Freddie H Fu: a true friend of ESSKA

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With a few words and quotes, which we feel are in many ways representative for our feelings at this hour, we would like to say “Thank You” to Freddie H Fu.

We are sad and we deeply miss you. The orthopaedic world is not the same without you!

With these words, we say “Good Bye” to you Freddie!

“The effective response to a clinical issue is not always obvious. But usually you will find it by following “basic principles” and a combination of multiple “simple” answers to appropriate questions. Just be thorough and keep an open mind!”

Freddie H Fu said to Helder Pereira (when he received the Jan Gillquist award).

I finished my one-year fellowship program in USA in 1993 by Pittsburgh in the mysterious department of Freddie FU, and it has been the highlight of this wonderful experience to be a European fellow in USA. Dr Fu was so inclusive in every way, especially in surgery by opening his OR, answering all the questions we had, even if those were sometimes naïve. He made us all participate in the research meetings in the biomechanical lab, asking us to present in his morning staff with the old “carousel” slides the studies we had done in our countries. It was unbelievable to me being able

to give my opinion on the patients he was treating. This is what an open-minded man is. He showed me how to behave with the foreign fellows and residents, and I have certainly tried to be like that with all my visitors and fellows. Finally, he opened the “US border” to me, by giving me a podium presentation at AOSSM in 1994. He was so spontaneously generous by offering his knowledge and by sharing his huge network without claiming anything in return.

In one word he is what we call a MENTOR.

David Dejour (past president of ESSKA).

I met Freddie several times. He was a great scientist, but also a great and very generous friend and an extraordinary teacher in any aspects.

In 2017, he hosted in Pittsburgh an important consensus conference on the ankle.

Even if this was not his primary field of interest he organized with his fellow a top level scientific meeting adding also a warm and unforgettable hospitality.

He will forever stay in our hearts.

Gian Luigi Canata (President of ESMA, the ESSKA Sports Medicine section).

The passing of Freddy H Fu was extremely sad, a dramatic loss for me and for the entire orthopaedic and sports medicine community.

Since the fellowship, which I was lucky to do in Pittsburgh in 1993 under his visionary guidance, Freddie represented for me several essential reference points not only for surgical and scientific activities, but in terms of the development of my way to work and in live. He was a real friend, always willing to help in both professional and personal aspects of life. The most important thing that we must do now is to keep alive the memory and legacy of Freddie H Fu, spreading his extraordinary and bright spirit worldwide; his fantastic ability and knowledge, his curiosity and care for patients. This is the most important heritage that the modern orthopaedics and sports medicine community will ever receive.

Stefano Zaffagnini (Rizzoli Orthopaedic Institute – Bologna, Italy).

When I was a clinical fellow in Pittsburgh back in 2001 I asked Freddie something about the graft tensioning before

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he left the OR. He was rushing out of the OR and I thought he did not realise my question. When he came back for the next case, he answered the question.

He never forgot anything and always took care of every single fellow in his department. Freddie was happy if he saw that the fellows were happy.

The first AGA (German Society of Arthroscopy and Joint Surgery) research day was organized in Frankfurt in 2005. It was the first re-union of all previous AGA-Pittsburgh fellows and it was not easy to get them together. Freddie was so enthusiastic about the meeting and of course wanted to participate. Unfortunately, he was unable to travel to Germany because of an ear infection, but he was so excited when he gave his talk at 3 o'clock in the morning Pittsburgh time via a video conference call. Today we call it ZOOM. However, this was the birthday of the AGA research day. Thank you, Freddie for your friendship!

Roland Becker (ESSKA 2nd vice President, former AGA-President).

During my fellowship, Freddie made us immediately feel welcome in Pittsburgh. Later he gave me the financial support to attend the ORS/AAOS annual meeting in California. His invitation was not only for me, but also for my wife and my little children. Without his support we would not have been able to attend this annual orthopaedic summit. He remembered my family for the rest of his life like he did for hundreds of other fellows.

Likewise, he gave us the freedom to get access to all research labs without any administrative hurdles.

That's what characterized him: an unprecedented generosity.

Romain Seil (ESSKA past preident).

Beyond his scientific and surgical excellence, Freddie, with his character and intelligence, has been a real "game changer" in my life in many different aspects. One day, I asked him how he did to deal with all his commitments, traveling, duties, and family (a non-negotiable priority for him). He replied to me: "100%!!" "Wherever you are, whatever you do, be at 100%! 100% with your family, 100% at

surgery, 100% with your patients, 100% with your team, 100% in research, but... 100%!!" Since then, he remains Mister 100% for me, day after day, every day.

Jacques Menetrey (ESSKA president).

Over the last twenty years I had the possibility to share many glorious experiences with Freddie, both on the professional and personal level. Throughout my time with him, his generosity and curiosity always stood out.

His generosity was his special attitude to enjoy deeply and richly being amongst friends, from sharing his knowledge of knee function, to his marvelous collection of wine. Always embracing a sense of love, especially for the young colleagues, like my son Francesco. Freddie was also always able to find the right way to deal with his international fellows, his wisdom was to teach them how to better use their brains.

Regarding curiosity, I will always remember his first visit to our clinics in Italy in the early 2000s. Besides from his curiosity for our clinical organization, I was impressed by his curiosity of the culture and societal structures of our country. One perfect example of this was during the visit of our clinic in Cortina d'Ampezzo, in the Italian Alps. He took the opportunity to share a bike ride with the President of Ferrari and the founder of a bicycle company, and he tried to learn as much as possible about the construction of cars and bikes. The same attention to detail that he put into studying the anatomy and the function in planning an ACL anatomic reconstruction.

In my opinion, his main lesson for the younger generations will always be; "be generous and be curious"

Stefano Della Villa (President of ISOKINETICS).

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