Spring forward

BOS members Fiona Ryan and Zahra Sheriteh report on the recent British Orthodontic Society’s spring Meeting in Dublin

T he British Orthodontic Society’s Spring Meeting was held at the RCSI, in the heart of Dublin. Following lunch, BOS Chairman Peter McCallum, opened the proceedings with an excellent presentation on the start of many joint ventures between the two societies. Michael Ryan, Chairman of the OSI, chaired the afternoon session, which was a fascinating insight into the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Invisalign and Incognito appliances.

‘Linguual had arrived’ with Dirk Wiechmann, who made an excellent start to the Friday afternoon session, presenting ‘Lingual Orthodontics: the latest history’. The most recent advancement in laboratory manufacturing of Incognito, developed by the speaker, has resulted in a customised appliance which is not only more comfortable for the patient but also boasts accurate torque expansion and distal movement with class I buccal segments, expansion and distal movement and post-treatment relapse. He outlined its benefits including aesthetics, gentle forces and facilitating oral hygiene. However, he advised that care must be taken to eliminate undercuts during manufacture, as well as understanding its limitations in terms of the tooth movements that can be achieved. We were very lucky indeed to receive some useful clinical tips from a very experienced clinician.

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With no sign of any ill effects from the night before, the next day’s proceedings started promptly to a full house, with Professor and BOS President, David Bowden, presenting the Geoffrey Fletcher Award to Lorna Dubhys from Dundee Dental School. This award is presented annually to enable an orthodontic trainee to pursue an elective in orthodontics, to further their knowledge and experience.

The first session was then launched by BOS Chairman, Nigel Harradine. The guest speaker, Dr David Sarver, needed little introduction as most of us would be familiar with him as one of the co-authors of the most widely read orthodontic textbook in the world, Contemporary Orthodontics by Professors Sarver and Sarver. Dr Sarver lectures widely on the ‘art and diagnosis of the smile’ and is well known for his dynamic multimedia presentations.

Part 1 - The aesthetic evaluation didn’t disappoint as Dr Sarver sought to expand the diagnostic regime of the audience and introduce the soft tissue paradigm. The importance of appreciating the macro-, mini- and micro-aesthetics of a smile was discussed in growing, non-growing, and ageing faces. Dr Sarver urged us all as orthodontists to look more at the cosmetics of a patient and less at the cephalometrics and to appreciate the ‘art in its entirety’. Dr Sarver presented a systematic method of assessing the face, smile, and dentition in three dimensions. The emphasis was placed on proportions and not linear measurements and resisting the temptation to apply a ‘Procrustean’ approach of ‘one size fits all’.

Following the break, the session was chaired by Cath Crocker of the OSI, who introduced the next speaker, selling coach, Ashley Lattely. Ashley was quick to dispel the negative stereotype of a ‘salesman’ with his engaging and interactive session on ‘Helping patients to say YES’. He started by reminding the audience that an investment in knowledge always pays the best interest and continued over the next hour to promote positive selling. Ashley views selling in orthodontics as a combination of building relationships with the right types of patients, finding out their problems, and then solving them.

He reminded the listeners that the reasons patients say no to private treatment is usually nothing to do with technical ability, and that price may be an issue, but is rarely the issue. The initial sceptical audience was won over by the participative Attitude Test, which required the audience to remember 20 items in perfect order. A task the majority managed with success despite initial cynicism. Ashley finished his animated and entertaining presentation by reminding the audience that successful selling is about positive attitude and being pro-active.

Dr Sarver’s mini-aesthetic evaluation

The final presentation before lunch was again by David Sarver. This time the focus was on mini-aesthetic evaluation. Dr Sarver exhibited great rapport with the audience as he introduced recent concepts in the quantification of the characteristics of smile aesthetics. As well as showing many examples of the comprehensive three-dimensional analysis that Dr Sarver teaches and practises, he reminded us of the importance of considering the fourth dimension - time - and discussed the influence of aging on the smile. Again, the value of tailoring each treatment plan to the individual was stressed as ‘your smile is your signature’. Dr Sarver spoke about both the shape and proportions of the face and gingival characteristics, and urged the audience to consider these aspects when striving to deliver the optimal result for every patient.

Returning refreshed after lunch, delegates were welcomed back by session chair Peter McCallum, BOS Chairman, who introduced David Sarver for a discussion of ‘Orthognathic and adjunctive cosmetic surgery’. The excellent atmosphere in the auditorium continued and Dr Sarver showed no signs of tiring as he presented an impressive case selection of orthognathic patients before and after orthognathic and adjunctive surgery. These additional procedures included rhinoplasty, genioplasty, platysmal plication, liposuction, V-Y closure, and other soft tissue procedures.

The presentation started with an honest account of ‘surgical failures’ and early lessons learned, where Dr Sarver admitted that the occlusal goals had not been met but the aesthetic goals had not. The importance of adjunctive procedures to counter the sometimes unwanted side effects of hard tissue orthognathic surgery and to enhance the outcome was emphasised. The audience was captivated by the series of cases presented next where Dr Sarver used digital technology to present ‘morph movies’ of patients with severe malocclusions throughout treatment. The results were exceptional and Dr Sarver accentuated the importance of a multi-specialty approach in offering patients the best outcome.

Complex cases

Dirk Wiechmann returned to present a selection of complex cases treated with Incognito. This was truly impressive! Dr Wiechmann described the use of custom-made Extra Torque (ET) wires in complex Class II division two malocclusions as well as the use of obliquewise archwires to manage open and deep bite cases. The use of both lingual and buccal auxiliaries allowed excellent control of tooth movement during space closure.

After a welcome tea-break, David Sarver once again took to the stage, introduced by David Bowden, BOS President. The final topic for discussion was new technologies - soft tissue lasers and CAD-CAM braces. Continuing on the mini-aesthetic theme, Dr Sarver introduced the concept of using soft tissue diode lasers as part of adjunctive orthodontic treatment. Uses for this technique include aesthetic enhancement, such as improving gingival topography, idealising crown proportions, crown lengthening, and resolving crown height asymmetries, in addition to treatment management, for example, eliminating pseudopockets. The benefits of using diode laser to ablate soft tissue; including precision, haemostasis, and the need for topical anaesthetic only, were illustrated.

Finally, Dr Sarver concluded his presentation with an introduction to custom-made Computer Aided Design/Computer Aided Manufacture (CAD/CAM) fixed appliances. The Insignia system uses 3D imaging and software which produces customised brackets and wires which theoretically yield optimal finishing. The possibility of using this software together with digital images of the patient’s smile has been explored by Dr Sarver in his quest to provide the perfect smile to suit every patient.

If you would like more information about the BOS, visit www.bos.org.uk.