2: Turin, November 2nd 2023 - November 5th 2023

The next chapter of our fellowship journey unfolded in the city of Turin, where Prof. Roberto Rossi and Federica Rosso warmly welcomed us. This leg of the trip promised a continuation of our educational odyssey, coupled with the unique charm and warmth of Turin's culture.

Upon our arrival, the camaraderie among us fellows—Rudy, Marco, Angelo, and Nils—had already begun to deepen, a testament to the shared experiences and discussions that started in Modena. Our anticipation for the learning opportunities ahead was matched by our hosts' eagerness to share their knowledge and expertise, but also making it a unforgettable memory. Federica Rosso, one of our hosts, showed us around Turin, and in the evening we had a lovely dinner with a couple of other Colleagues from the team.



Turin was characterized by its emphasis on the efficiency of mechanical alignment in primary and revision TKAs. Observing Prof. Rossi's skillful application of these techniques was not only educational but also inspirational. It highlighted the importance of a holistic approach to

patient care, demonstrating that the essence of a successful surgery extends beyond technical prowess to include patient-centric considerations.

The discussions that ensued, both in the operating theater and during our shared meals, revolved around the nuances of these alignment strategies and their impact on patient outcomes. Prof. Rossi's willingness to delve into these topics, sharing his vast experience and perspectives beyond clinical experiences, fostered an environment of mutual excitement not only about knee arthroplasty, but also for life.



Our stay in Turin was also marked by memorable cultural experiences that further enriched our fellowship. A visit to the Museo Nazionale dell'Automobile allowed us to explore the history of automotive innovation. Meanwhile, Professor Rossi's passion for wines introduced us to another facet of Italian culture, offering a taste of the region's rich viticultural heritage.



These moments of cultural exploration were not just leisure activities but integral parts of our fellowship experience, underscoring the importance of balance and well-being in the life of a medical professional. The hospitality extended by Professor Rossi and the warmth with which he and his whole team shared his

interests outside of orthopedics left a lasting impression on all of us, reminding us that the pursuit of medicine is as much about human connections as it is about scientific achievement. As we bid farewell to Turin, we were not only richer in knowledge but also in experiences that would shape our professional paths and personal lives. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to Prof. Rossi, Federica Rosso, and everyone who made our stay in Turin an unforgettable part of our fellowship journey.

Stop 3: Nijmegen, November 5th 2023 - November 8th 2023

Our third stop after a taxi, two airplanes, train, bus and 10 minutes of walking was the beautiful Nijmegen in the Netherlands. Yes, the trip was absolutely an adventure, but soon we realized that this was only the beginning of our trip. The first impression from the city was the Christmas mood, since we had 50 days for Christmas. However, we really enjoyed the mood of this small city and became part of this reality. Next morning, Doctor van Hellemondts welcomed all of us in his department and we spent the whole day in the operation room with him and his colleague in interesting revision cases of knee arthroplasty. That day we were lucky because



we had the opportunity to see how an experienced surgeon can overcome possible undesirable issues during the operation and how he can manage to solve them all in the same time. The same day we had also a surprise in the afternoon. Despite the really cold weather, we had the opportunity to participate in a

Padel “tournament” with great success. The day closed with a dinner in a beautiful Thai restaurant beside the canals with a lot of conversation out of orthopaedics.

The following day, Tuesday, we spent the morning time in the OR, but we also had the time to visit the very well-organized rehabilitation department and discussed with the specialists about their post-operative approach. We also met the chef of research and discussed about their approach in this scientific direction. The day closed with a dinner in Doctor’s van Hellemondts house. The welcome was





really warm from his family. We spent all the night discussing about many things, his approach in revision cases and his habit about ongoing learning and more. We really appreciated his generosity to exchange his knowledge to us about life and his approach to the orthopaedic world. It is true that he was a great and friendly host for all of us.

Next day we had the time to make a short walk and see this small but friendly city, take some Christmas gifts and taste the local coffee and chocolates. Afterwards a taxi driver picked us to the next stop of our fellowship.

Stop 4: Roeselare and Ghent, November 8th 2023 - November 11th 2023



Not far from Nijmegen, next stop was in Belgium with only one taxi and 3 hours of driving. The city was Roeselare which greeted us with temperature around 5 degrees Celsius and a rainy mood. This was actually the weather during our stay in Belgium. We reached at the hotel at night so there was not so much time to see the city; however we found time to taste a local burger with a Belgian beer. Equally warm was our greeting by Professor Luyckx and Doctor DeGrave the next day in their meeting room. Breakfast and more were waiting for us and a small presentation took part before the

big OR program. We had the opportunity to see the first UNI cases during our fellowship and their gently surgical and anatomical approach. The message was clear and true 100% “respect the anatomy in order to achieve the best results for our patients”. The end of the day found us to a football match to the VIP area to have a traditional meal with the colleagues of Professor Luyckx.



The cherry on the top of the cake was the next day in a cadaver laboratory in Ghent. Next morning, we visited a big cadaver laboratory and spent all the day there, in order to practice their



anatomical surgical approach, such as unicompartmental arthroplasty and more. This was really great opportunity for all of us to practice everything we had seen the day before. At the end of the day we made our presentation in different fields on knee arthroplasty, discussed around the topics and exchanged our knowledge on the world of arthroplasty. The food was great also in the lab but at the end of the day, as in every Asterix story, a great meal was waiting for us in a restaurant near our hotel.

Belgium was truly rainy, but our mood was up to continue with great enthusiasm and visit our next stop.

Stop 5: Brescia, November 12th 2023 - November 15th 2023



Our fifth stop, thanks to a comfortable plane trip, was the amazing Brescia in Italy. The same evening, we received a warm welcome from Doctor Stefano Rossi, who took us to a go-kart race, which he also easily won.

After a couple of beers to celebrate the funny race, we had a lovely dinner in a typical brescian restaurant with Professor Franco Benazzo, his wife Silvia, and Doctor Stefano Rossi.

The following day we were lucky to attend brilliant knee arthroplasty surgeries with the functional alignment technique assisted by the ROSA Robot, of which Professor Benazzo and Doctor Rossi are very skilled users.



On the same day they also showed us the interesting organization of the orthopedics department. In the late afternoon, we had an intense and stimulating scientific session where we were able to discuss all the different topics seen during the day.

The dinner that followed in another typical Brescia restaurant was fantastic. The following day



another busy day in the operating room where in addition to 2 other cases of robotically assisted TKA, Professor Benazzo showed us his brilliant manual technique for revision TKA and UKA.

After this intense day in the operating room, our co-fellow Dr Rudy Sangaletti acted as Cicerone, showing us the nocturnal meanders of the city. And after the night's efforts next morning we left for the next stop, Bern.

Stop 6: Bern-Winterthur, November 15th 2023 - November 19th 2023



The sixth stop was in beautiful Switzerland. When we arrived in Bern at 10pm we found PD Dr. Tilman Calliess to welcome us, who immediately made us feel at ease by sharing a few beers with us. The following morning, he joined us at the hotel to guide us on a short but wonderful walk in the direction of the clinic. This is where the fun began with PD Dr. Callies showing us his way of using the MAKO for TKA and UKA cases. There was an opportunity to discuss tibial slope, rotation of the tibial plateau, patellofemoral joint, showing us all the advantages of using a CT-scan based system.

In the evening, we left for Winterthur, where PD Dr. Koch welcomed us with great warmth in a wonderful restaurant. After a few hours of rest, the following morning PD Dr. Koch came to



pick us up and take us to his clinic. Thus, we were able to witness several cases of TKA with the Medacta PSI system, with PD Dr. Koch who was able to best explain to us the advantages of the kinematic alignment associated with the personalized cutting system.

After the valuable experience in the operating room, PD Dr. Koch accompanied us back to the station where we took the return train to Bern so that we could have dinner with PD Dr. Callies and his colleague Dr. Carlo Theus-Steinmann who were waiting for us in an excellent typical



restaurant of the city. On Saturday morning our "surprise" awaited us.



Saturday proved to be fantastic and memorable, where after the wonderful tour of the highest peak in Europe in the morning and the succulent fondu lunch in Winterthur, the scientific session started in the afternoon. This session proved to be lively, open and stimulating and several ideas were born to improve our clinical and surgical practice.

The intense day ended with another appetizing dinner in the wonderful location before returning to the hotel, saying a warm goodbye and preparing for the seventh stage the following morning.



Stop 7: Lyon, November 19th 2023 - November 22nd 2023

Following the inspiring days in Switzerland, we took a train to Lyon, excited at the prospect of visiting the Lyon Knee School. Upon our arrival, we are warmly welcomed by Cécile Batailler, whose invaluable presence is marked by her kindness and profound commitment to the subject matter. On Sunday evening, we were guests at Professors' Bonnins house, where we found the other major players of the Lyon knee school gathered. Within the serene ambiance



of his house, we deliberate upon our presentations and those of the younger participants, appreciating the open dialogue and exchange of ideas that pervades the environment. On Monday we continued our experience in the operating room as guests of Professor Sebastien Lustig,

who leaves an indelible mark by imparting his philosophy of alignment, fostering a dynamic research agenda encompassing a spectrum of compelling topics.

Our stay there has shown us how that the school's essence lies in its unity—a collective desire



to engage in discourse and growth, inspiring young minds to engage in science around the knee and pose questions. The second day unfolds once again within the operating theater, albeit in a different hospital, marked by a distinct philosophy and strategic approach. As guests of Prof.

Bonnin, we learned about implant planning, with an alternating approach. This alternative approach further stimulates our desire to engage in dialogue, share experiences, and contemplate future endeavors, fostering a sense of belonging within the community. Throughout our two days in Lyon, there is a palpable sense of the community's eagerness to embrace us, signaling an invitation beyond mere formalities—an invitation into the EKS environment for a future characterized by discourse and personal development, all while maintaining a steadfast commitment to surgery and patient care, guided by the contagious passion that defines Lyon's environment.

Stop 8: Marseille, November 22nd 2023 - November 25th 2023

Our next destination is Marseille, following an early departure that takes us directly to the operating room. Upon arrival, we are greeted by Professor Jean-Noel Argenson, alongside numerous other international guests, and we immediately encounter a distinctive approach to robotic TKAs, characterized by a unique system of work and organization. Subsequently, we engage in a scientific meeting, which proves to be extremely captivating due to its meticulously organized approach and lively atmosphere conducive to exchange of ideas.

Later, the discussion transitions to Professor Argenson’s residence for a dinner where valuable teaching moments unfold, focusing on how to harmonize scientific research with surgical practice in a continual process of improvement. The ensuing two days in the operating room



provide us with an opportunity to delve into and discuss a novel strategy for managing arthritis and deformities through osteotomy. We engage in discussions with the esteemed expert, Professor Matthieu Ollivier, who, in addition to organizing a saw bone workshop,

generously shares a wealth of surgical tips and tricks that are integral to his surgical and scientific endeavors.



Stop 9: Florence, November 25th 2023 - November 29th 2023

As we wrapped up our traveling fellowship with the final stop in Florence, we are eager to share the blend of professional growth and unforgettable experiences this city offered.



Florence wasn't just a backdrop for learning; it became a vibrant classroom where surgery met Italian culture in the most enriching ways. During our stay, we had the opportunity to see Dr. Andrea Baldini perform several complex revision TKA cases. These weren't your everyday procedures—they challenged him to think critically and adapt to unexpected situations. The hands-on experience was invaluable, and the advice and strategies that Dr. Baldini shared were eye-opening. Outside the operating room, our experiences were equally



enriching. Dr. Baldini hosted a wonderful dinner at his home one evening, where the food was delicious and the company, even better.

One of the most memorable days was when we took a quad bike tour around the Tuscan landscape. Zipping through nature, felt a world away from the operating theaters and surgical instruments. It was a breath of fresh air—literally—and a fun way to bond with the rest of the fellowship group. We also got to experience the local passion for soccer by battling Dr. Baldini, some friends and colleagues. The energy



after a long day in the OR was incredible, and it was great to see everyone unwinding and getting caught up in the game. Looking back, Florence was the perfect end to our fellowship. It wasn't just about the surgical skills of Dr. Baldini; it's also about the people

we met and the experiences we shared. We are heading home with not only a deeper understanding of our specialty but also memories that we will look back on for a lifetime!

Stop 10: Bordeaux, November 29th 2023 - December 1st 2023

The final stop was the EKS Closed Meeting in Bordeaux. Beyond the scientific sessions, we were truly pleased with how warmly this community welcomed us. For now we want to express our heartfelt thanks to everyone at the European Knee Society, especially to all our hosts during our Fellowship and the EKS Secretary. This was incredible!

The Fellows

Angelo Vasiliadis

Marco Pungitore

Nils Meissner

Rudy Sangaletti