

Editorial

Format changes in *Acta Orthopaedica Scandinavica*

Readers of this issue of *Acta Orthopaedica Scandinavica* will notice three breaks with the traditions of the journal. The proceedings of the recent Århus congress are published as a supplement, book reviews are introduced, and a section for follow-up of previous reports is presented.

Proceedings published as supplements

The spectacular growth of orthopedics during recent decades has resulted in a serious imbalance in the number of pages devoted to articles versus proceedings in the regular issue of *Acta Orthopaedica Scandinavica*. As regards published proceedings, each of the Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands organize national meetings about twice annually; moreover, the Scandinavian Orthopedic Association holds a biennial congress; and finally, superspecialty societies and research seminars demand space for abstracts. The aggregate effect of these events has resulted in the annual number of pages devoted to the publication of the proceedings of these meetings having doubled in recent years. Because we prefer not to increase the total number of pages of our regular issues, the proceedings' section has thus increased to almost a fourth of our total space. Our readers may, indeed, feel that too many pages of fine print cause "overdigestion" and that our contributors are threatened by a stiffening competition for space. Our editorial board discussed the situation with the editors and the referees in Århus this past summer. A suggestion that the proceedings' abstracts be limited to a specified number of pages per meeting was rejected. There was a general consensus that the proceedings constitute an important forum for exchanging ideas and reports on work in progress, and it was pointed out that most programs of meetings are based on some sort of selection process. We therefore decided to publish most of the proceedings, if not all the abstracts, in two annual supplements — one in the spring and one in the autumn.

The Proceedings of the 43rd Congress of the Scandinavian Orthopedic Association in Århus in June 1988 are published as a supplement, distributed with this issue of *Acta Orthopaedica Scandinavica*. The covers of the new proceedings' supplements will be red as distinct from the green covers of the regular issues and the blue covers of the traditional supplements.

Dr. Björn Strömqvist, who is responsible in the editorial office for publication of the proceedings, has been increasingly successful in coordinating his efforts with the national scientific secretaries to diminish the publication delay to only 4 months for the Århus meeting and 1 month for the meeting of the Swedish Orthopedic Society in Karlskrona. With the continued development of desk top publishing, we expect the forthcoming proceedings' supplements to contain the transactions, on an average, only a few months after the meetings.

Book reviews

In the past, *Acta Orthopaedica Scandinavica* has not published book reviews. However, because one of the purposes of the journal is to market the orthopedic ideology of Scandinavia and the Netherlands, we feel amiss in not informing the rest of the world of textbooks and other publications intended for an international readership. For similar reasons, we hope to provide balance to this new section by printing reviews of the international literature, and as a start, Campbell's classic textbook of orthopedics is reviewed by two Swedish orthopedists.

Follow-up of previous reports

Reports on follow-ups of previously published material are often quite important: for example, it is good to know the early results of a new endoprosthesis design or a modified operation for knee ligament injury, but it would be even more "comfortable" to know what has happened to the patients after another 2, 3, or 5 years. Accordingly, as regards previously published articles, it would take up unnecessary space to republish the materials and methods section, and it may be difficult to rewrite the introduction and discussion without coming close to a "double publication." We hope to obviate this problem by introducing a new section titled "Follow-up of Previous Reports," which we sincerely hope will attract an increasing number of manuscripts. Although at first glance, a one-page article may not appear very impressive; in reality, such articles may well serve an increasingly important purpose. Thus far, the international orthopedic press has contained far more articles introducing new methods, designs, and procedures than detailed reports on why some of these innovations are no longer used by their originators.