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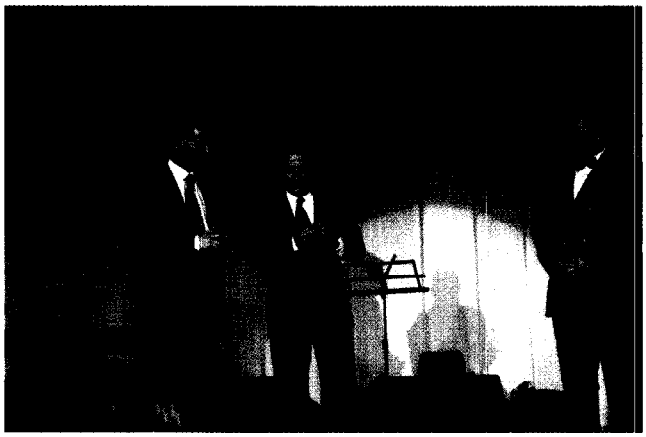
Presentation of the 1995 Ian Donald Gold Medal

Dr Hobbins holds aloft the Gold Medal to ecstatic applause



The presentation ceremony was held at the Congress banquet in the Takaragaike Prince Hotel. Dr Hobbins, flanked by the President and Vice President, Manfred Hansmann, receives the medal

The Ian Donald Gold Medal is awarded at the time of each World Congress to a person who has made a profound and significant contribution to the development of ultrasound in obstetrics and gynecology. The award is made by the Board of ISUOG after taking advice from a wide range of opinion within the membership of the Society. The 1995 Gold Medal was presented at the Congress banquet on Monday 27 November to Dr John Hobbins by the President of ISUOG, Stuart Campbell, who made the following oration.

Presentation of the Ian Donald Gold Medal to John Hobbins

It gives me immense personal pleasure to present to the Society John Hobbins for the 1995 Ian Donald Gold Medal. In these modern times, when so many words have been debased by the hype of the modern media, to say that John is a legendary figure in our specialty may not provide the impact that is meant. For, indeed, John is a living legend in our field not just because of his scientific work which is considerable but because of his qualities as a leader, teacher and human being. He is perhaps one of the most paradoxical figures in ultrasound, a loner who is always center stage in company, an introspective man who is always accessible and fun to be with, a true product of the American culture yet with a deep love of everything Italian. His early formative student years, when much of his time was spent as either a life-guard or a nightclub pianist, did not suggest an academic future. The Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Yale made him and, in return, he turned the department into a formidable center of pioneering research. 1974 was his annus mirabilis with two papers in the New England Journal of Medicine and one in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, introducing fetoscopic blood sampling, the in utero diagnosis of hemoglobinopathies and the combination of ultrasound and fetoscopy in the prenatal diagnosis of fetal anomalies. These techniques led to subsequent publications on the diagnosis of Duchenne muscular dystrophy and genetic conditions such as Ellis Van Creveld syndrome. Although these fetoscopic techniques have been overtaken by ultrasound-directed tissue biopsy and diagnosis by molecular genetic techniques, the recent rebirth of interest in fetoscopic techniques for embryoscopy (for which John must take a lot of credit) and in utero laser surgery indicate the visionary nature of his early work. John pioneered many areas of ultrasound diagnosis of fetal structural abnormalities which are elegantly presented in his 1979 paper in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology. In particular, he was the first person to describe the measurement of the femur length in the antenatal diagnosis of skeletal dysplasias. At Yale, John built up a remarkable team of young researchers who, with him, produced an avalanche of papers covering all aspects of prenatal diagnosis and fetal medicine. The list of current luminaries who have worked with John are too numerous to mention here, but an abbreviated list runs as follows: Dick Berkowitz, Frank Chervenak, Josh Copel, Roberto Romero, Greg DeVore, Gianluigi Pilu, Russell Deter, Charles Lockwood, Ruben Quintero, Albert Reece and the late lamented Peter Grannum. His vision led him to team up with leaders in other specialties such as Charles Kleinman in pediatric cardiology and Maurice Mahoney in clinical genetics, which resulted in ground-breaking advances in fetal echocardiography and genetic diagnosis.

John has the qualities of all great teachers, the ability to make complex subjects simple and to spice his lectures with

the subtle blend of telling phrases and brilliant humor. Being the leader of a team of ambitious competitive young researchers with large and easily bruised egos is a difficult task and yet I have never met any of John's past or current fellows who have had anything other than praise for him and the selfless leadership he deployed at Yale. This is elegantly summed up by Greg DeVore in his moving Editorial to John in this Journal (February 1995).

John has made great contributions to our specialty in other areas. As President of the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine and a member of the Board of Governers and the Bioeffects Committee of the AIUM, he has had a profound influence on increasing the understanding of all of us working in the field of the bioeffects of prenatal ultrasound. He was influential in forming the Ultrasound Practice Accreditation Commission of the AIUM with a view to upgrading the quality of prenatal ultrasound in the USA. The model he devised of voluntary accreditation of all centers performing ultrasound, whether in the office or tertiary center, will probably serve as an international model for quality assurance in the future.

I suppose it is the combination of all these qualities, pioneering researcher, visionary team leader, exhilarating teacher, bon viveur and warm human being that makes John Hobbins the legend he is today.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am pleased to present on your behalf the Ian Donald Gold Medal for 1995 to John C. Hobbins.

S. CAMPBELL