Living like a rock star

Ken Harris reveals all from the first MSc residential in Manchester

What a hectic few months it has been. What with trips to Copenhagen to teach occlusion, and to Warsaw to present a lecture at the Polish Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry to say nothing of a day spent a day teaching colleagues in Nottingham, and a lecture at the 2012 Dentistry Show at the NEC, I have had little time for anything else. I suppose I do spend too much time preparing my lectures, but I fear that colleagues in Nottingham, and me spending a day teaching Cosmetic Dentistry to say nothing of the nationalities speak English so well, and a few hours with delegates from Croatia and Bulgaria in particular have only reinforced my linguistic shortcomings.

I guess I initially underestimated the sheer amount of reading this MSc course would involve and probably allowed it to build up to a sizeable backlog. However, I have knocked down and finally completed Module 1... just in time to start Module 2!

The latter stages of Module 1 have been restoratively based with examination and diagnosis well to the fore as they should be, but up to now there has been very little emphasis upon aesthetic aspects. I guess this is how it should be initially, but did I perceive the slightest bat’s squeak of animosity towards the whole concept of cosmetic dental treatment from the academic staff? I wonder if they have become so used to teaching restorative dentistry over the years that the cosmetic outcome may well still be of a secondary concern. Let’s see how they shape up during the coming modules shall we?

As well as a comprehensive reading list, much of our teaching is also provided by live online webinar lectures. This format allows direct access to the lecturer and we are all encouraged to type in questions and comments as the lectures unfold. It makes for a lively interactive format, and I’m starting to see who the troublemakers are already!

The first module began with the basic science which has lain deep in my undergraduate subconscious for well over 50 years. Sharpey’s fibres, the prickle cell layer and of course the Hunter-Shgreger bands have once again become old friends. I feel like an 18 year old again!

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However, the news of our success was revealed via Twitter within minutes of the presentation, so the game was up, and I could not hide my Saturday morning “celebratory hangover”. I tried to blame it all on the 6am train from Easton, but news of the huge round of celebratory drinks I was “forced” to buy (London prices, wow!) had also travelled ahead of me, and my limp excuses were met with smirks and superior looks by the “teacher’s pet” contingent. All I can say is that my staff were a lot worse for wear than I was, which is no real surprise I suppose, but their powers of recovery are startling. Ah, the joys of youth.

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