
Editorial

I am most grateful to Dr Takaaki Ikata, and Dr Eiji Iwatsubo, members of the Editorial Board of *Paraplegia* for editing this issue of *Paraplegia*. The fruits of their hard work are shown by the excellent papers that they have obtained, have had peer reviewed, and then completed and indeed set out clearly in good English. They are to be congratulated.

The scope of the contributions is wide and varied, and includes a paper clearly showing how the lifespan of spinal cord injured (SCI) patients has increased in recent years in Japan. There are papers on some of the pathological aspects of SCI, including micro-angiographic studies, syringomyelia and cord oedema. Experimental animal studies have demonstrated the importance of haemoperfusion and oxygen saturation. Peroperative spinal monitoring by a micro-computer automated technique is discussed. There are studies of the disturbances of micturition in patients with spinal arteriovenous malformations, and in those with HTLV-1 associated myelopathy. The continuing problems of patients who develop intractable leg spasms after a cervical SCI receive attention. Another interesting paper is one on the use of different assessment methods to study the clinical progress of patients who have sustained a severe cervical SCI. The issue also contains a submission on the physical fitness of wheelchair marathon competitors.

This latter paper reminds me of the International Stoke Mandeville Games for the Paralyzed that was held in Tokyo, Japan in November 1964, just immediately following the 'able-bodied' Olympic Games. Some 370 paraplegic sports people, representing 22 countries, participated. Thanks to (the late) Sir Ludwig Guttmann and the excellent team of organisers in Japan, the Games were a tremendous success as was the associated Scientific Meeting of the International Medical Society of Paraplegia. I was privileged to be the medical officer on the KLM aircraft from London, England to Tokyo, with the UK, Dutch, Israeli and Irish teams and escorts on board. We all stayed in the bungalows of the Olympic Village. It was estimated that about 100 000 spectators visited the Games, including Ambassadors from several countries and many other 'VIPs'. These Games certainly made a dramatic impact on the Japanese public, the press, television and also on Government and Municipal Authority members. Thus within a few months of holding the Games in Tokyo, a custom-built centre was established, and also a factory for paraplegic workers was opened. The stoicism of paraplegic athletes was clearly shown by the necessity to remain on board the aircraft on the return flight to England, when unfortunately an engine in the aircraft returning from Tokyo caused trouble between Tokyo and Anchorage, Alaska. The captain of the aircraft had to decide on medical advice if he should return to Tokyo, where there would be good facilities for all on board, or proceed to icy cold Anchorage where there were only minimal facilities. It seemed best to return to Tokyo, hopefully to have the engine repaired and then proceed with the journey. This happened, and indeed the paraplegic sportswomen and sportsmen remained on board until arrival in London, when

the Dutch, Israeli, Irish and Scots went on forthwith to their countries! This was a most successful and memorable venture!

A very active Japanese Medical Society of Paraplegia has been formed and its Journal is a high quality production with its contents in Japanese.

Phillip Harris

The Japan Medical Society of Paraplegia

The Japan Medical Society of Paraplegia was established after the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic games which were held in 1964. The first Scientific Meeting was held in Beppu City in 1966 and the President was Professor Tamikazu Amako. Annual Scientific Meetings have been held in the Autumn in various places in Japan (language: Japanese). The membership of the Society consists of 875 doctors (20 trustees and 70 council members).

Past presidents who have been elected annually were from 14 orthopaedic, 7 urological and 2 neurosurgical specialities. The 23rd Annual Scientific Meeting was held in Tokyo on 2 and 3 November 1988. The main subjects were two special lectures: 'MRI of the spinal cord' and 'Hand function and its reconstruction', two symposia: 'Diagnosis and treatment of syringomyelia' and 'Long term follow-up of urinary management of spinal cord injury', and one panel discussion: 'Aging of spinal man'. Eighty four proffered papers and 27 posters were presented by doctors from 53 orthopaedic, 30 urological, 14 neurosurgical, 8 medical rehabilitation, 4 neurological and 2 other fields. Recently the large number of papers and presentations have made it difficult for members to meet together in one place for discussions.

The first issue of the Journal of the Japan Medical Society of Paraplegia (Japanese language) was published in April 1988.

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