BOOK REVIEW

Title: THE RUNNING FOOT DOCTOR
Author: Steven I. Subotnick
Publisher: World Publishers
Price:

Whatever one may feel about Steven Subotnick, one cannot ignore him and there can be no doubt that he has made a most valuable contribution to sports medicine by stimulating greater interest in the foot and its problems in sport.

This book is in fact a manual of sports podiatry, a profession supplementary to medicine little known in the United Kingdom but which could be crudely defined as five-star chiropody! Perhaps the most important contribution of podiatry to medicine has been an identification of deformities of the foot and these are nicely described in the middle section of the book. Unfortunately it appears that the state of the art is currently such that podiatry tends to describe these deformities as causes of symptoms and sets out to treat them accordingly, rather than as the results of specific pathologies. To that extent much podiatric practice must be regarded as superficially based and to a degree, therefore, empirical. However, there is no doubt that many of the treatment techniques are effective and because they are effective should give a valuable lead to the nature of the underlying disability.

This book, larded as it is with Americanisms (sometimes irritating to the Anglo-Saxon taste) is yet full of interest and indeed immensely stimulating. Personally I find Mr. Subotnick's views a healthy challenge to my own views and attitudes and I heartily recommend this (and his other book, Podiatric Sports Medicine – Futura Publishing Co., New York) less as a manual of how to manage foot problems in sport (although it does contain a considerable volume of useful and practical information) than as a highly abrasive intellectual stimulant!

J. G. P. Williams

BOOK REVIEW

Title: THE FIT ATHLETE
Author: R. J. Shephard
Publisher: Oxford University Press, 1978 ISBN No. 0-19-217549-1
Price: £3.95
 214 pages, 25 figs, including ½ tone, 21 tables

The Publisher's statement on the fly-leaf of the jacket states that this book is recommended 'for the athlete, but also for the layman, the arm-chair marathon expert, and the student – in physical education or coaching'. This is not true! The book is an excellent introduction to many aspects of sports medicine, and would be of value also to the student of medicine, to the sports scientist and to the doctor in general on hospital practice who is making a start in the medical care of the athlete or is continuing to participate in some form of physical exercise.

After a short introduction, the book starts with a history of sport, not only Hellenic and Modern Olympiad, but from many different cultures and periods coupled with an interesting philosophical discussion on the need for sport, fitness, and sports medicine. An interesting graph on the growth of Olympic participation is given on page 17, but it is a pity the graph was not extended to cover the 1976 Olympiad, though these figures are mentioned in the legend. (We would also hope that an honorary life member of B.A.S.M. would give us our correct title of British Association of *Sport and Medicine*, and not of *Sports Medicine* – page 22 – Oh Roy!)

Body build, strength, skill, and the psychological attributes of the athlete are dealt with next, followed by simple but very clear descriptions of diet, training, doping, environment, disease, injuries (in outline), and sport for special groups – women, young adolescents, the middle aged, the handicapped, and the place of sport in society. There is no detailed list of references, but a most useful bibliography of the main books and journals in the English language.