Reviewer's report

Title: The prognostic relevance of interactions between venous invasion, lymph node involvement and distant metastases in renal cell carcinoma after radical nephrectomy

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Reviewer: vincenzo ficarra

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The Authors retrospectively (I believe) report about prognostic factors in 200 patients undergoing radical nephrectomy for renal cell carcinoma. The idea for the paper is not so original, but it is moderately well written. Some methodological changes should be done in order to improve the manuscript:

- Methods. The series is quite an “old” one, as the last patient is reported to have been operated in 1994. As such, a minimum 10 year follow-up should be expected. Nevertheless, median follow-up is only 5.5 years. It should be explained or follow-up should be updated. The retrospective or prospective nature of the study should be clearly stated in this section. Did the Authors use ultrasounds to better define the thrombus level? Cavogram is quite an old method, also in the 90’s.

- Results. Table 1: Beyond crude numbers, percentages should be reported in parentheses. The primary tumor pathological stage (pT) should be reported. One peculiarity of this series is the really high percentage of symptomatic patients: mistake or due to the old nature of the series? It should be commented in the discussion. Table 2: why did the Authors choose 10 cm as size cutoff? 28 mm for ESR? The cutoff should be either a clearly internationally accepted one or the median in the series. Moreover, they should add TNM pT stages in univariate analyses. Table 3: in the multivariate models more information concerning the primary tumor should be added. In particular, either the pT stage (even if there is a problem of co-linearity with the VI) or the single prognostic information provided by the T category (perinephric fat invasion, adrenal involvement, venous involvement, and/or the combination of them) should be reported. In figure 1, a curve with the LNI positive data should be added.

- References should be updated.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests