BOOK REVIEWS

Neurological Physiotherapy. Ed Susan Edwards. (Pp 212; £16.00.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1996. ISBN 0 443 048878.

In this very readable book Sue Edwards and her fellow contributors take an essentially pragmatic approach, dealing with issues that face neurological physiotherapists daily. Apart from the first chapter, in which Cecily Partridge gives an informative review of the development of physiotherapy in neurology, the book is concerned with finding practical solutions to some of the very complex problems raised when dealing with neurologically damaged patients. I was particularly pleased to see a chapter by a neuropsychologist, as the cognitive deficits of brain injured subjects, and the influence of these on their overall management, often seem to be ignored by those promoting a particular approach to treatment. Indeed, Sue Edwards does not shy from controversy and acknowledges in her excellent chapter on orthotics and splinting that the debate continues about the appropriateness of such measures.

Each chapter is extensively referenced for further reading. The text is well organised and easy to access with clear headings and plentiful illustrations.

This is not a book about a set of very specific treatment techniques or even about a philosophy of treatment, but it offers an approach which is insightful and oriented towards the total physiotherapy management of complex and severely disabled patients. It is a book I would very much like to own and

would recommend to practitioners with considerable experience in neurology, as well as to those relatively new to this field.

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The Psychology of Concentration in Sport Performers. A Cognitive Analysis. A P Moran. (Pp 317; £29.95.) E Sussex: Psychology Press, 1996. ISBN 0 86377 443 1.

This text is a long overdue reference work that details, in a much needed fashion, the research to date on concentration, attention, cognition, and sports performance. It relates sports science research in these areas to parallel studies in performance and expertise in mainstream psychology and suggests a host of ways in which the two disciplines might combine to enrich each other's knowledge. The almost encyclopaedic scope of this text means that I find myself referring to it for references, ideas, and information during the course of my daily work.

Dr Moran makes it clear that much of the evidence to support the importance of the ability to concentrate in sport comes directly from anecdotal reports from athletes and coaches themselves, who describe moments of concentration loss in a losing performance and descriptions of total concentration and focus during the "best" performance. He has used this springboard cleverly, by heading each chapter with a series of relevant evidential quotes from a variety of leading sportsmen and women. These quotes are never overdone, are contextually well placed, and certainly helped me to retain a perception of the practical relevance of the cognitive issues he discusses. They were, undoubtedly, a bonus in terms of retaining appropriate "focus"!

Retaining an appropriate focus could have been made easier, and this is my only real criticism of the book. It is not directed at the con-

tent of the book but has to do with the style in which it is written. Dr Moran has adopted the standard style of beginning and ending each section (and chapter) with a summary of what is to be/has been covered and how it correlates with the rest of the book. However, I found that while I was reading these summaries, I began to scan, rather than read the text, and the thought, "too many unnecessary words" would spring to mind. These "guidance statements" would be so much better if they were clearly laid out—for example, in bullet point (or similar) form. This would have broken up the mountain of text, highlighting and linking the important points. As psychologists studying information processing and attentional control, surely we have a responsibility to use our own research advice about how best to provide information in an easily accessible form? *The Psychology of Concentration in Sports Performers* has few charts, tables, or diagrams to help its readers. Thus although the content is fascinating and well argued, absorbing and processing this mountain of information, without missing any of the interesting detail, requires a great deal of purposeful concentration.

To summarise, the strengths of this book are in its contents and depth. I am not sure that Dr Moran says anything new, but he does make clear what evidence there is to support the variety of performance enhancing techniques used by sports psychologists and, more importantly, highlights the areas where theory is absent and what can be done about this. He brings to the fore the idea that sport and sports performance is a veritable playground for the study of the construct of "attention" because the process or attention directly refers to the relation between "mental effort and physical skill". With this in mind, this book is essential, not only for sports science professionals but also, perhaps more importantly, for mainstream psychologists looking to enhance their own essentially laboratory based experimental work.

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NOTES AND NEWS

Aircast Travelling Fellowship

The Aircast Travelling Fellowship will be awarded this year for the first time. The prize is an educational grant to the value of £2000, which will enable the successful applicant to travel to a centre of excellence in sports medicine in the United States. The prize will be awarded at the BASM Annual Congress in Brighton and details of the entry criteria are available from the BASM office.

1997 BASM National Congress

The organising committee expects a large number of delegates at the 1997 congress, which takes place at the Stakis Brighton Metropole from 6 to 9 November. In addition to a full programme of invited lectures, there

will be a special session devoted to academic research, and the abstracts of all those papers selected for presentation will be published in this Journal. This was a very popular session in 1996 and reflected a very high quality of research and development in British sports medicine. The organising committee also invites submissions for a new category entitled "Pearls in practice". This might be an idea, a diagnostic test, or a treatment that you feel adds to the body of current knowledge in our discipline. In keeping with the decision at the 1996 congress, there will also be a meeting of the doctors group within BASM to discuss future developments in postgraduate training and opportunities for improvement in educational standards.

American College of Sports Medicine—BASM lecture

Professor Ron Maughan gave the BASM lecture to an audience of about 200 people at this year's meeting of the American College of Sports Medicine. It was a great success, and this initiative was well received both by

the audience and the host organising committee. Also at the ACSM meeting, Dr Paul Thompson, president elect of the ACSM, came to speak to those BASM members present at the physicians reception and invited BASM to continue this sponsorship. He is very enthusiastic about developing international relations and we look forward to close partnership in the future.

National Sports Medicine Institute

The new chief executive of the NSMI is Mr Stanley Williams, who is very keen to develop relations with BASM. Dr Neil Townsend, chairman of NSMI, reported recent developments to the most recent BASM council meeting, and sports medicine should be optimistic about these changes. BASM representatives encouraged NSMI, through Dr Townsend, to devote particular attention to promoting education and research. As NSMI is the key educational organisation in British sports medicine, members of the council see this as a priority.