

Book review

Nordic textbook of sports medicine. Sports injuries from a broader perspective

Michael Kjaer, Michael Krogsgaard, Peter Magnusson, Lars Engebretsen, Harald Roos, Timo Takala, Savio L-Y Woo, 808 pages, Oxford: Blackwell Science Ltd., 2003

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There was a time when sports medicine in Scandinavia consisted of two different parts: exercise physiology and injury treatment. Both were kept at a high international standard, especially the physiology part. When sports medicine was gaining renewed interest in Scandinavia in the last decades of the 20th century, it no longer fell within the old frame of reference, and the people working in sports medicine required not just one of the two parts, but both. This might reflect a new viewpoint of athletes who do not see freedom from injuries as the only aim of their doctor. They also want to be given advice from the doctor on how to perform in an optimal way and how to prevent injuries by training.

This new generation of doctors who are engaged in sports medicine requires up-to-date reference literature, and of course many new textbooks have been pouring forth from the publishers over the years. This is a new textbook in the heavyweight class, however, and its aim is to be a champion. Whether or not it will succeed is too early to say, but at least it has already earned the Nordic and Northern European crowns. From a Scandinavian standpoint, it is interesting to see this as an example of how these four countries can behave as a unit rather than being competitors—which may be a more realistic strategy in the competitive world of the future where, from a global perspective, Scandinavia is seldom regarded as being the center of the world. All the best clinicians and physiologists from Scandinavia have worked together towards the 35 individual chapters of this book, and there is little overlap, even though most of these authors could easily have written more than one chapter each.

The book has six main parts: Basic science of physical activity and sports injuries (186 pages);

Aspects of human performance (110 pages); Health achievements vs. sports injuries (98 pages); Exercise in acute and chronic medical diseases (103 pages); Imaging in sports medicine (27 pages); and Sports injuries (140 pages). The blend of the topics shows that this is not a book on sports injuries or a book on sports physiology. Rather, the aim of the book is to put the sporting individual into a context in which both performance, motivation and possible injuries are discussed, with the question of what health achievements may be expected from sport as its backdrop. This is a mature way of looking at sports medicine, and it will also be interesting for those who earn their living in orthopedics. For those who are relatively new to sports medicine, this may be a bit more difficult than to read only of how sports injuries should be treated or how principles of training should be practised, but for those who have been treating injured athletes for a longer time period, this is how it should be viewed.

The Sports injuries part is subdivided into 8 sections. Each of the seven of the sections is devoted to a different region of the body, e.g. the ankle, knee, spine etc. All of them are well illustrated and concise regarding injury pathophysiology, diagnosis and treatment. The last chapter, however, is perhaps the most interesting. Entitled “Practical sports medicine”, these 13 pages give the reader advice on field assessment, sideline assessment and treatment of muscle injuries. The sports medicine kit and the work of the doctor during travel are also covered accurately.

The book is heavy, and it is recommended that only well-trained sports medicine personnel should carry it daily. On the other hand, it is not a book that should be read from page 1 to page 808

in one or a few sittings, but can be recommended for those who have read other, smaller books on sports medicine already and now require deeper, specific knowledge. For such readers, the book is optimal: well-structured, comprehensive and easily read. It will certainly make every person who is interested in sports medicine happy, irrespective

of whether they have an orthopedics or physiology background.

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