

# Musculoskeletal radiology in South Africa

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Musculoskeletal radiology in South Africa has shown significant growth in the last decade. This was achieved through advanced educational programmes, international input and significantly improved imaging techniques and equipment — which in turn has enabled musculoskeletal (MSK) radiologists to offer an improved service to referring physicians.

The progress in technology has served radiology well. Digital imaging enables radiologists to readily share and discuss problematic cases with colleagues elsewhere. High-resolution imaging is comparable to sectioned anatomy and histology, which makes imaging challenging but also rewarding, as extremely accurate reporting is possible. Herein lies the challenge to the radiologist.

SAMSIG, the South African Musculoskeletal Imaging Group, was formed in 2005 by a dedicated group of radiologists who aimed to elevate the level of MSK radiology to international standards. At the time, there was no dedicated subgroup within the RSSA, nor were there any dedicated local fellowships or MSK-specific meetings.

By many and various means, SAMSIG has achieved its goal — with the support of the RSSA, significant input from international speakers and continued improvement by South African radiologists with a special interest in MSK radiology. Without the contributions of international MSK radiologists Jock Anderson, Phil Lucas, Rusty Fritz, John Feller and George Koulouris, to name a few, this task would not have been accomplished. The local SAMSIG committee members showed dedication, determination and leadership to establish a subgroup that South African radiology can be proud of. SAMSIG has elevated the standard of MSK radiology to an international level. The Radiological Society of South Africa (RSSA), under the academic leadership of Leon Janse van Rensburg and Jan Labuscagne, have been extremely supportive of the SAMSIG dream.

International MSK congresses were hosted locally. This level of radiology enabled local radiologists to experience world-class speakers right here, face to face. The following congresses were pivotal in the advancement of MSK radiology:

- 1st SA Sports Imaging Congress in 1999
- SA Sports Medicine bi-annual Congress, since 2001
- MRI update in sports medicine by David Stoller in 2010
- SAMSIG bi-annual international conference, since 2010
- 1st RSSA/SAMSIG advanced MSK course in 2014.

As radiologists, we need to offer a superior service to our referring market. Orthopaedic surgeons, rheumatologists, sports physicians and others who are involved with the MSK system deserve the best imaging service available to answer their questions, the ultimate goal being improved patient care. With the aid of high-level imaging techniques, continued technical skill improvement, interaction with our clinical colleagues and dedicated MSK reporting, we can face possible turf wars with confidence. Perhaps the time has arrived where we should now offer dedicated MSK radiology fellowships to further improve the levels of expertise. A strong and active MSK imaging group is essential to achieve these goals.

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