Jan Willem van der EIJKEN

(1938, Deventer – 2019, Amsterdam, The Netherlands)
Board Advisor (1989-1991)
3rd General Secretary (1993-1995)
8th EPOS President (1997-1999)

Dr Jan van der Eijken graduated in medicine in 1964 at the University of Amsterdam. He specialized in Orthopaedics in 1972 and defended his Medical Thesis: "*De spondylodesis posterior met toevoeging van homogeen beenbankbot bij de behandeling van de scoliose*".

During his career in Amsterdam, he had different prestigious positions: from 1972 to 2001, he was Orthopaedic surgeon at the Onze Lieve Vrouwe Gasthuis (OLVG - "Our Lady Hospital"), and from 1977 to 2001, he was Consultant at the Dutch Cancer Institute. Next to his practice in the OLVG, he later also worked part-time at the "Emma Children's Hospital" of the University Medical Center Amsterdam, and although oncological patients were treated in the OLVG in the early days, after his appointment in the University Hospital, most oncological patients were treated at the location Emma Children's Hospital, Amsterdam.

During this period (1983-1990), he became the chairman of the Surgical Committee European Intergroup Osteosarcoma (EORTC).

In 1990, he was nominated extraordinary Professor. As he devoted his career to paediatric oncological orthopaedic surgery, he became the President of the European Musculo-Skeletal Oncological Society (EMSOS) (1993-1996). He was Board member of many Societies: BIS Eurotransplant Leiden, International Limb Salvage Society (ISOLS), International Federation of Paediatric Orthopaedic Societies (IFPOS), Ver Osteogenesis Imperfecta.

In 1999, he was awarded Honorary Member of the Dutch Orthopedic Society, and in 2001, he was Officer in the Order of Orange-Nassau.

Contribution to EPOS:
Dr van der Eijken was elected EPOS member in 1984.

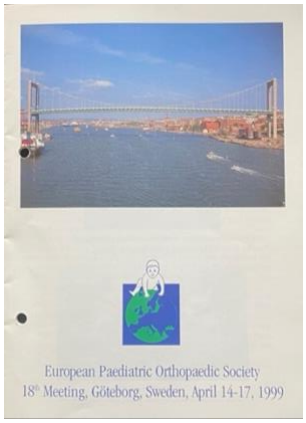
Van der Eijken organised the 7th Annual Meeting in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, at the OLVG on the 25-26th of March 1988. The main topic was "the clubfoot". 70 participants were present, including 7 colleagues from the USA: J. Bright, S. Coleman, R. Hensinger, R. Lindseth, G. Simmons, L. Staheli and K. Wilkins. Jean Prévot had the opportunity to present the Nancy nail technique.

At the 8th Annual Meeting in 1989 in Helsinki (local host: Soini Ryöppi), Jan van der Eijken was elected Advisor.

In 1992, during the General Assembly of the 11th Annual Meeting in Jerusalem (local host: Viktor Bialik), Jan van der Eijken was elected as the third General Secretary, in succession of Alain Diméglio. Three years later, during the 14th Annual Meeting in Brussels (local host: Wladyslaw Lokietek), Jan van der Eijken was elected as the Vice President, and he became the 8th EPOS president in 1997 during the 16th Annual Meeting in Heidelberg/Mannheim (local host: Lutz Jani).

Under Jan van der Eijken presidency, two EPOS Annual Meetings were organized:

- The 17th Annual Meeting was held in Madrid, Spain, on the 1st-4th of April 1998 (local host: Julio de Pablos). At this meeting, IFPOS, chaired by Nando de Sanctis, organized its inaugural Meeting, and so, this was the first combined meeting EPOS-IFPOS. Due to a such combined meeting, more than 500 participants came from all the world. The scientific program was one day longer than usual. It was very rich with topics as Cerebral Palsy, Spine, Foot and with the two main topics: "Growth Plate Surgery" and "Children's Knee".



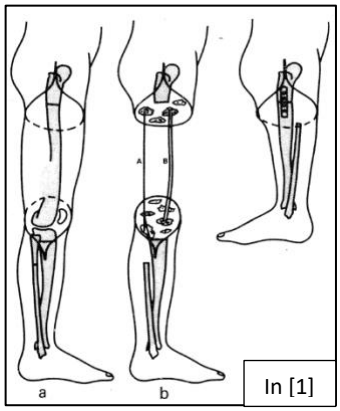
- The 18th Annual Meeting was organized by Erland Lysell, Goran Hansson, Gunnar Hagglund and Bertil Romanus in Göteborg, Sweden, on the 14-17th March 1999. They were 400 participants coming from all over the world. The main topic was "The Natural History of Paediatric Orthopaedic Diseases". An EPOS multicenter study was presented on "Orthopaedic Aspects of Down Syndrome". The General Assembly elected a new board: Nando de Sanctis (President), Michael Benson (vice-President), Jan van der Eijken (Past President), Guy Fabry (General Secretary), Giovanni Peretti (Treasurer), Gérard Bollini, Pavel Dungl, Tomas Epeldegui and Glyn Evans (Advisors), Ernesto Ippolito (Scientific Committee), José Mesquita

Montes (Historian), C Pempinello (EPOS News) and Henri Bensahel (JPO B). Another Committee was created: the Reading Committee chaired by Goran Hansson.

Dr Jan van der Eijken was awarded Honorary Membership by Michael Benson in Istanbul in 2002 during the 21st Annual Meeting (local hosts: Aysegul Bursali and Gaze Zorer) and Pro Maximis Meritis by Dietrich Schlenzka in Zagreb in 2010 at the 29th Annual Meeting (local host: Darko Anticevic).

Contribution to Paediatric Orthopaedics

Dr van der Eijken published numerous articles on various PO subjects: free vascularized fibular graft in congenital pseudarthrosis of the tibia, NF1; bilateral epiphysiodesis around the knee for excessive height in boys; Sprengel deformity; trigger thumb; avascular necrosis of the femoral head; club foot; radial neck fracture; bacterial infantile coxitis; congenital femur… However, he was fascinated by the treatment of bone tumors, particularly malignant tumors in children.

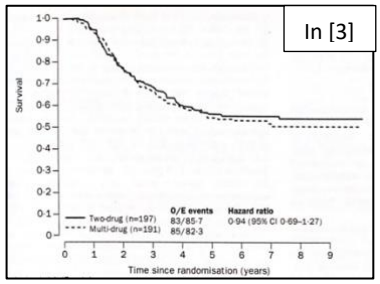


In [1]

So, his main activities were devoted to bone tumors in children. One of his first paper written in Dutch concerned the rotation plasty of the lower leg after resection of an osteosarcoma; the surgical technique is described, and 5 cases are presented [1]. In 1988, Dr van der Eijken reported the Dutch experience of 131 osteosarcomas in children treated by conservative methods as far as possible. He proposed some techniques to avoid growth disturbances and leg length discrepancy [2].

3

As a member of the European Osteosarcoma Intergroup, he has participated in numerous studies, including randomized trials. One study compared a two-drug regimen with a multi-drug regimen in 407 non-metastatic osteosarcomas. After reconstructive surgery, the results at 3- and 5-years follow-up showed no difference between the two groups. As dual therapy was shorter and better tolerated, it was therefore the preferred treatment [3].



In [3]

In 1998, he wrote a review of the treatment of benign tumors. Among the options described in the literature, he expressed his opinion based on his extensive experience [4]. The archives of the Dutch Bone Tumor Committee made possible to study 116 chondroblastomas at the age of growth. The main treatment was a simple excochleation with an associated bone graft in 52%. The recurrence rate was 20%, twice as high in female as in male. Growth disturbance was observed in 7% of cases. Although chondroblastomas remain benign tumors, Dr van der Eijken concluded that new treatments should be developed to reduce the high recurrence rate [5].

Hobbies

Jan collected precious antique wine glasses and played tennis. His second house in Denmark was also source of occupation.

Top 5 references

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3. Souhami RL, Craft AW, Van der Eijken JW, and all. Randomized trial of two regimens of chemotherapy in operable osteosarcomas: a study of the European Osteosarcoma Intergroup. Lancet. 1997; 350: 911-7.
4. Van der Eijken JW. Strategy in the treatment of benign bone tumors: an overview. J Pediatr Orthop B. 1998; 7: 249-52.
5. Schuppers HA, Van der Eijken JW. Chondroblastoma during the growing age. J Pediatr Orthop B. 1998; 7: 293-7.

Married to Birgitte Skytte Palsbo, they had three daughters

Coll. Klaus Parsch

Acknowledgements: Ralph Sakkers

Pierre Lascombes – EPOS Historian