The *European Spine Journal* is continuing to grow and has now gained an established position in the spine research field. This is reflected not only by the increasing number of submitted papers, not the least the number of experimental papers, which is particularly encouraging, but also by the recent listing in *Current Contents*. We hope that this trend will continue and that high quality papers in the spine field, not only from Europe, will continue to be submitted to the journal.

At the first annual meeting of the SSE two outstanding papers received the SSE awards, one in basic research and one in clinical research. Both papers are published in this issue of the *European Spine Journal*. The clinical paper by Verheyden and colleagues affiliated to the University of Leipzig comprises an experimental part and a pilot study over the use of open MR tomography in spine surgery. This technique

enables the surgeon to position any implants with higher accuracy, and subsequently less adverse effects. The basic study by Rohlmann and colleagues at the University of Berlin provides important baseline data of the load in vivo on spinal fixation devices using telemetry. These data will unquestionably be of high relevance when considering both surgical techniques and new designs of spinal instruments.

In a recent editorial in the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* the question was raised regarding the postoperative pain management in experimental animals [1]. The issue was brought up by an editorial in *Veterinary and Comparative Orthopaedics and Traumatology* which stressed the importance that all animals, not only those seen by veterinarians, should be guaranteed post-operative pain relief [2]. Since such issues usually are regulated by the approval of a local ethics committee, the *Journal of*

Bone and Joint Surgery adopted a policy to require a copy of the written approval of an animal utilization study committee before considering publication of a paper involving animal research. We see no reason why the *European Spine Journal* should not adopt the same policy.

References

1. Cowell HR (1999) Editorial. *J Bone Joint Surg [Am]* 81:751
2. Sumner-Smith G (1998) Editorial. *Vet Comp Orthop Trauma* 11:4, 5

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The Spine Society of Europe Awards 1999

- *SSE Clinical Science Award* by **DePuy Acromed**: The open MR tomography in spine surgery: experimental investigations and first clinical experiences. P. Verheyden, S. Katscher, Th. Schulz, F. Schmidt, Ch. Josten (Leipzig, Germany)
- *SSE Basic Science Award* by **SULZERMEDICA**: Loads on internal spinal fixators measured in different body positions. A. Rohlmann, G. Bergmann, F. Graichen (Berlin, Germany)
- *Best SSE Podium Presentations Award* by **MATHYS**: Palsy of the L5 neural root following reposition of high degree spondylolisthesis and spondyloptosis – in vitro investigations. H. Kellinhuus, S. Albrecht, C. Gill, W. Noack (Berlin, Germany)
- *SSE Best Clinical Science Poster Award* by **DePuy Acromed**: Concave thoracoplasty (CTP): a new posterior instrumentation technique for rigid thoracic scoliosis/comparison with the VDS. P. Metz-Stavenhagen, W. Morgenstern, J. Völkel (Bad Wildungen-Reinhardshausen, Germany)
- *SSE Best Basic Science Poster Award* by **AESCULAP**: A study of the stability of lumbar interbody cages in compression. D. Bose, P. Davies, S. Evans, D. O'Doherty (Cardiff, Great Britain)