Reviewer's report

Title: Signs of positive selection of somatic mutations in human cancers detected by EST sequence analysis

Version: 1 Date: 18 November 2005

Reviewer: Steven Benner

Reviewer's report:

General
1. Is the question posed by the authors new and well defined?
Yes. The question is very interesting, and very well selected.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described, and are sufficient details provided to replicate the work?
Yes. We were concerned that there was some sequencing error, but I believe that this issue was handled adequately (see page 12, top and the corresponding section in Materials). There is a statistics to this analysis in any case, so a few errors will not change the conclusions dramatically.

3. Are the data sound and well controlled?
Obviously, these authors use only standard tools to detect positive selection. These have shortcomings, several of which are mentioned (perhaps more discussion would be useful; it is the choice of the authors). But the existing discussion is adequate.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
This I cannot judge. I have never understood the standards for data deposition myself.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
I thought so. The CASPs were very interesting, and there is more than enough qualification.

6. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
Yes.

7. Is the writing acceptable?
Well above average.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
none

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
see above

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
see above
What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions
Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No