

# British Andrology Society



## **BRITISH ANDROLOGY SOCIETY COMMITTEE**

### **Chairman**

Bill Holt

Institute of Zoology, Zoological Society of London,  
Regents Park, London NW1 4RY

*Tel: +44 (0) 20 74496630, Fax: +44 (0) 20 75862870*

*E-mail: bill.holt@ioz.ac.uk*

### **Treasurer**

Sheena Lewis

Obstetrics and Gynaecology, School of Medicine,  
Queen's University Belfast,  
Grosvenor Road, Belfast BT12 6BJ

*Tel: +44 (0) 28 9063 3987, Fax +44 (0) 28 9032 8247*

*E-mail: s.e.lewis@qub.ac.uk*

### **Secretary and Membership Secretary**

Alireza Fazeli

Academic Unit of Reproductive and Developmental Medicine,  
University of Sheffield, Level 4, The Jessop Wing, Tree Root Walk,  
Sheffield S10 2SF

*Tel: +44 (0) 114 2268195, Fax: +44 (0) 114 2268538*

*E-mail: A.fazeli@sheffield.ac.uk*

### **Programme Secretary**

Lisa Thurston

Veterinary Basic Sciences, Royal Veterinary College,  
Royal College Street, Camden Town, London NW1 0TU

*Tel: +44 (0) 20 7468 5270, Fax: +44 (0) 20 7388 1027*

*E-mail: lthurston@rvc.ac.uk*

### **Postgraduate Representative**

Miss Vicky Sharp

Royal Veterinary College,  
Camden Campus,

Royal College Street, London, NW1 0TU.

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7468 5270

*E-mail:* vsharp@rvc.ac.uk

**Newsletter Editor and Web Page Designer**

N.S. Prathalingam

Institute of Zoology, Zoological Society of London,  
Regents Park, London NW1 4RY

*Tel:* +44 (0) 20 74496308, *Fax:* +44 (0) 2075862870

*E-mail:* nprathalingam@rvc.ac.uk

**Committee Members**

Iwan Lewis-Jones

Reproductive Medicine Unit, Liverpool Women's Hospital,  
Crown St, Liverpool L8 7SS

*Tel:* +44 (0) 151 708 9988 x 4215, *Fax:* +44 (0) 151 702 4042

*E-mail:* I.Lewis-Jones@liverpool.ac.uk

Mark Curry

Biology Department, The University of Lincoln,  
Riseholme Park, Lincoln, Lincs. LN2 2LG

*Tel:* +44 (0) 1522 895440, *Fax:* +44 (0) 1522 545436

*E-mail:* mrcurry@lincoln.ac.uk

Dr Jacqui Piner

GlaxoSmithKline, Building 4,  
Park Road, Ware SG12 0DP

*Tel:* +44 (0) 1920 882828, *Fax:* +44 (0) 1920 882331

*E-mail:* Jacqui.A.Piner@gsk.com

Dr Stephen Troup

Scientific Director

Hewitt Centre for Reproductive Medicine, Liverpool Women's Hospital,  
Crown Street, Liverpool L8 7SS

*Te:* +44 (0) 151 702 4173/4301, *Fax:* +44 (0) 151 702 4342

*E-mail:* stephen.troup@lwh-tr.nwest.nhs.uk

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**British Andrology Website:**

<http://www.britishandrology.org.uk>

## **A NOTE FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of BAS who have contributed to this issue of the newsletter. As you would have noticed the BAS logo has changed following our competition for a new logo. I would like to thank everyone who entered but following a vote the logo designed by Katrien Van Look won the competition.

I would like to take this opportunity to stress that we do encourage you to submit articles or to request articles that you feel will be of benefit to our general readership. I will do everything possible to accommodate requests and get them published in the next issue of the newsletter. I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the newsletter.

Regards

N S Prathalingam

*nprathalingam@rvc.ac.uk*

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

### **British Andrology Society AGM 2005**

During the last year the society has been involved in a number of activities, often with members working behind the scenes and therefore going unrecognised. For example, our previous Chairman, Iwan Lewis-Jones, attends the Steering group meetings for National Infertility Day 2006 and Dr Allan Pacey is coordinating a joint committee that is currently working to update the BAS guidelines on semen for donor insemination. The committee has been busy organising future meetings and I am pleased to say that next years AGM in Leeds is already planned and has an exciting programme of speakers. Our thanks go to Dr David Miller and his colleagues for their efforts with this. The conference venue for 2007 has yet to be decided, but I am currently discussing the possibility of holding a joint British-Spanish conference in Spain for 2008. Spanish colleagues are very willing to help.

As I mentioned in my last Chairman's report I thought it would be useful for the BAS to join forces with the Biosciences Federation, an organisation of UK biological societies, who form a focal point for many matters concerning science policy, funding and education. The BAS is now a member of this group and I occasionally reproduce parts of their report in the BAS newsletter. Those wishing to see further details can visit the BSF website ([www.bsf.ac.uk](http://www.bsf.ac.uk)).

I have also been working towards obtaining charitable status for the BAS. This may have a number of advantages over our present unrecognised status, including some financial advantages such as gift aid, certain discounts and arrangements to protect the committee members against financial mismanagement or disaster. The Charity Commission have approved our application provided we amend our constitution in ways that they suggest. The amendments are not onerous and seem sensible.

This year the committee took the decision to opt out of being a formal participating organisation for the next Joint Fertility meeting with SRF and BFS in York (2007). We considered that the meeting would achieve a financial loss, therefore cutting into our reserves and that the prudent course of action would be to opt out. Representatives of the other societies were very understanding of our position.

This year we have some changes to the committee and I would like to thank those people who have served as committee members of the past few years. I would especially like to thank Mark Curry for his work as Treasurer, one of the most crucial posts in the society.

Finally I would like to thank Dr Alireza Fazeli and his colleagues for their hard work in organising this years BAS annual meeting in Sheffield.

W. V. Holt  
15 February 2007

## **MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S MESSAGE**

### **New Members**

A warm welcome to all the new members of the BAS!

Dr I Agbaje, Dr A Arpanahi, Miss C Bowden, Ms G Davies, Dr A Dawe, Dr S Kaukoranta, Dr R Kharfagy, Mr SP Kodithuwakki, Dr S La Falci, Mr K McEleny, Dr JA Moilanen, Miss E Pewsey, Dr K Van Look and Prof FA Weber.

Please can the BAS committee request that all members update their email address for our records. This can only be done by sending your current email address to Dr Alireza Fazeli ([A.Fazeli@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:A.Fazeli@sheffield.ac.uk)). It is possible that in the future information concerning the BAS might be circulated to members using this medium and we would like to ascertain the number of members with email access at present. Thank you.

## **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE'S MESSAGE**

Dear fellow BAS students,

Firstly, I would like to introduce myself. I was recently elected as your student and postgraduate representative. I am currently in my 2<sup>nd</sup> year of my PhD studies at the Royal Veterinary College in London and am studying the effects of varying isoforms of the cortisol metabolising enzyme 11 beta hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase in the porcine testis, reproductive tract and sperm. My main aim is to build up a good base of students who can use the BAS as a good networking point, a place where they can convey their scientific findings and expand their knowledge, and enjoy some sociable gatherings. If you are a student member of the BAS there is plenty to look forward to this year. However if you are not yet a member there are plenty of reasons to join:

- You can purchase a full years student membership of the BAS for a fee of £5 (bargain!).

- Student members of the BAS are entitled to apply for an award to travel to national and international conferences - so apply today! To qualify for an award you must have been a BAS member for at least 6 months by the date of travel. BAS members can apply for one travel grant every two years and each application can be up to a maximum of £250. As a token of your appreciation all you have to do is make the most out of the conference and oh yes, write a short report on the conference for our newsletter! Deadlines for applications are three times a year in January, April and September. Travel grant application forms can be found on the BAS website.

This leads us on to the next BAS meeting, which will be held in Leeds on the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> November 2006. Attending BAS conferences will allow you to have lots of fun while making those all-important contacts and there will be a chance to listen to some world-class speakers that you will have perhaps not had the chance to meet. You will also have the chance to submit a poster or talk. The deadline for submission of an abstract is 1<sup>st</sup> October so get cracking - it's a great way to show off your hard earned work and get your face recognised. I also hope to organise a postgradoc lunch, so come along to meet your fellow peers in a relaxed atmosphere.

If you have any suggestions, concerns, questions or you would like to contribute to the BAS newsletter I would love to hear from you. My contact details are: Vicky Sharp, Department of Veterinary Basic Sciences, Royal Veterinary College, Camden Town, Royal College Street, London, NW1 0TU or feel free to email: [vsharp@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:vsharp@rvc.ac.uk) I look forward to meeting you all in Lincoln!

Vicky Sharp

## **BAS TRAVEL AWARD REPORT**

### **GORDON RESEARCH CONFERENCE ON 'FERTILIZATION AND ACTIVATION OF DEVELOPMENT' Holderness School, Plymouth, New Hampshire, July 2005**

These days there are so many options for research scientists when deciding how to spend their limited travel money. Do you choose meetings on sperm/fertilization, ones on reproductive biology in general, clinical or basic science meetings or go for meetings covering specific technologies or many areas of biology? Perhaps even a training course might be more useful. One option that I would recommend highly is the biennial Gordon Meeting on Fertilization and Activation of Development (<http://www.grc.uri.edu/programs/2005/fert.htm>). I was fortunate enough to attend this meeting last summer and had a tremendous time. Not only did I learn a lot of science but I got to meet a number of old and new friends within the field.

This meeting is held in New Hampshire about a one hour drive from Boston. This time I took the bus that is provided although in the past I have rented a car to explore the amazing surrounding countryside. Holderness School is a private school with plenty of

open spaces. Accommodation is in shared rooms with communal showers and all the food (which is plentiful and excellent) is provided. In a way it is a bit surreal posing as an American public school kid for a week but I am sure they don't get the free beer and wine that comes with package! Overall the meeting is pretty cheap and they even stretch to lobsters on the last night.

The School provides a wonderfully relaxed atmosphere for the science which runs in solid sessions from 9-12.30 and 7.30-9.30. The intention of these meetings is for leading researchers to discuss their latest ideas and the scientific sessions are noteworthy in being packed full of intense discussion of the topics which takes up a third of the time. Poster sessions take place between 4 and 6 (usually with drinks) and are of a very high standard. The meeting is always fully attended (about 100 individuals) and there is a requirement for speakers to stay on after their talk. This coupled with the fact that the School is in the middle of the countryside means that there is plenty of time to discuss science with everyone. I do find that when conferences are in cities that people often goes their own ways in the evenings and it can be tricky to catch up (or maybe they just avoid me!!).

While the days are fairly long – 9 to 9.30 – there is no need to despair. Everyone gets from 12.30 until 4.00 for lunch and free time and 1 ½ hours for dinner and free time. During the afternoon there are options for walks in the surrounding countryside, swimming in the nearby river, canoeing, kayaking, mountain biking, tennis, squash, volleyball and several other outdoor activities. In the hot afternoons these are great ways to relax or you can just sunbathe or sleep off the excesses of the previous night and the day's science.

The science this year was exemplary as ever. I was particularly interested in the first session on functional genomic approaches to problems in fertilization. This was followed by a session on sperm motility and chemotaxis where I particularly enjoyed Chris Wood from Alberto Darszon's lab in Mexico discussing calcium and sperm motility. Functional membrane domains in gametes were the next area of focus followed by molecular aspects of sperm-egg interaction. Masaru Okabe gave a wonderfully entertaining talk on the use of gene knockout mice to study fertilization. Melissa Jungnickel (UMass) and Marc Spehr (Maryland University) gave excellent presentations in the signal transduction in sperm session. Egg-centric sessions included one on gamete maturation with a graduate student Lisa Mehlmann from Laurinda Jaffe's lab giving a great talk. There was also a good session on egg activation signalling with Guillaume Halet (John Carroll's lab, UCL) impressing. Finally there was a session on gene activation in early development. So overall a wide range of topics and a wonderful meeting to attend.

*I sincerely thank the BAS for providing me with a travel grant (£150) to contribute towards the cost of attending this meeting.*

***Ian Brewis***

**EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR DOMESTIC ANIMAL REPRODUCTION  
University of Murcia, Murcia, Spain, September 2005**

The 9th Annual Conference of the European Society for Domestic Animal Reproduction /ESDAR/ was held in the Veterinary Faculty of the University of Murcia, Spain on 1-3 September 2005. Murcia is located at the South-East corner of the Iberian Peninsula. The venue was held in the Campus de Espinardo, in the outskirts of the city. My accommodation was in Downtown Murcia, in the Colegio Mayor Azarbe, which was almost empty at this time of the year because the school season begins in October every year due to the hot climate. Living in the centre made me happy, because Murcia has an eleven century history and is very beautiful with the famous wonderful Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque art Cathedral, pretty narrow streets and squares breathing real South Spanish atmosphere. The transparency of the City hall, Glorieta de España with the slogan of “Agua para Todos” shows the importance of water and the politics about water-economy for the people living in this droughty, dry area.

Worldwide-acknowledged experts of animal reproduction participated and presented at the conference. The presentations included six oral presentations in the Plenary sessions that were published as full articles in "Reproduction in Domestic Animals", 30 Workshop abstracts and 30 oral communication abstracts in addition to 287 posters.

The Welcome Reception took place in the ancient monastery of the Faculty of Law in downtown Murcia on the 1st September evening. This event provided the opportunity to meet old friends and make new acquaintances during tasting some typical food like “tapas” and a fine selection of Spanish wines.

Prof. László Solti, the President of the Society and Juan María Vazquez from the local Organizing Committee opened the meeting on Friday, 2nd September morning. After the Opening Ceremony the presentations began with two interesting Plenary Sessions: “Advances in biotechnology” then “Environmental chemicals as reproductive disruptors”. Prof. Keith Campbell from the University of Nottingham began the session with a review presentation entitled “Eight Years after Dolly”, detailing the background, the milestones of animal cloning from somatic cells and the past and present approaches of the nuclear transfer procedures. He emphasized that despite the increased knowledge in this field the frequency of healthy offspring remains low. He pointed out that continued research is essential to improve the frequency of development and to provide basic knowledge on the control of cell differentiation and maintenance of the undifferentiated state. The following afternoon consisted of 3 parallel workshops in two groups, separated by the Poster Session for odd numbered posters. I presented my poster entitled “Morphologic evaluation after using pentoxifylline and hyaluronic acid for stallion sperm separation” on this day. For use of poor quality equine semen for *in vitro* fertilization and AI, mini-Percoll and swim-up separation methods were combined with pentoxifylline and hyaluronic acid treatment to increase the yield of viable, normal cells. We carried out this study in the Colorado State University with Dr. Tae Kwang Suh, Dr. Elaine Carnevale and Prof. George Seidel.

In my view one of the most interesting presentations was in Workshop 3: “Regulatory Functions of Seminal Plasma constituents”. Dr. Calvete from Valencia talked about the biological function of boar spermadhesin PSP-I/PSP-II. PSP-I/PSP-II elicits a massive

migration of PMN into the uterine lumen shortly (but not immediately) after AI. They hypothesized that the latency period for PMN migration is a window of opportunity for a sperm subpopulation to reach the sperm reservoir. In Workshop 4: "Procedures for the selection of sperm subpopulations" we listened to three excellent presentations. The opinion of Dr. Cebrián from Zaragoza was that one possible reason for sperm quality assessment methods providing imprecise data about fertility is overlooking the fact that one ejaculate is constituted by several spermatozoa subpopulations. Dr. T Muiño-Blanco presented data on the sperm survival ability and heterogeneity assessed by Centrifugal Countercurrent Distribution Analysis correlated with fertility. Dr. Abaigar from Almería presented three alternative new parameters to characterise sperm movement: diffusion coefficient, mean velocity and immobility ratio. Additionally they use fractal dimension to characterize the track complexity. They determined two subpopulations of sperm based on these characteristics.

On the second day Prof. WR Allen from New Market gave a plenary presentation on the history, the present and the possible future of the modern reproductive technologies to horse breeding. In the morning five Parallel Oral Communication Sessions were held. I attended the Equine Reproduction Session. Young scientists talked about their field of research. Among the six talks Dr. MM Rivera from Helsinki presented data on inhibition of oestrus in mares using an intrauterine plastic ball. Dr. S Budik from Vienna spoke about Expression involved in the synthesis of Prostaglandins in early equine embryos. In the afternoon there were interesting presentations on the conservation of feline semen by Dr. E Axner from Uppsala followed by a talk by Dr. GC Luvoni from Milan on *in vitro* manipulation of cryopreserved gametes in the domestic cat. In the poster sessions there were many excellent presentations and this was a valuable opportunity to change experiences between researchers working in same fields.

The "Feria de Murcia" had just begun on the 1st of September with traditional Spanish and also International folklore in downtown Murcia. In the evening and during the night the traditional open-air fiesta was full of happy, friendly Spanish women, men and little children in spite of the late night hours. Craftsmen, traditional Spanish foods, like tapas, paella, churros, original flamenco music and dance. And since the Spanish people prefer their own language to communicate to foreigners, it was a good chance to practice Spanish.

I would like to express my thanks to the British Andrology Society for the travel award that enabled me to attend on the ESDAR meeting in Spain, which was a very useful, memorable and unforgettable experience.

Kútvölgyi Gabriella  
University of Kaposvár, Faculty of Animal Science, Hungary

### **Travel Grant Applications**

BAS Travel awards are available to successful applicants for travel to national and international conferences- so apply today.

To qualify for an award, applicants must have been a BAS member for at least one year or a student member for six months. Only one BAS travel grant per applicant will be awarded in a 2 year period and the maximum award value is £250. Successful applicants will be required to write a report on the conference attended for the BAS newsletter.

If you would like to apply for a travel grant, complete the travel grant application form (<http://www.britishandrology.org.uk>) and return it to the BAS treasurer (Sheena Lewis [s.e.lewis@qub.ac.uk](mailto:s.e.lewis@qub.ac.uk)). Applicants submitting abstracts will be favoured and we request that where possible applicants enclose a copy of the abstract to be presented. Applications will be assessed in January, April and September.

**BAS ANNUAL MEETING "LEEDS 2006"**  
16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> Nov 2006

A special BAS 2006 meeting will be held on Thurs Nov 16th - Sat Nov 18th, comprising of an Advanced Workshop (Thurs Nov 16th (all day) and Fri Nov 17th (AM)) on 'The testis as a conduit for genomic plasticity'. Following the Advanced Workshop, the BAS annual meeting will commence with three sessions on the topics: - 'Extrinsic and intrinsic effects on sperm function' (Session A); 'Epididymal effects on sperm maturation.' (Session B); 'Is semen analysis still a worthwhile exercise? (Session C)'. Poster sessions will be held on the evenings of Thursday November 16th and Friday November 17th and there will be room for free communications in BAS Sessions A and B with an open roundtable forum for Session C. For programme details and more information please go to the British Andrology Society Website (<http://www.britishandrology.org.uk>).

A registration form can be downloaded from the website. If you would like a form sent to you please contact David Miller.

David Miller  
Tel +44 (0) 113 3923882  
Email: [d.miller@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:d.miller@leeds.ac.uk)

**DIARY DATES**

**2006**

**Annual Meeting of the British Association for Animal Science (BSAS) 2006**

10 - 12 April, 2006

Venue to be confirmed

Email: [British Society of Animal Science \(BSAS@ed.sac.ac.uk\)](mailto:BSAS@ed.sac.ac.uk)

Web: [http://www.bsas.org.uk/Meetings\\_&\\_Workshops/](http://www.bsas.org.uk/Meetings_&_Workshops/)

**American Society of Andrology 31st Annual Conference**

8 - 11 April, 2006

Chicago, Illinois

E-mail: <http://www.andrologysociety.com/default.asp>

**14th European Testis Workshop**

22 - 26 April, 2006

Bad Aibling, Bavaria

Web: [www.etw2006.de](http://www.etw2006.de)

**The First Seven Days: From Gametes to Blastocyst and Stem Cell**

26 - 28 April, 2006

Tampa, Florida, USA

Web: <http://www.seronosymposia.org/>

**Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists**

Management of the Infertile Couple and Assisted Conception

24 - 28 April, 2006

London, UK

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7772 6245

Fax: +44 (0) 20 7772 6388

Email: [swaterfall@rcog.org.uk](mailto:swaterfall@rcog.org.uk)

Web: [www.rcog.org.uk/meetings](http://www.rcog.org.uk/meetings)

**Intersex**

1st May

Istanbul, Turkey

Tel: +90 212 235 17 89 - 90

Fax: +90 212 239 71 69

E-mail: [dgundog@superonline.com](mailto:dgundog@superonline.com)

Web: <http://www.intersex-tr.org>

**22nd Annual Meeting of the ESHRE**

18 - 21 June, 2006

Prague, Czech Republic

Tel: +32 (0)2 269 09 69

Fax: +32 (0)2 269 56 00

E-mail: [info@eshre.com](mailto:info@eshre.com)

Web: <http://www.eshre.com/emc.asp?pageId=206>

**ENDO 2006**

24 - 27 June, 2006

Boston, USA

The Endocrine Society, 8401 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 900, Chevy Chase, Maryland  
20815-5817

Tel: +1 301 9410200 Fax: +1 301 9410259

E-mail: [endostaff@endo-society.org](mailto:endostaff@endo-society.org)

Web: <http://www.endo-society.org/scimeetings>

**Society of Reproduction and Fertility (2006)**

in conjunction with the National Ovarian Workshop

3 - 5 July

University of Leeds

Web: <http://www.srf-reproduction.org/events/default.htm>

**7th International Ruminant Reproduction Symposium**

13 - 17 August, 2006

Te Papa Museum of New Zealand,

Wellington, New Zealand

Web: <http://www.ruminantsymposium2006.co.nz/page.cfm?id=3>

**"From Gene to Gender" - 2nd International Symposium on Disorders of Sex Development (DSD)**

31 August - 2 September 2006

Luebeck, Germany

Tel: +49-(0)451 - 500-2596

Fax: +49-(0)451 - 500-6867

E-mail: [info@netzwerk-is.de](mailto:info@netzwerk-is.de)

Web: <http://www.netzwerk-is.de>

**10th Annual Conference of the European Society for Domestic Animal Reproduction**

7 - 9 September 2006

Portoroz-Lipica, Slovenia

Contact: [esdar.congress2006@vf.uni-lj.si](mailto:esdar.congress2006@vf.uni-lj.si)

Web: <http://www.esdar.org/>

**7th Royan International Congress on Reproductive Biomedicine & Stem Cells**

11 - 13 September 2006

Tehran, Iran

Tel: +98 21 22414532

Fax: +98 21 2240 9340

E-mail: [info@royaninstitute.org](mailto:info@royaninstitute.org)

Web: <http://www.royaninstitute.org>

**10th International Symposium on Spermatology**

17 - 22 September 2006

Madrid, Spain

Tel: +34 91 310 43 76; Fax: +34 91 319 57 46

Contact: [secretariat@spermadrid2006.org](mailto:secretariat@spermadrid2006.org)

Web: <http://www.spermadrid2006.org>

**Second Asia-Pacific Forum on Andrology**

19 - 23 October. 2006

Shanghai, China

E-mail: [apfa@sibs.ac.cn](mailto:apfa@sibs.ac.cn)

Web: <http://www.conference.ac.cn/apfa/html/general.html>

## **2007**

### **Society for Endocrinology Annual BES Meeting 2007**

5 - 8 March, 2007

Birmingham ICC, UK

Tel: +44 (0)1454 642212

Fax: +44 (0)1454 642222

E-mail: [shirine.borbor@endocrinology.org](mailto:shirine.borbor@endocrinology.org)

Web: <http://www.endocrinology.org/SFE/confs.htm#26bes>

### **American Society of Andrology 32nd Annual Conference**

18 - 24 April, 2007

Hyatt Regency

New Orleans, Louisiana

Web: <http://www.andrologysociety.com/default.asp>

### **8th European Congress of Endocrinology**

28 April – 2 May 2007

Budapest, Hungary

Contact: Blaguss Ltd Congress Bureau, PO.Box 706, 1365 Budapest

Tel: + 36 1 374 7030 Fax: + 36 1 312 1582

E-mail: [benyhe@blaguss-congress.hu](mailto:benyhe@blaguss-congress.hu)

Web: <http://www.endocrinology.org>

### **IFFS 2007 - 19th World Congress on Fertility and Sterility**

30 April – 5 May 2007

Durban, South Africa

Contact: Paul Dalmeyer, IFFS2007 President

E-mail: [pdal@iafrica.com](mailto:pdal@iafrica.com)

Web: <http://www.iffs-reproduction.org/>

### **23rd Annual Meeting of the ESHRE**

1 - 4 July, 2007

Lyon, France

Tel: +32 (0)2 269 09 69

Fax +32 (0)2 269 56 00

E-mail: [info@eshre.com](mailto:info@eshre.com)

Web: <http://www.eshre.com/emc.asp?pageId=206>

## **2008**

### **10th European Congress of Endocrinology**

3 - 7 May, 2008

Dresden, Germany

Web: <http://www.euro-endo.org/>