



International Society for Clinical Biostatistics

Number 5 October 1988

Editor : D.W.Wilson

ISCB SUCCESSES 1987-1988

Professor Albrecht Neiss : - ISCB -9 Organizer, 1988

It is quite amazing how ISCB Meetings get better and better in terms of scientific content, and in the social interactions that develop. ISCB -9, Innsbruck was no exception. Professor Neiss at the Institut für Biostatistik und Dokumentation der Universität Innsbruck, organized a superb Meeting at the Innsbruck Convention Centre on August 30 - September 2, 1988. The activities of ISCB -9 began, in fact, with a workshop, organized by Dr. Douglas Wilson, on 'Teaching Medical Statistics in Developed and Developing Countries' held on August 29th. The programme included the traditional topics of ISCB - congresses such as Clinical Trials, Epidemiology, Statistical Modelling, Bayesian Methods in Clinical Biostatistics, Philosophical Aspects of Biostatistics, and a mini-symposium on the Quality of Life Assessment. The Society is indebted to Professor Neiss and his team for their tremendous effort and the high quality of scientific and social endeavour which was so obvious at Innsbruck.

**ISCB - 10
MAASTRICHT,
THE NETHERLANDS.
(See back page)**

Professor Edmund Gehan :- President 1987-1988

The election of Professor Edmund Gehan to the office of President of the ISCB was a wise choice for ISCB Members to make, his election held much promise and the ISCB was not to be disappointed. Born in Brooklyn, New York in 1929, Ed Gehan graduated at Manhattan College (1951) and then moved to North Carolina State University where he gained his Masters (1953) and Doctorate of Philosophy in Experimental Statistics (1957). He held a succession of important posts at Chapel Hill - North Carolina from 1953 to 1959 and then moved to the National Institute of Health, Bethesda where he became Head of the Biometrics Division of the Cancer Chemotherapy National Service Center in 1962.



In 1967, Ed Gehan became Chief, Section of Biometrics and Professor of Biometrics at the University of Texas System Cancer Center within the M.D. Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute, Houston, Texas. His involvement in Committees, Editorial Boards and his contributions to Teaching and Research are voluminous and beyond the scope of this Newsletter item. Of his many awards, the Jeffrey A. Gottlieb Memorial Award in 1983 is considered to be very special to Ed.

When elected as President of the ISCB in Gothenburg, Sweden, Ed immediately started to explore ways in which the professional standing of the Society could be developed. Firstly, the high standards of ISCB Meetings had to be assured for ISCB -9 in Innsbruck, 1988. Ed worked diligently with his Programme Committee Chairman (E. Marubini) and his Local Organizer (A. Neiss) to achieve this. Ed, always conscious of the future, marshalled his thoughts and energies through correspondence and personal contacts so as to line up candidates for prospective Meetings for some years ahead. As a result, ISCB -10 is now firmly established for Maastricht in The Netherlands in 1989, and proposals for ISCB -11 in Nimes, France and ISCB 12, EORTC, Brussels are being considered by our new President Mats Lorstad. The enthusiastic note of thanks given to Professor Edmund Gehan at the AGM in Innsbruck was a true reflection of his commitment to the Society during his Presidential year of Office.

BECOME A MEMBER OF ISCB (International Society for Clinical Biostatistics)

Support our aim to stimulate research on the principles and methodology in the design and analysis of clinical research, to increase the relevance of statistical theory to the real world of clinical medicine; and, through scientific meetings to create an opportunity for the exchange of knowledge, experience and ideas among clinicians, statisticians and members of other disciplines (e.g. epidemiologists, clinical chemists and clinical pharmacologists) working in, or interested in, the field of clinical biostatistics.

For only £15 you may take out ordinary membership.

For application of membership contact the Honorary Secretary, Dr. J. Seldrup, Ciba-Geigy Pharmaceuticals, Wimblehurst Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 4AB U.K.

Dr Mats Lörstad :- ISCB -8 Organizer, President 1988-1989

In 1985 an inspired telephone call to his company AB Hassle, Mölndal, Sweden resulted in ISCB -8 being held in Gothenburg in 1987. His efforts together with those of his Programme Committee Chairman (Hans Wedel) and his Local Organizing Committee added another dimension to the ISCB, one in which the Pharmaceutical Industry could identify within the ISCB, a scientific programme which served a significant part of their needs. This continues to be a feature of the ISCB. The Organization of an ISCB Meeting is not an occasion for the faint-hearted and the trials and tribulations, the hope and despair and final triumph was expressed in a letter to the Editor, an extract of which follows.

... ORGANIZER'S ORDEAL IN HINDSIGHT - THE CASE OF ISCB -8

Organizing a conference is fun, you should try it some day.

Or at least, what you remember afterwards are the funny moments and there are plenty. Right in the midst of the preparations when the number of participants had a crucial question mark on it but the committed expenditures for the invited speakers kept piling up way above the income from the few registered participants it was easy to appear slightly distraught when the brain was in a loop making all kinds of excuses as to why the budget had gone to pieces.

But, with a certain flair for allowing the feeling of "what the hell, you only live once" to guide the mental status the committee kept going. And as August progressed we became gradually more relaxed as the numbers kept rising. In addition, when the glorious Swedish government in one of its few sparks of wisdom awarded us 20,000 SEK for the conference we knew that the finances were on solid ground.

From my point of view the conference had it all from the tragedy of a prospective participant breaking a leg on the way to the airport to the enjoyment showed by the participants when we heard the music from the dixie-orchestra in the harbour of Marstrand. On another dimension, the frustration of the first day's totally unexpected queueing for the luncheon which as far as unexpectedness is concerned was balanced by the voluptuous, at least relatively seen, welcoming party. To illustrate the wide spectrum of what the organizer encounters I had a participant complaining that the party destroyed his plans for the evening as he had planned to go out for a meal afterwards and now he felt that to be unnecessary. . . .

The Viking party turned out to be the success we had hoped for. However, it should not be a secret that of the events planned for the conference which the Local Organizing Committee spent most interest in and time on, the party was the one. The invoice for the party brought a surprise : according to the records at the place, 29 of the participants equipped themselves with the very cow horn they had used at the party. We could not talk ourselves out of paying for those horns which thus was taken out of the surplus. On the bright side, the horns in actual fact became a donation by the Swedish Government since we had to repay the remainder of the surplus, which amounted to about half the original grant.

I wish I had pinched one myself. . . .

Despite a wonderful Gothenburg conference, it was Mats Lorstad's long service to the Society which led to his election as President in 1988. A profile on our new President will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter.

The Executive Committee of the ISCB 1988-89

At the Annual General Meeting of the Society held in "Saal Tyrol", Innsbruck Convention Centre, at 17.30 on Thursday the 1st September 1988, the following were elected to, or continued their office on, the Executive Committee.

Officers

M. Lörstad (President - Sweden)
W. Koepcke (Vice President - FR Germany)
J. Selstrup (Hon. Secretary - United Kingdom)
D.W. Wilson (Hon. Treasurer - United Kingdom)

Members

C. Chastang (France)
R.A. Dixon (United Kingdom)
R.J.M.M. Does (The Netherlands)
E.A. Gehan (Immediate-past President - U.S.A.)
E. Marubini (Italy)
A. Morabito (Italy)
A. Neiss (Austria)
R. Van Strik (The Netherlands)

Correspondence (Cont.)

Dear Dr. Wilson

Many thanks for your positive reaction on my talk - Mathematical modelling, reconstruction and simulation of AIDS in The Netherlands - at the ISCB - 8 meeting. As you may remember from our conversation, I was wondering whether it was wise to present papers on the epidemiology of infectious disease at the ISCB. I did participate in ISCB -7 and ISCB -8. I enjoyed both meetings very much. Contributions on infectious disease, however, were scarce at both meetings. At ISCB -7 there were two papers on infectious disease epidemiology. Both papers, however, were presented at the same time, i.e. it was impossible to attend both talks. At ISCB -8 there were three papers on infectious disease epidemiology - two on AIDS and one on influenza -.

One of the aims of the ISCB is to stimulate research on analysis of clinical research data and create an opportunity for the exchange of knowledge among clinicians, statisticians and members of other disciplines e.g. epidemiologists. With respect to infectious disease e.g. AIDS, it can be expected that clinical studies will increase in quantity. Investigations on latent, infectious and incubation periods of AIDS are essential for future modelling of the AIDS epidemic and the link between results obtained from clinical and epidemiological studies is vital for further progress. Forthcoming drugs may affect the degree of infectiousness of those who are infected and the survival time of the infected will increase. In short, clinical studies may provide estimates of parameters which are essential for further work on the epidemiology of AIDS, herewith stressing the importance of communication between both disciplines in future meetings.

Infectious disease epidemiology can better embark in the ISCB when theme sessions are organized. If papers on clinical and infectious disease epidemiology are presented in the same session, they become pronounced as a main subject. This in turn could promote the research in this interesting field and stimulate the number of contributed papers.

The above may be an item for the Newsletter of ISCB.

with kind regards

Dr. Hans A.M. van Druten, MSA, Toernooiveld, 6525 ED Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

PRESS RELEASES

From Marcel Dekker, Inc.:

Directory of Statistical Microcomputer Software : 1988 Edition. By Wayne A. Woodward, Alan C. Elliot, Henry L. Gray, and Douglas C. Matlock. 1987. 752 pages, \$59.75 (U.S. and Canada); \$71.50 (All other countries). ISBN : 0-8247-7846-4. (Prices subject to change without notice.)

Praise for the previous edition of Directory of Statistical Microcomputer software!

" . . . the product history/market information . . . and the product review references [are] worth the price of the book itself."

-- Technometrics

" . . . quite useful for getting some insights into the minimal hardware configuration needed and the price-performance ratio of the various products."

-- Computational Statistics Quarterly

" . . . Highly recommended for all libraries."

-- Choice

Completely updated and revised, the 1988 Edition of the Directory now lists over 200 statistical software packages - describing more than 100 programs than the previous edition!

Readership : Statisticians; mathematicians; computer engineers and scientists; researchers working with statistical data in such disciplines as engineering, marketing, business, medicine, social science, psychology, and biometry; CAD/CAM software designers; microcomputer manufacturers; and software producers and vendors.

Cancer Modeling. (Statistics : Textbooks and Monographs Series/83). Edited by James R. Thompson and Barry W. Brown. 1987. 440 pages, bound, illustrated. \$89.75 (U.S. and Canada); \$107.50 (All other countries). ISBN: 0-8247-7773-5. (Prices subject to change without notice.)

Ranging in approach from exploratory data analysis (EDA) to speculative data analysis (SDA), this important new reference helps oncological biometricians to consider every aspect of the cancer modeling process.

Topics include intracellular electrolytes and their role in cancer aetiology . . . quantitative theories of carcinogenesis . . . tumor growth models and cancer chemotherapy . . . cell population models with continuous structure variables . . . metabolic events in the cell cycle of malignant and normal cells . . . a modeling approach to metastatic progression of cancer . . . repair of radiation injury and the time factor in radiotherapy . . . modeling resistance to cancer chemotherapeutic agents . . . exploring large tumor model spaces . . . and simulation-based estimation of parameters characterizing a stochastic process.

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Teaching Medical Statistics in Developed and Developing Countries :

A report on this ISCB Meeting held in Innsbruck on 29th August 1988.

In recent years considerable anxiety has been expressed by medical statisticians both in developed and developing countries as to the progress made, or lack of it, in the development of the profession. The purpose of this Workshop, organized by Dr Douglas Wilson, was to obtain the views of experts in the field of Teaching Medical Statistics from Europe and elsewhere with an ultimate view to evolving a basic structure that could be used by others. This initial meeting was well attended and comprised participants from eleven different countries. The President of the ISCB, Professor E. Gehan gave an introductory talk on the Teaching of Medical Statistics to Medical Students and Doctors focussing considerable attention on applications, particularly in the area of Clinical Trials.

Professor Claude Chastang, CHU Lariboisière, University Paris 7, followed this talk with his own focussing attention on Teaching Biostatistics to Medical Students. After an 'Introduction', Professor Chastang clearly indicated the main reason for teaching statistics was to keep abreast of the rapidly expanding areas of statistics that related to medicine such as epidemiology and medical informatics. His approach was to develop a teaching programme based on the need to solve biological problems such as those encountered in Diagnosis and Treatment but moreover to spread the biostatistical training over the whole of the Medical Syllabus. Indeed, he suggested that professors in other disciplines should undergo training. One important tool that was being used was that of the use of microcomputers to solve biological problems. This talk was concluded with a detailed description of courses run by his department and concluded that a 'European Recommendation for training programmes for teaching medical students biostatistics' was considered to be vital. This, of course, was the very reason for this ISCB initiative.

Professor Roel Van Strik tackled the problems of When, What and How to teach. In a similar vein to Claude Chastang, Professor Van Strik stated that the motivation of medical students is for medicine not for statistics, chemistry or physics but naturally they must know enough biostatistics, biochemistry and biophysics to practise medicine effectively. Professor Van Strik then described the Biostatistics Curriculum at the Medical Faculty of Erasmus University, Rotterdam. As to the question When to teach, 3 levels of understanding were set. The first was the understanding of the line of thought used in the design and analysis of a medical research project. The next level was an ability to make a critical appraisal of a piece of work with regard to design, analysis and interpretation and finally students should be able to apply methodological principles to their own projects. It was thought that the Rotterdam Curriculum catered for the What and When to teach Medical Statistics, How? was judged to be in a way as follows :- To overcome the lack of interest and motivation by the students, to convince students of the relevance of statistics to Medicine, to explain that statistics is more than a computer package and to stress four points namely the question to be answered by the investigation, the structure of the investigation, the data generating process and the type of data generated. This talk provoked much discussion and it became clear that a common ground existed in the papers given by those representing the developed countries. Professor Marubini and Dr Adriano Decarli supported the aims and objectives of the earlier papers in their equally erudite way with examples from courses given to medical and dental students in Italy. Similarly, Dr. Hélène Sancho-Garnier described the aims and objectives of the CESAM (Le Centre d'Enseignement et à la Biologie Médicale) Courses given at the Statistics Institute of the Pierre and Marie Curie University, Paris. Professor Schneider gave a German view of Teaching Medical Statistics with again many points in common with previous speakers.

The final scheduled talk of the day was given by Dr Verma, MLB Medical College, Jhansi, India. In many ways his talk had a different emphasis in which he criticised the current status of those involved in teaching the subject. Teachers of Medical Statistics were not given the recognition nor the status afforded to others within the Medical Fraternity.

Finally, this Workshop produced much discussion, particularly from Professor Krickeberg who addressed the simple problem of Teaching Statistics to Primary Health Care Workers in Cambodia, and so proved to be successful. A report on this Workshop is to be published and those interested in the report should contact : Dr. Jorgen Selstrup, Hon. Secretary, Ciba-Geigy Pharmaceuticals, Wimblehurst Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 4AB, U.K.

Correspondence

Dear Dr. Wilson

I am writing to tell you about the XIX International Conference of the International Society for Chronobiology (ISC), which will be held in the Metropolitan Washington D.C. area during June 20-24 1989.

Topics to be covered at the Conference include (1) environmental physiology and pathology, (2) cellular genetic and molecular mechanisms, (3) agriculture, (4) pineal, (5) other neurobiology, (6) physiology and medicine, (7) sleep, (8) instrumentation and technology, (9) data analysis, (10) psychology, (11) nutrition, (12) chronopharmacology, (13) education, (14) interactions and mechanisms of ultradian and infradian rhythms, (15) masking, and (16) epidemiology.

This conference will be of interest to biostatisticians and therefore the ISCB Membership.

Dr. Dora K. Hayes, Local Organizer, Room 120, Bldg. 307, BARC East, Beltsville, MD 20705 USA.

ADVANCE NOTICES

The Tenth Meeting of the International Society for Clinical Biostatistics (ISCB-10) 11-14 SEPTEMBER 1989

The call for Papers for this Meeting will be despatched in early December by the outgoing Treasurer, Professor Wolfgang Koepcke. The proposed themes are : Clinical Trials, Epidemiology, Statistical Modelling, Survival Analysis, Medical Decision Making, General Aspects of Clinical Biostatistics, a Mini-Symposium on Nutrition Research and a Course on Clinical Trials is planned for the 15th September 1989. The Chairman of the Local Organizing Committee is Dr. Ronald J.M.M. Does, University of Limburg, Medical Informatics and Statistics, P.O.Box 616, 6200 MD Maastricht, The Netherlands and the Chairman of the Programme Committee is Professor Roel Van Strik, Institute of Biostatistics, Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, POSTBUS 1738, 3000 DR Rotterdam.

Preparations for this Meeting are almost finalised already and prospective participants are advised to respond promptly to the 'Call for Papers'. An invitation from the Local Organizers will be printed in the next issue of the Newsletter.

HEALTH OF INNER CITIES 4-7 September 1989

The Provisional Programme

1. Concepts of man and his Inner-City life.

Covers both the context of the whole of that community and its constituent parts.

2. Identifying problems of 'Inner-City Health'.

Environmental pollution and associated morbidity and mortality, quality of housing and health, social factors, nutrition, education, mental health and behaviour, urban ecotoxicology and occupational hazards.

3. Understanding causes of 'Health Problems of Inner Cities'.

Databases (National and International), surveys, measurements, monitoring of health factors, ecotoxicological and epidemiological modelling and hypothesis testing.

4. Strategies for Health Improvement.

Intervention strategies and their assessment; the role of health and social services, central and local government, and the legal profession. The implementation of health promotion programmes for personal and community health issues.

5. Recommendations for 'Health Improvement of Inner Cities'.

Publication and distribution of the deliberations of Working Parties established during the Conference.

Those interested in receiving further information should write to :

P.S. Cleary, Secretary-General, The Institute of Statisticians, 50 Fitzroy Street, LONDON, W1P 5HS, England.

DIARY OF EVENTS

TOPIC	DATE	VENUE	CONTACT
2nd International Workshop on 'ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND STATISTICS'	4-7 Jan 1989	FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA	W.Gale, AT & T Bell Laboratories, 2C278, 600 Mountain Avenue, Murray Hill, N.J. 07974, U.S.A.
GLIM 89 and 4th International workshop on STATISTICAL MODELLING	17-21 July 1989	TRENTO, ITALY	Adriano Decarli, Istituto di Statistica e Ricerca, Operativa, Università degli studi di Trento, Via G Rosmini 42, I-38100 Trento, ITALY.
'HEALTH OF INNER CITIES'	4-7 Sept 1989	CARDIFF, UK	P Cleary, Institute of Statisticians, 50 Fitzroy Street, London W1P 5HS
STATISTICAL METHODS IN BIOPHARMACY	7-8 Sept 1989	PARIS	Joris Cauquil, Centre de Recherche, Pierre Fabre, 17 av Jean Moulin, F-81106 Castres, FRANCE.
STATISTICS FOR REPEATED MEASUREMENTS	7-9 Sept 1989	BRESSANONE/ BRIXEN, ITALY	Adelchi Azzalini, Dept. Statistical Science, University of Padova, Via S. Francesco 33, 35121 Padova, ITALY.
ISCB - 10	11-14 Sept 1989	MAASTRICHT, THE NETHERLANDS	Dr R.J.M.M. Does, University of Limburg, Medical Informatics & Statistics, P.O. Box 616, 6200 MD Maastricht, THE NETHERLANDS.

**CALL FOR NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS. CONTACT
Dr. D. W. Wilson, Tenovus Institute, Heath Park, Cardiff CF4 4XX, U.K.**