EDITORIAL

In this edition of the journal it is interesting to note for the first time a study of the energy expenditure in ballroom dancing. Prior to publication cynics might have suggested that this was not a correct forum to be reporting this work but the values of oxygen uptake that have been estimated suggest that this activity is at least as strenuous as other activities that are reported. Although the study relates to young competitive dancers the information concerning energy expenditure with this activity is useful, as it is a form of exercise not uncommonly undertaken by older individuals. It is recognised that it is important to remain active and mobile throughout life to counteract the steady decline in organ function and ballroom dancing is perhaps an additional activity in which we can encourage older individuals to participate.

The use of corticosteroid injection may be helpful, but in certain clinical situations controversy exists. The study from Leicester in this edition fails to show any benefit over local anaesthetic from the use of corticosteroid injection in Achilles paratendonitis, both groups being given the same physiotherapy regimen. Of as much interest as the lack of benefit from corticosteroid injection in this particular clinical situation is that no harmful effects were seen from the injection.

The report of the sports medicine clinic in Livingstone provides useful practical information on the running of such a service. This will be of interest for those wishing to set up such a clinic with some guide as to the anticipated cost, although I suspect that some expenses are unintentionally hidden because of the evolution of the clinic in this instance. It is encouraging that individuals are able and prepared to set up a relatively low cost service at the site where it is the most useful. It is also encouraging to note that the running of such a service did not produce great demands on local hospital services when referrals were necessary.

Prevention of injury is always an important aim for those dealing with sports injuries. The study from Denmark suggests that although head injuries were more common when knuckle protection was used in karate the severity of these injuries was reduced with fewer fractures occurring as well as there being less hand injuries. Overall, the number of injuries requiring treatment was reduced. Let us hope that the governing bodies are taking note of articles produced in this and other journals as it is pointed out in the correspondence pages that to date little note has been taken with regard to implementing changes to reduce the incidence of eye injuries in sport, despite data illustrating that it is a problem with potential for prevention.

Although gastrointestinal disturbances are important to the sufferers, the study reported in individuals running a marathon in this issue should be interpreted with caution because of the low response rate. It is probable that those with symptoms are more likely to respond to a questionnaire. It is also noted that the runners are relatively slow and that there could well be a difference between these and those individuals who train more seriously for a marathon.

The Scottish Area of BASM have compiled an interesting programme for Congress 88. A broad spectrum of interesting and topical subjects are to be covered with presentations by well-known speakers. Although expensive to enjoy the luxury of staying at the famous Gleneagles alternative accommodation details are available from the organisers so that expense will, hopefully, not preclude members from attending the Congress. The AGM, it is hoped, is to be incorporated into the weekend of Congress which serves to illustrate that the voice of the regions can be heard — this suggestion having been voiced most recently by the North West branch. The Report of the Directors and other relevant papers will be circulated to all members in advance of this meeting.

Wendy N. Dodds

OBITUARY

David Palmar, BA, MCSP, Dip.T.P.

We are saddened to learn of the death on 22nd October, 1987 of David Palmar, at the early age of 49 and after a long illness. He joined our Association in 1970, when working in Glasgow at the Scottish Physiotherapy Hospital in St. Vincent Crescent, as a Teacher of Physiotherapy. A few years later he moved to the West Middlesex University Hospital to take up the post of Deputy Principal of the School of Physiotherapy. In 1987 he transferred membership to the new incorporated BASM, but at the time was no longer active in any sport, though still very knowledgeable in the treatment of track and field athletics, especially injuries in sprinters and had a special interest in soft-tissue injuries of the knee. We extend our deepest sympathy to his widow Jennifer and we will miss a keen member, at first a supporter of the newly-formed Scottish Area, and later of the parent body.

H. E. Robson