

***Report about the European Medical Physics School (EMPS) Workshop “PACS in practice today, the real facts” and the VIII EFOMP Congress of Medical Physics and Clinical Engineering  
by Heiko Karle - CONGRESS Award Winner 2003***

During my stay in Eindhoven from May 19th to May 22nd I visited the EFOMP Workshop and the 8<sup>th</sup> EFOMP Congress of Medical Physics and Clinical Engineering – for both events (including the social program) the registration fee was sponsored by EFOMP.

The EFOMP Workshop and the Congress are arranged every second year somewhere in Europe (2001 Belfast – North Ireland / 2005 Nürnberg - Germany). In 2003 it was hosted in Eindhoven (Netherlands) by the Dutch Society of Medical Physics (NVKF – Nederlandse vereniging voor klinische fysika). The NVKF was celebrating at the same time their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

For me as a Ph.D. Student at the University of Mainz – Germany working in the department of radiotherapy and also undertaking the program of our national Society of Medical Physics (DGMP – Deutsch Gesellschaft für medizinische Physik) to get their certification in the field of radiotherapy, the award was an opportunity to get in contact and up to date in the whole field of medical physics – not only in the field of radiotherapy.

On the first day I attended the EMPS (European Medical Physics School) entitled “PACS in practice today, the real facts” which took place at the University of Eindhoven. During the lectures a complete overview of diagnostic digital imaging was given, starting up with an overview of a PACS implementation going on through the possibilities of digital imaging including quality control and quality assurance aspects and ending up with some future aspects of possibilities and limitations. Attending these lectures was for me a kind of revision/reconsideration of the basics in digital imaging. Additionally I got some news about the imaging standards and current developments of some commercial distributors. It was also interesting, during the coffee and tea breaks, to get in contact with people from other hospitals and discuss with them their problems ideas and solutions in the field of digital imaging. The whole day at the EMPS was pretty well organized and I got many new aspects for my lectures in the field of digital imaging, so finally there was for me, as a physicist who is working in a radiotherapy department, only one thing lacking; no mention was made of any aspects of imaging and image communication in the field of radiotherapy, maybe the reason was that a separate class entitled “New Developments in Imaging Techniques in Radiotherapy” was offered.

After the ESMP there was a welcome reception at the town hall. This reception gave the opportunity to make contact with the people who participated in one of the other three classes which were held this day. It was quite interesting to speak with people from all over Europe not only to exchange knowledge and experiences about the kind of work everyone is doing but also how different life can be in Europe.

Between May 20<sup>th</sup> and May 22<sup>nd</sup> the 8<sup>th</sup> EFOMP Congress took place at the Evoluon which was built in 1966 for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Philips (the main sponsor of the congress) to illustrate the development of planet earth and of technology and the role Philips had played in this technological evolution. During the congress the Evoluon was again a place where

new developments were presented not only by scientists from Europe – there were also people from Asia and Australia.



The Evoluon – a place of developments in Medical Physics during the EFOMP Congress

All three congress days started up with a plenary session. The lectures of these sessions began normally with the fundamental basics and ended up at the level of current developments in the related field of medical physics. So it was always possible to get familiar with all the different subjects, including those in areas in which I am not so much involved at work. After the plenary session the congress was split into four parallel sessions, including one with the focus on radio physics and radiotherapy which I normally attended. During the lunch and coffee breaks there was again plenty of time to discuss with others about latest presentations or take a look at the industrial exhibition. Most of the vendors came from the field of radiotherapy so I could nearly visit all companies which affect my work at the daily routine and get up to date with their latest developments.

Compared to the scientific meetings of the German Society of Medical Physics, the EFOMP Congress was different in that there were many more presentations held outside of the field of radiotherapy. It was interesting to hear about the work and developments in areas of medical physics outside my own direct area of concern.

On Thursday evening the congress dinner was held in Hertogenbosch, a city 45 minutes away from Eindhoven. The dinner itself was in a former church which was rebuilt for events like these. Again there was the possibility to discuss the scientific developments and how the developments through the EURATOM are affecting the European countries and how the national societies try to handle this.

I would like to thank EFOMP for providing me with the opportunity to attend the ESMP and the 8<sup>th</sup> EFOMP Congress. I had a pretty good time in Eindhoven with opportunities to develop my knowledge and to get in contact with physicists from all over Europe. All the exchange of knowledge, the new contacts with people from other clinics and the exchange of experiences will help me to make life easier in research and work during daily routine.