

EDITORIAL

SPORT FOR ALL = INJURIES FOR ALL

(J. G. P. Williams)

Unfortunately this appears only too true, as everyone connected with the "biology" of sport is aware, whether they are concerned with the proper physical and psychological preparation of the athlete, the prevention of his injuries, their treatment and rehabilitation. All these aspects are included in this number of our journal.

The first step in organising treatment for any class of pathological conditions is to investigate the epidemiology. As we have found over a period of many years, this is extremely hard to do. Sportsmen, their officials and their public are all loud in condemning the lack of sports medicine facilities in times of crisis; when injury strikes, or lack of fitness interferes, but little or no support is given to enable epidemiological studies to be undertaken, or to encourage with facilities or finance the establishment of specialist services. We are indebted to Roaas and Nilsson for their analysis of injuries sustained in association football in Norway, where any injury apart from trivia is treated under a private insurance scheme. No official fixtures can be played unless the premium is paid, and the authors have analysed these more serious injuries over a four year period. Unfortunately there is no account of the many minor injuries that cause such a problem in loss of a few days work and training, but that, added together, make a considerable inroad into the national economy.

Other factors to be considered in the achievement of fitness are body composition, Bell, regarding College rugby football players; cardio-respiratory fitness as assessed by the treadmill, — Gibson and co-workers; similar studies on Indian athletes by Verma, Sidhu and Kansal from the Punjabi University at Patiala in India; a study of stride length in Australian runners, and its possible role in understanding some runners' injuries — Elliott and Blanksby.

Injury can largely be prevented by the observance of safety precautions and regulations, McLatchie discusses this in relation to karate competitions, and Robson regarding equestrian injuries, following another article by McLatchie on injuries to riders in Scotland.

An interesting injury, traumatic rupture of the capsule of a rugby player's knee joint, is described by Stodell, and the use of physical exercise in an elderly ultra-heavyweight woman with multiple serious medical conditions is reported by Marley, Barry and Posner from Philadelphia. A physiological case study is reported by Myles and his co-workers from Canada upon the energy cost of an 80 kilometre run, a real test of endurance!

As already announced, the Annual General Meeting of the British Association of Sport and Medicine will take place on June 27th, in London, at a place to be announced later. There will be some vacancies on the Executive Committee, and nominations will be invited, to be sent in writing to the Honorary Secretary well in advance, proposed and seconded by members of the Association, and with the signed consent of the person proposed. Any other item of business should also be notified well in advance. The business meeting will be preceded by a symposium on ethics in sport and sports medicine, and could include such items a doping and other unfair procedures in competition and training, the relationship of team doctors to the athletes' own general practitioners, the degree of responsibility of physiotherapists working without referral of patients by doctors, and the rights of team managers and coaches to know the health condition of their team members.

As this number goes to press, we are preparing for the fifth Sports Medicine Course, the third one to be staged at Loughborough. We were booked up fully by the end of February, overbooked in fact, but can give advance notice to those unable to attend this year's course that the 1980 one, also planned for Loughborough, will be held during the week beginning on April 13th 1980. We have not opened a file for 1980 yet, but will soon be doing so, and inviting enquiries. As usual, no firm reservation can be made until we receive the booking form and deposit cheque.

It is regretted that the last issue of the Journal, 12:4, was so late in production. There were a number of factors, outside the control of the editor and the printer; heavy commitments, many overseas, of the members of the Editorial Board and contributors to the Exercise — prescription for health symposium illness, and not least the current industrial unrest, which has held up supplies of materials, international mail, and necessitated consultants carrying out work that normally is done by technicians. We hope to get the 1979 journals out on time, but appeal to anyone contributing articles or notices of meetings to give us plenty of notice, preferably six months.

Partly as a result of the recent symposium for editors of medical journals, but also following discussions with the printers, there are some minor changes in presentation of papers, reducing unnecessary full stops, and eliminating changes of fount, especially in references. It should not make the journal more difficult to read, and might save some time in typesetting, and some cost.

H. Robson