

Bombay Orthopaedic Society Hosts the Silver Jubilee Conference of IOA September 1980

Anand J Thakur^{1,2}

The annual meeting of the Indian Orthopaedic Association used to be a low-key affair. At the AGM, a few wise heads would come together and select a venue and a person to conduct the conference. There were only a handful of regional associations, and there was no clamour for or competition to hold the meeting. The chosen person would arrange the meeting more as a duty towards the association. Although 7 Bombay Orthopaedic Society (BOS) members had been presidents of the association, no one initiated holding a meeting in Mumbai. During their 24th AGM, it was L V Vora who engineered an invitation to hold the meeting in Mumbai and he and only he was entrusted with the responsibility.

L N Vora was a planner par excellence. Within days of given the responsibility, he had everything on the paper — venu, delegate accommodation, transport, academics, entertainment and plan for winding up as well. He decided to have a committee of 6 only to help him. Down the line, mainly as friendly democratic gesture, he invited suggestions from the BOS members; he received only one detailed, well-drafted suggestion to raise the standards of audiovisual presentations. In orthopaedic conferences before the Silver Jubilee, the audio-visual aspect of the presentation was an abysmal affair. The majority of the presenters were aware that there were seven incorrect ways of projecting a photographic slide; they experimented with each one before arriving at the correct one (Fig. 1).

The slide backgrounds were a meaningless selection of colors, the text appeared in all sorts of confusing fonts and layouts, and the hapless audience was driven to somnolence sheerly because of the inability to correlate the talk with the screen view. The lone suggestion detailed a plan to make smart slides for the delegates at the committee's expense inducing excellence in the meeting, detailed a blueprint on how to create professional

looking slides for the delegates, how to store them before and after the conference, how to load the slides in carousels, preview them with the speaker standing by, transporting the carousels to the two halls, and ensure that the slides appeared accurately during the entire proceedings (Fig. 2). The plan was so novel, so scientifically organized, and effective that the committee decided to include the proposer in the committee, bringing number of the members to a magical 7 (Fig. 3).

The BOS held the IOA silver jubilee conference at the iconic Taj Mahal Palace Hotel, Apollo Bunder, near the Gateway of India. The hotel features two major halls and several side rooms. The anticipated number of participants was an all-time high of 900. The Taj had never handled anything on this scale before. The establishment took the matter in the proper perspective, and the entire top management provided the committee in-depth help at every stage to ensure its success. The inauguration was held at the TIFR auditorium, which has a capacity of 1,200 seats. G D. Birla was the chief guest and inaugurated the proceedings. The entire conference ran like clockwork. The CME featured speakers such as Morris Muller of AO, Merle D' Aubine, the French colossus, and Wroblesky, from Writington, W J W Sharrad, paediatric orthopaedic from UK, and C S Ranawat from New York, to name a few.

Each session started and finished on time. Those who overshot found that the slides would not work beyond the slotted hour. The conference featured 140 presentations, each with on an average, 10 slides. As mentioned earlier, there were seven opportunities to project a slide incorrectly, that is, 1400×7 opportunities to bungle the show; however, there was not a single mistake in projection because each speaker loaded his slides correctly and checked the projection in the preview room. Each chairperson of the session received tips on how to conduct

¹Irla Nursing Home, 189 S V road, Irla, Vile Parle West, Mumbai 400056, Maharashtra, India.

²Formerly Hon. Orthopaedic Surgeon, Cooper Hospital, Juhu, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India.

Address of Correspondence

Dr. Anand J Thakur,

Irla Nursing Home, 189 S V road, Irla, Vile Parle West, Mumbai 400056, Maharashtra, India.

E-mail: thakurajt@gmail.com

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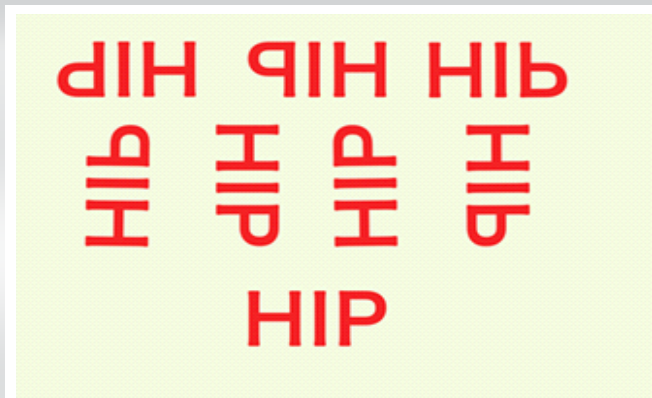


Figure 1: Only 1 correct way to project a cardboard-mount photographic lantern slide.



Figure 3: M7 organizing committee for Silver Jubilee Conference of Indian Orthopaedic Association. From left to right: Anand J Thakur, K V Chaulbal, N S Laud, L N Vora, J C N Joshipura, M N Shahane, C G Pradhan.



Figure 5: Revellers on board. From left to right: K V Chaulbal, N S Laud, Manda Chaulbal, Anand J Thakur, Ashok Maniar.



Figure 2: Four pillars of a successful projection plan. (a) A red dot over each slide indicates the correct placement of the slide in the carousel tray. (b) Specially designed plastic wallets to store each speaker's slides during the conference and securely return all their slides. (c) Carrousel-type photographic slide projectors, a bulwark of the projection plan. (d) One tray for one talk, loaded, tested in the preview room, transported to the meeting hall and returned to the preview room to be loaded in the special plastic folder and kept ready to hand over to the speaker, within minutes. One tray could hold up to 80 lantern slides.



Figure 4: Harbor cruise. Delegates seated to enjoy a song and dance show.



Figure 6: W J W Sharrad, pediatric orthopedic surgeon and Edourad van der Elst, treasurer of SICOT in deep conversation on the cruise. Far right, in profile, P H Vora.



Figure 7: High table at IOA Silver Jubilee Dinner. From left to right: Dr. K P Shrivastav, IOA president, K T Dholakia SICOT president, Mrs Shrivastav, Robert Merle d'Aubigné making a post-dinner speech.



Figure 8: IOA Silver jubilee celebratory dinner. From left to right: Shubha Laud, N S Laud, Urmila Thakur, Anand J Thakur, Tara Rama Rao, WG Rama Rao.



Figure 9: The other row: From left to right: L N Vora, Mrs Mehta, M T Mehta, Bindu Vora, M N Shahane; opposite row, left to right: JCN Joshipura, Mrs Desai, P M Desai, Manda Chaubal, KV Chaubal.



Figure 10: Post conference relaxation for organizing families. The wife's of the committee members participated full-time in running the silver jubilee conference by supervising several important social functions with a gentle touch that male orthopedic surgeons do not have. Left to right: L N Vora, Bindu Vora, JCN Joshipura, Urmila Thakur, KT Dholakia



Figure 11: From Left to right: Mrs Joshipura, Mrs Shahane, Dr. Mrs. Manik Pradhan, Shubha Laud, Manda Chaubal, Bindu Vora, Urmila Thakur



Figure 12: Limited edition IOA Silver Jubilee commemorative gold coin awarded to the members of M-7 organizing team for 25th annual conference of IOA, held at Mumbai from 25 to 28 September 1980.

a session with full details of hall arrangement including slide projection, time maintenance and light dimming controls. Each hall had reporters and hall in-charges to handle questions and address issues. After a hard day's work, the delegates enjoyed a Bombay harbor cruise accompanied by a band, along with high-quality food and beverages (Fig. 4, Fig. 5 and Fig.6).

The silver jubilee conference dinner was a sit-down, full-service affair (Fig. 7, Fig. 8 and Fig. 9). Most of the guests were immaculately dressed and were served by a team of liveried waiters in the legendary Taj style. On a separate day, BOS hosted a sit-down dinner for the SICOT executive committee. On the last evening at the venue, after the conference was over, there



Figure 13: Valedictory function was a happy occasion. From left to right: Sushil K Sabnis, C T Shah, R M Bhansali, Ashit Rao.

was special soiree to recognize efforts put in by the spouses of the managing committee members (Fig. 10 and Fig. 11) Each delegate received a silver coin specially struck for the occasion (Fig. 12). The valedictory function was one to remember as free beer was served (Fig. 13).

The impact of the conference on scientific presentation standards and organizing a large conference was enormous. It raised the standard of Indian orthopaedic meetings to an International standard, which has continued to date. The management of Taj Hotel was so pleased with the conduct of the conference that after a couple of weeks, they hosted the organizing committee of 7.

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