

Professor Heinz Stammberger (1946-2018)



The Father of Endoscopic Sinus Surgery

Within the global ENT community, there can be few people whose names are as well-known as his, and his loss will be keenly felt around the world.

Claire Hopkins pays tribute.



As I write, I am still stunned and deeply saddened by the news of the loss of Heinz Stammberger. He has been a core figure in rhinology from my very first days in ENT and it is impossible to contemplate holding a meeting without his wry smile and words of immense wisdom. Without his contribution to rhinology, I am quite sure that we would not have the thriving specialty that we have today.

As an SHO I was captivated by endoscopic sinus surgery, still in its relative infancy. I learnt of the Stammberger technique, bought the textbook, and sat in awe at his lectures. Heinz lived in the realms of the rhinology gods; I eagerly joined the audience as we hung on his every word and once even joined a queue of juniors at a meeting to take a selfie with his cardboard cut-out (he

famously refused all requests for photos with the 'real deal'). His allure never faded, as rhinologists young and old were drawn by his passion, charm, experience and never-ending patience for the endless questions that came from the audience.

As I progressed in my career I was initially equally terrified and delighted to be asked to join Heinz on panels, and in teaching together on FESS courses. After every lecture I would eagerly look to Heinz for his approval and, although I am absolutely sure that he had heard everything a million times before, he was always supportive and encouraging. I am grateful and immensely privileged that I had the opportunity to work with him, learn from him and get to know him. He was an incredibly warm, intelligent, thoughtful and humble man. He was extremely generous with his time and

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friendship, and his loss will be keenly felt around the world. My thoughts are with his wife, Doloris, and those closest to him.

As I operated today, I smiled and had a moment of quiet reflection as I asked for the Stammberger punch. He will continue to inspire generations of rhinologists for many years to come, and will certainly never be forgotten.

Claire Hopkins, Consultant ENT Surgeon, London, UK.