Reviewer's report

**Title:** Protein induced by vitamin K absence or antagonist-II production is a strong predictive marker for extrahepatic metastases in hepatocellular carcinoma: a prospective evaluation

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 27 June 2011

**Reviewer:** Takumi Yamabuki

**Reviewer's report:**

-Major Compulsory Revisions

1. In this study, four different types of treatment modalities (TACE, RFA, PEI and Surgery) were performed in HCC patients. How about a subgroup analysis for extrahepatic metastases according to treatment modality? The author should discuss this point.

2. I’m a little confused by the characteristics that were adjusted in Table 3 and Table 4. The portal vein thrombosis was used for multivariate analysis in overall patients (Table 3), but the PT was used for univariate and multivariate analysis in subgroup analysis according to stage instead of the portal vein thrombosis (Table 4). I would like to know the explanation for this.

-Minor Essential Revisions

1. The PT was not included in multivariate analysis of Table 3 (RESULTS, All patients, line 12).

2. The description “portal vein thrombosis (in AJCC)” should be changed to “portal vein thrombosis (in BCLC)” (RESULTS, All patients, line 14).

3. The description “stage I, stage II and stage III” should be changed to “stage A, stage B and stage C”, respectively (RESULTS, subgroup analysis for extrahepatic metastases according to BCLC tumor stage, line 17,18).

4. The description “the groups II and III, group III” should be changed to “the groups B and C, group C”, respectively (RESULTS, Alteration of the PIVKA-II level ring follow-up, line 16,17).

5. The description “AFP>300” should be changed to “AFP>400” (FIGURE LEGENDS, Figure 1, line 6).

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the
statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.