

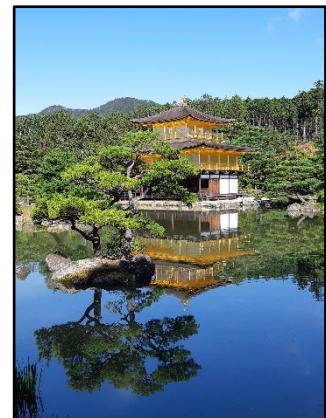
ISPO World Congress Report 2019

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The 17th ISPO World Congress was held in Kobe, Japan in October 2019 and I was one of the lucky 4,400 participants. I was honoured to be able to attend such a prestigious congress with so many great speakers from around the world. There were keynotes, symposia, instructional courses, free papers and posters all timetabled in unison and set around two exhibition halls showcasing the best in prosthetics and orthotics from 38 different countries. I was one of 348 free papers that were presented over the 4 days of the conference. Being given the opportunity to present my paper “Prosthetic Rehabilitation Following Multiple Limb Loss: basics to bionics a case study” was an amazing experience, although nerve wracking it is something I would recommend to others considering writing a free paper in a heartbeat. Case studies are always well received because the clinicians in the audience really get something from it.

The theme of the conference was ‘Basics to Bionics’ which I think encapsulated my experience of Japan very neatly. Japan is an incredibly diverse country with such a rich and interesting history but has so many new technologies that we in the UK can only dream of (heated toilet seats with built in bidets as standard is just one example!). I took the theme to heart whilst choosing which sessions to go to over the four days of conference. I wanted to see new technologies including talks on microprocessor knees and the ever expanding world of osseointegration, but I also wanted to see



the ‘bread and butter’ topics that we see in our clinics, day in and day out. I found the instructional courses on alignment particularly valuable because although it’s something I do in clinic every day, it’s extremely useful to revisit why we’re doing things and what effect it can have on our patients.

The exhibition was a great area to spend time, not only for the freebies, but also to talk with people face-to-face who you may only know through emails. It also really gives a sense of new products and techniques. I watched socket manufacture demonstrations and prosthetic feet and knee’s being put to the test. What I found interesting this year was how companies are starting to think about the environmental impact of their products. It still needs a lot of work because as an industry we produce an incredible amount of plastic waste alone. But



slowly I could see change; companies are starting to experiment with alternatives to carbon. There was a poster comparing flax and basalt to carbon and one company was showing their flax material for socket manufacture.



Overall, I was humbled to be a part of ISPO 2019 and was incredibly grateful to ISPO UK for the bursary. I would recommend to anyone who has an interesting case study, a topic they've always wanted to learn more about or a piece of research or an experiment, to make that idea happen and present at the next ISPO. It's really not that scary once you get past your first slide!

