Book reviews

Skeletal trauma: basic science, management and reconstruction. 3rd edition. Edited by *Bruce D. Browner, Jesse B. Jupiter, Alan M. Levine and Peter G. Trafton*. Pp 2816. Philadelphia, USA: Saunders, 2003. ISBN: 0-7216-9175-7. £440.00.

Orthopaedic trauma is a rapidly advancing specialty; it is often difficult for the major texts to keep pace with the changes in orthopaedic techniques and more particularly with changes in philosophy. However, the 3rd edition of 'Skeletal trauma' has done more than merely keep abreast with the changing times. The editors have recognised the changing epidemiology of orthopaedic trauma, and instead of the major emphasis being solely on the management of severe fractures and the treatment of the multiply-injured patient, they have introduced a number of features dealing with osteoporotic fractures and their outcome. There are also chapters discussing the enhancement of skeletal repair and the evaluation of outcomes, topics that will become more important in the future. These are not the only changes. Six non-North American authors have been added to enrich the scope of the book and there are 11 more chapters than in the 2nd edition.

All orthopaedic trauma topics are covered except, curiously, finger amputation which is the commonest amputation performed by orthopaedic surgeons. The hand section deals excellently with reconstructive techniques, while the amputation chapter deals only with the lower limb. Otherwise, I could find no glaring omissions. Indeed, some of the chapters are outstanding. The section on the spine is encyclopaedic and Trafton's chapter on tibial diaphyseal fractures provides a challenge for other authors to emulate.

The secret of success in a major text such as this is the quality of the editing which is masterly. The chapters are consistent and the use of classifications, illustrations and photographs is appropriate. Minor changes might be recommended; it is unnecessary to have sections on history after Colton's excellent review of the history of Orthopaedic Trauma. The editors of the book are to be congratulated on the 3rd edition. It is going to be a hard act to follow!

Charles M. Court-Brown

Skeletal trauma in children. Vol. 3. Edited by *Neil E. Green and Marc F. Swiontkowski*. Pp 638. Philadelphia, USA: Saunders, 2003. ISBN: 0-7216-9294-X. £125.00.

When I was training, one of my consultants remarked somewhat disparagingly about the skill required to treat children's fractures. "As long as the two ends of the bone are in the same room, they'll join up", he said, "And you don't have to worry about the reduction because they'll always remodel". We have come a long way since then in our understanding and practice of skeletal injuries in children. It is no longer appropriate to approach children's injuries in

such a casual fashion, as we all know that the outcome of these injuries cannot always be predicted as satisfactory by today's exacting standards. As a consequence, operative intervention has certainly become more common, even on this side of the Atlantic.

This book epitomises that particular journey. It is one of a three-volume series on skeletal trauma. The main authors are well-known and respected figures in the paediatric orthopaedic world, and they have drawn on additional expertise from other contributors across North America. They make no apologies for glossing over the historical aspects of the management of children's injuries. This is a text at the cutting-edge of its subject.

However, it is not simply a paean to operative treatment. While there is much on newer surgical techniques, such as elastic intramedullary nailing, there is also room for thoughtful reflections on analgesia and rehabilitation, as well as an excellent section on how to apply a forearm cast. Skills such as these must not be forgotten in our enthusiasm for operative surgery, and in this respect, this text does well in maintaining a balance.

Two contributions are especially conspicuous; Canale's chapter on physal injuries is a gem, and the inclusion of a chapter on measuring outcomes of paediatric trauma is a demonstration of the authors' desire to produce a text relevant to today's needs. Basic sciences are covered in bite-sized portions at clinically relevant points throughout the text rather than being presented (as so often happens) in a large indigestible mass at the start. Although the initial impression is of a rather dense and busy page, the overall quality of radiographic reproduction and diagrams is high.

The cover illustration is an interesting if somewhat perverse choice; it is a radiograph, magnified and in lurid tones, of a plated distal femoral fracture which has healed in significant angular malunion. Perhaps this is the authors' way of saying that their book comes with a health warning; children's injuries must not be taken lightly and there are many ways of getting things wrong. This book will go a long way in helping to ensure that we actually get it right.

J. Mark H. Paterson

The haemophilic joints: new perspectives. Edited by *E. C. Rodriquez-Merchan*. Pp 200. Oxford, England: Blackwell Publishing, 2003. ISBN: 1-4051-1230-1. £99.50.

The organisation of the management of haemophilia in most health-care systems is centred round a few major haematological centres and musculoskeletal management is devolved upon a small, multi-disciplinary team. Orthopaedic experience of the operative management of the difficult sequelae of this condition is confined to a handful of surgeons in any one country. To assist in the dissemination of experience and treatments, the Musculo-Skeletal Committee of the World Federation of Haemophilia has been established and meets annually. The editor has invited chapters from many of the major contributors to the present debates on optimal management of these problems. Authors from 15 countries have contributed to this book and the team approach is reflected in the specialities of the contributors, including physiotherapists, haematologists, rheumatologists, paediatricians, rehabilitation physicians, radiologists and orthopaedic surgeons.

The chapters have been divided into six sections, beginning with an outline of the general principles of evaluation and manage-

ment. Difficult areas, including the presence of inhibitors, are carefully covered. The range of non-surgical therapies is outlined including radiological and chemical synovectomy. Treatments at different stages of the disease process are established including the management of acute joint bleeds, control of established chronic synovitis and distinctions made between the options in moderate and in end-stage arthropathy. Included also are chapters on recent work relating to the pathogenesis of joint damage, the biomechanical analysis of gait alterations and the difficulties of correlating clinical observation with imaging appearances in the evaluation of treatment outcomes.

The book is well written and illustrated with images and diagrams. The only area not specifically covered at individual chapter level is the vexed problem of HIV-positive patients, which is sad because so many of them have been infected in the course of treatment, a prominent medical tragedy of the last 15 years.

The book joins several other recently published texts in the field of the musculoskeletal management of haemophilia. It will prove an excellent reference in all Haematology departments and those Orthopaedic and Rehabilitation units encountering patients with haemophilia.

Bill Ribbens

1st Announcement of the third EBOT exam

Fellowship Exam of European Board of Orthopaedics and Traumatology

The third Fellowship exam of the European Board of Orthopaedics and Traumatology is going to take place in the Onze Lieve Vrouwe Gasthuis in Amsterdam, Holland on the

11th and 12th October, 2003.

Requirements

1. Citizenship of European Union (EU) including Norway and Switzerland, and New Countries joining the European Union (EU).
2. Certificate of full qualification as an Orthopaedic Surgeon by the National Authorities (EU Orthopaedic Society).
3. Be fluent in English.

Title

"Fellow of the European Board of Orthopaedics and Traumatology"

Enquiries

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*Please read the information that will be published in the European Orthopaedic literature or contact your national UEMS-European Board of Orthopaedics and Traumatology delegate.

Application

Deadline for application will be the 31st of July 2003.

Number of candidates restricted to 40

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