Reviewer’s report

Title: Expression of pS2 in prostate cancer correlates with grade and Chromogranin A expression but not with stage

Version: 2 Date: 1 June 2004

Reviewer: Jens Hansson

Reviewer’s report:

General
I would like to apologize for the delay in submitting the review, but I was appalled and surprised by the fact that the author’s response to my review was so inadequate, and I wanted to wait a while before addressing this manuscript once again. The authors have not addressed all major concerns I had, nor have they justified why they did not do so! For example, point no. 6 in my review (7 points in total) has not been addressed at all, while point no. 7 has been renamed no. 6 by the authors etc. Thus, there are still major concerns regarding the manuscript, all of which must be addressed by the authors before possible publication:

Major Compulsory Revisions:
1) Language: The authors state that revisions have been made, but major language corrections are still needed!
2) Title and Abstract: This has been addressed to my satisfaction.
3) Introduction: This has been addressed to my satisfaction.
4) Methods and Materials: This has been addressed to my satisfaction.
5) Results: In the results section the author’s present information about the number of patients and their clinical classification. This information should be moved to the Material and Methods section – and the authors have to add information about the number of metastatic cases (M1), as this is not given in the current manuscript. Stage: we still have the problem with pS2 expression and possible confusion with correlation to stage of disease: the authors state that “expression of pS2 was correlated with the stage of disease in Figure 1.”(page 6, second paragraph), - this should be changed to “expression of pS2 was not correlated to the stage of disease, see Figure 1”. Grade: the authors state in the result section of the abstract that “pS2 expression in prostate cancer significantly (p<0.001) correlates with histological grade”, and in Figure 2 there is a histogram, where “% expression of pS2” is presented (ranging from 6 to 30%). However, there is no information about the number of patients in each GS group, and it is not stated what the % expression refers to. - Is it the percentage of positive acini present in whole mounted specimens, as stated in the Methods section? (If so, then only 15 patients were analyzed). - Or is it number of specimens positive for pS2? The authors must supply this information, so that the reader easily can make this out.
6) Discussion: The authors ignored this point, - and thus should address it now: The first paragraph (the authors discuss why they did not use tissue extracts) is unnecessary and should be omitted. In the third paragraph the author discuss neuroendocrine differentiation and points out that their present work shows that “NE differentiation not only correlates with tumour grade but also has independent prognostic value”. However, the authors have not presented any information about this in their present work, i.e. this manuscript. Instead, the authors should rewrite the sentence, into: “Our earlier work (reference no. 2, and NOT reference 15) indicates that NE differentiation not only correlates with other prognostic markers like grade of the cancer but also has independent prognostic value”. In the fourth and last paragraph the authors write that “…pS2…significantly correlates with the histological grade and NE differentiation; both have independent and interdependent prognostic value”. This statement is a bit confusing, and the authors should omit the last sentence. Thus they should just write “…pS2…significantly correlates with the histological grade
and NE differentiation", end of sentence. This should be done, so it becomes clear that the authors have not studied the prognostic value of pS2 expression.

7) References: The numbering has yet to be revised!!!

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**Declaration of competing interests:**

None