Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Promoter methylation of CDKN2A and the lack of p16 expression characterize patients with hepatocellular carcinoma

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 25 August 2009

**Reviewer:** Liwei Wang

**Reviewer’s report:**

The question posed by the authors is well defined and the methods appropriate and well described. The manuscript adheres to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition. The authors clearly acknowledges the work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished. The title and abstract accurately convey what has been found and the writing is acceptable. However there are still some problems as below:

Major Compulsory Revisions:
1. annotation 4,
2. The tables were designed too complicated to be understood.
3. The patients’ characteristics descriptions about HCC are chaotic and I think the author should make some choice to abandon those unrelated.

Minor Essential Revisions:
1. annotation 1,2,3,5,6 (seen in the manuscript)
2. There are some mistakes about the data, perhaps due to the carelessness of the author, but these mistakes makes me suspicious of the whole data.
3. The references need to be updated.

Discretionary Revisions: zero.

Conclusion: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions