There is a well-researched chapter on chest wall deformities. Questions regarding pectus excavatum are not uncommon, and interesting data are presented on long term follow up of respiratory function and exercise performance in patients who have had corrective surgery for this deformity. Other chapters providing authoritative reference material include those on vesico-ureteric reflux, haematuria, hernias, congenital heart disease, and spinal dysraphism (to mention but a few).

As a sports physician, I was disappointed by the chapter entitled ‘Musculoskeletal Injuries’. The chapter ran to only six pages of this 900 page text. Essentially, the chapter addressed management of long bone fractures, with references (to text books mainly) dating from 1980 to 1996. No mention is made of knee meniscus injury, cruciate ligament rupture, apophyseal avulsion, or stress fractures, and none of these terms appear in the index. No reference is made in the text to muscular injury, making the title of the chapter somewhat misleading. In contrast to this six page chapter that poorly covers a huge subject, there is a 16 page chapter on ‘Infections of the Lung and Airway’.

This textbook is hard bound and its 900 pages are printed on good quality paper. The text is readable throughout. The subject matter is certainly relevant to practitioners who have paediatric patients. The black and white line illustrations are of good quality, and the black and white photographs of moderate quality. As noted, the quality of x-ray reproduction is disappointing.

I am sure that I will refer to this book regularly in the coming years. It would certainly be a valuable addition to the library of sports medicine training practices, and to those of practitioners with large paediatric patient populations. However, as a sports physician rather than a surgeon, there would be higher priorities on my ‘must have’ list if I were going to spend this amount of money on a reference textbook.