

W.I.R.O.C. Story Direct Dil Se !

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"Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory." — Dr. Seuss

Nostalgia is a powerful emotion, it brings back the people, places, and moments that shaped us. It brings into perspective significant events that leave deep imprints in the mind. Memories which are etched forever as a time stamp. They remind you of who you were, how far you've come, and what you still hold dear. I am both elated and humbled by this responsibility, especially since I have to trace back countless memories about WIROC and what it means to the entire Bombay Orthopaedic society.

Western India Regional Orthopaedic Conference actually embodies the ethos of the culture of BOS. It is reminiscent of the original name of the region that it grew out of. Established in 1965 Bombay Orthopaedic Society was a collective of founder members from Mumbai and the surrounding region within Mumbai province. Bombay Province comprised of Mumbai – rest of Maharashtra, Gujrat and Goa. Since BOS was geographically situated in Western India, it was apt to name the conference Western India Regional Orthopaedic Conference W.I.R.O.C. The inaugural WIROC was held in Mumbai in November 1966. The meeting was spread over two days. In order to get more surgeons interested in the specialty, it was planned to hold such a conference annually and generally out of Mumbai. Orthopaedic surgeons from various parts of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnatak and Madhya Pradesh became members. Delegates travelled to Pune, Nashik, Sholapur, Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Mahabaleshwar and Mount Abu for annual conference till almost 1986. Following this it was passed in the AGM that WIROC be permanently stationed in Mumbai and be organised by Mumbai members.

Over the last 60 years WIROC has become an event of the magnitude of a mini "Kumbh". It is a confluence of doyens and the dawning surgeons, young and old, brilliant achievers and novices, path breaking research and innovations and the ultimate litmus test of peer review of your scientific work. It has been the leader of orthopaedic conferences in the country which set the tone and standard for showcasing talent, amalgamating industry and doctors on a common platform for fruitful interaction. WIROC has always been renowned for its crisp conduct, top notch academics, state of the art updates, practice changing ideas, and the pinnacle of excellence. The event is a reflection of the legacy created by our pioneering stalwarts and seniors who were trailblazers in the field of orthopaedics. But did it become a sensation and brand Icon overnight? Let's take a look at its evolution and noteworthy milestones over 6 decades.



Flagship plenary sessions.

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Submitted Date: 03 Oct 2025, Review Date: 12 Nov 2025, Accepted Date: 21 Nov 2025 & Published Date: 10 Dec 2025

Journal of Clinical Orthopaedics | Available on www.jcorth.com | DOI:10.13107/jcorth.2025.v10.i02.756

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Orations

Late R J Katrak Oration

This is the highest honour conferred upon an orthopaedic surgeon and a speaker of great repute by the Bombay orthopaedic society. It is fortitude that the founder of the society himself was there in person as the chair of the oration. It is a statute now that this oration is to be presided by the President of that year. Dr. B. Mukhopadhyay of Patna was the first Katrak Orator. For few initial years only outsiders of repute were invited as Katrak Orators. In course of time, as the body of work in each branch of orthopaedics grew substantially - Katrak Orators are now drawn from members of BOS, both from and outside Mumbai but preferably from within the Bombay Orthopaedic Society and its own members.

Late K T Dholakia eponymous lecture

In 1978, Dr K T Dholakia, was elected to the high office of the President of Societe Internationale De Chirurgie Orthopedique Et De Traumatologie (SICOT) the first ever Indian to receive summit this pinnacle of achievement in the world. At the felicitation function it was proposed to institute KT Dholakia Lecture, to be delivered every other year on a subject of Basic Science as related to Orthopaedics. WIROC thus had an oration and an eponymous lecture and a variety of other programmes. Dholakia Lecturer speakers need not be restricted to form within the BOS and may also be from within allied specialities. The Dholakia lecture is always presided by the Vice President.

Late A K Talwalkar symposium

A flagship best paper prize was commenced at WIROC in legendary Dr Arvind Keshav Talwalkar's honour in 1974, as he was an outstanding and enterprising surgeon of immense fame and glory to the BOS. In 1996 it was passed in the AGM to commence a symposium dedicated to trauma in his memory, due to his dedication to trauma and innovation. The BOS general body had unanimously passed that this symposium will be beyond the purview of a sponsor and the society itself would year after year hold the symposium as a legacy of Dr Talwalkar.

Late K S Masalawala best paper award

In 1995, senior members of B.O.S. suggested that Best Paper Award be named after Dr Keiki S Masalawala posthumously, to perpetuate his memory and recognise his contribution both in Nair and JJ hospitals. From WIROC 1996 Best Paper Award was rechristened the Dr. Keki Sorabji Masalawala Best paper award, from amongst the top-ranking papers in each of the various orthopaedics specialities, i.e. Trauma, spine, paediatric ortho, onco ortho, arthroplasty, arthroscopy and general ortho.

Young Surgeons Forum

Bombay Orthopaedic Society started Y.S.F. to encourage young

orthopaedic surgeons who had promise: to bring to centre stage orthopaedic work of either an unusual/original/authentic theme, constitute a nature of serious clinical research deemed to be of valuable contribution. This was usually awarded to one or two Orthopaedic Surgeon under 40 Years age- now rectified to 45 years.

Veteran Surgeons Forum

In 2003, the AGM decided that instead of granting two young surgeons forum awards, one 20-minute slot was then chosen to be VSF or Veteran Surgeons Forum, as several of the veterans were actually doing a lot of spectacular work and that needed to be showcased. The criteria were same as YSF, and age limit now is above 45 years.

Other Features that make WIROC Vibrant

With each passing year new sessions were added which contributed richly to enhancing the flavor of varied knowledge portals. Focused Symposia, Round table conferences, Free papers, Presidential Guest lectures, Debates, PG activities, Posters, cradle to grave conclaves, Master talks- Guru Gyan, What an Idea sirji, Book launch – award, Publications, Live workshops, Video techniques, technology and social media sessions, practice changing ideas and tips and tricks, Complications, P G sessions, debates, quizzes, Medico legal sessions, non-academic talks, Trade sessions, Alumni meets, Virtual reality studios, selfie points, camaraderie, banquet and fellowships, F and B, sports, entertainment, events for spouses and accompanying persons- above all team work and social interaction. It is the vibrance of WIROC and this constant reinventing that keeps the interest of the delegates and faculty alive and ticking.

Establishing Brand Value

Financial importance of WIROC have been steadily progressive. The purpose of WIROC once upon a time was to run the basic expenditure of the Bombay orthopaedic society. It then grew into a small profit-making annual event multiplying steadily each year in an exponential fashion. The handsome profit scaled up by a phenomenal leap in 2009. Over the years it has been multiplying and growing in scale and potential from a few thousands in the 60's to crores from 2018 onwards and in the future the sky is the limit. Thus, BOS gained substantial financial security which enables various other activities around the year. This financial security is now the heart and pulse of sustenance of the BOS. WIROC became a registered trademark in 2017, a feat not very many conferences or societies can boast of. But brand value is not just about fiduciary stability. Associations around the country emulate and incorporate several sessions based on WIROC success into their own satellite conferences and invite the talent pool of WIROC



WIROC Trademark Registration

speakers nationally and internationally. It's an icon of crisp academics, on time sessions, superlative knowledge exchange and great social bonding. It truly has a brand value beyond measure. It's a conference that evolves and invariably runs to packed halls where everyone listens with rapt attention. Frank and fair questions with threadbare discussion, great interaction and networking, rigorous time keeping, less fanfare and more science and litmus test of peer acceptance are the hall marks of WIROC.

Glimpses of WIROC 2009



EC of 2009 at Wiroc 2009 inauguration

Personally, WIROC for me has been a beacon of a true legacy handed over year after year, a heirloom or a symbol of trust, excellence and tradition. I have been fortunate to organize it in



Wiroc 2009 Entertainment.



First woman organizing Secretary WIROC 2009.



**Packed halls. Wiroc 2009
Other memorable WIROC's for me over the years.**

2009, a journey of courage, responsibility, growth and a celebration of life itself. It trained me for higher responsibilities, taught me the importance of group dynamics and how to balance them and consolidate the purpose of the meeting, and how to set and achieve a goal without deviating no matter what.! We published the blue book for conducting WIROC the first time after 2009 which was then amalgamated in the Best Practices book for the society by Dr Anand Thakur and Dr

Rajesh Gandhi subsequently. It moulded me into the framework of the Bombay orthopaedic society completely - and the event truly lived up to its tag line "Redefining conventions in pursuit of excellence".

Other memorable WIROC's For me over the years



Winning my first K. S. Masalawala best paper in 2001.



Young surgeons Forum 2010.



Winning the Prestigious K. S. Masalawala best paper at the Golden Jubilee WIROC 2015.

From the nay sayers to the purists from the guru's to the disciples, WIROC is the ultimate Litmus test which grew from strength to strength from 1 hall to 5 halls at times and became a



Presidential theme symposium as first woman secretary of BOS 2018.



WIROC 2021 – as the first lady vice president.



Late AKT symposium convener WIROC Max 2022.

force to reckon with over the last 60 years and may its tribe only increase with greater "ubuntu" meaning I am because we are ! WIROC is traditionally the President 's prerogative which is entrusted to the senior EC members to organize. It moulds them truly into leadership roles surrogately under his (as we are yet to have the first woman president yet) watchfully eye. As the flame passes on this year to the next generation of young bright and promising and responsible orthopaedic surgeons – I pray for the flame to glow brighter and brighter and illuminate the orthopaedic world always.

Penning by Dr. Rujuta Mehta



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Conflict of Interest: NIL
Source of Support: NIL

How to Cite this Article

Mehta R. W.I.R.O.C. Story Direct Dil Se ! Journal of Clinical Orthopaedics. July-December 2025;10(2):09-13.