

Obituary



Marko Godina 1942–1986

The dreadful news of Marko Godina's death was a shock for plastic surgeons all over the world which can hardly be expressed in words. He and his wife died in a car accident when returning from a microsurgical course at Hannover, Germany, which he attended as a guest lecturer.

43 years old, Marko Godina was already a legend in plastic surgery, and particularly microsurgery. He studied medicine in Ljubljana and Zagreb, Yugoslavia, and became a doctor in 1968. After having finished his training as a general surgeon, he visited several leading plastic surgery units in Great Britain; the Accident Hospital Birmingham, Mount Vernon Hospital, East Grinstead and Canniesburn Hospital.

He became enthusiastic about microsurgery and, after his return to Yugoslavia, he started his intensive activities at the Ljubljana Medical Centre.

Dr. Godina and his team performed more than 800 free microsurgical flaps and 840 replantations. By this enormous work he and his team undoubtedly became the world leaders in the field.

He was the first to use the free latissimus dorsi flap for the closure of defects in the lower leg; he reported on this in Portoroz, Yugoslavia and Cologne, Germany in 1978. His technique which helped immensely in dealing with complications of wound closure in the lower leg is now a standard method of treatment.

For the last three years Dr. Godina has used free flaps in the lower leg area as a primary surgical treatment after trauma. In a total of 130 free flaps in 1985 he performed 30 directly after trauma. This must be considered as a pioneer work in plastic surgery. He was also the first to report on the advantages of end-to-side microvascular anastomosis.

Dr. Godina became Professor on the 1st of January, 1986 and Chief of the Clinic for Plastic Surgery in Ljubljana Medical Centre. Over the past two years he established a course for plastic surgery in Ljubljana, which rapidly generated enormous international interest.

Dr. Godina did not only transfer his enthusiasm for plastic surgery to the other members of his team, but also to any colleague who spent any time with him, no matter how brief.

With his friendly way he has made friends all over the world.

Dr. Godina's death is a great loss for plastic surgery all over the world.

Neven Olivari, Wesseling/Cologne

What should have been a happy occasion for me, that is the launching of this new journal, has been tempered greatly by having to print Dr. Neven Olivari's obituary on my very good friend and much admired colleague, Dr. Marko Godina. Marko, in his younger days, came as a visitor to Canniesburn, spent many hours in our home, virtually became one of the family, and remained a close friend ever since that time. I admired his intellectual ability, his manual dexterity and that feeling of indestructibility and basic honesty which made him one of the greats of plastic surgery. I have lost a friend. Plastic surgery has lost a giant. Let us not forget him, but rather encourage our young plastic surgeons to be like him.

Ian T. Jackson, Rochester