



Book Reviews

Approaches to the Clivus. By Madjid Samii and Engelbert Knosp. (Berlin, Springer-Verlag, 1992). Pp ix + 169, ill. ISBN 0-387-54015-6. Price DM 228.

This little book is of nine chapters, and written by two German neurosurgeons. The introductory chapter is about the anatomy of this area of the skull base, and subsequent chapters are each on a different surgical approach which could be used for differing conditions in the various parts of the skull base in this region.

Each chapter has a historical survey, discusses the anatomy, and has black and white photographs taken at operation showing the approach. The surgical technique is discussed in some detail. There is a case report, followed by a summary of the lesions and their sites which would be suitable for that particular approach, and a short discussion of the advantages and disadvantages.

No figures are presented of these authors' own experiences, and some approaches, for example the transfacial approach to the clivus, are mentioned only quite briefly.

This book would be of interest to some surgeons who operate in this area of the skull base, but is by no means comprehensive, and the discussion of the transfacial approach, which is the one in which plastic surgeons would be most involved, is, in my view, inadequate.

M. D. POOLE

Plastic Surgery Educational Foundation Instructional Courses Volume Four. Edited by Robert C. Russell. (St Louis, Mosby Year Book, 1992). ISBN 0-8016-4114-4. Pp xii + 268, 404 ill. Price £65.00

Volume four of the Instructional Courses of the Plastic Surgery Educational Foundation contains fourteen chapters on various topics written by noted experts. Five chapters are on aesthetic surgery including two on face-lifts. Nine chapters are on reconstructive surgery – three on hand surgery and the rest are single chapters on wound healing, cleft orthognathic surgery, facial sculpturing, refinements in breast reconstruction using tissue expansion, complications in TRAM flap surgery and an overview of hyperbaric oxygen therapy in plastic surgery.

This book is not intended as a conventional text-book and its scope is necessarily limited. There are some chapters which give a good in-depth overview of a subject. The chapters on Cartilage Grafting by Stal *et al.* and Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy for the Plastic Surgeon by Kindwall are excellent.

Generally the book is well presented. The illustrations, figures and diagrams are clear and the text is written in a precise way. The references are comprehensive and up-to-date.

Because of the limited range of topics which are discussed in this book, I cannot recommend it for an individual's library. It will, however, be a useful book to have in Unit libraries where the higher surgical trainee will find it valuable, especially in the latter part of his or her training.

D. S. MURRAY

The Wrist in Rheumatoid Arthritis. Edited by B. R. Simmen and F.-W. Hagena. (Basel, Karger, 1992). Pp xii, 220. 105 figures. Price: £105.70. ISBN 3-8055-5514-8.

This is Volume 17 of a series entitled "Rheumatology. The Interdisciplinary Concept", edited by M. Schattenkirchner and F.-W. Hagena of Munich. It is composed of papers presented at the 1989 Meeting of the European Rheumatoid Arthritis Surgeons' Society and is therefore similar to the proceedings produced after major meetings of this type.

It is, however, more carefully edited and stylishly produced. This does not disguise the fact that the book is like the curate's egg, good in parts. Some of the chapters, for example, are very brief indeed and one can imagine that the editors had difficulty dragging these out of various authors. The chapters are largely written by Europeans and in places this shows in the English translation. The content is strictly for the specialist who already knows his or her way around the rheumatoid hand and wrist. Various sections cover the natural history of the disease, conservative treatment, partial and total arthrodesis and arthroplasty. There are some interesting sections on the various methods of classifying the severity of the disease at the wrist.

Most of the chapters are written by well known established authors who have a reputation for the section they cover and there is therefore very little new in the book. It is, however, very useful to have up to date comparative opinions from these experts which cover the indications and value of various operations, some of which have only become established in recent years.

The standard operative techniques of arthrodesis, arthroplasty and ulnar head excision (Darrach's procedure) are discussed in detail alongside more recent techniques, such as limited wrist fusion, which are applicable to earlier disease.

There are numerous tables and black and white illustrations. These are of X-rays and some have reproduced badly.

Each chapter is followed by a useful reference list and there is a concise index. This is not a cheap book (costing roughly 50p per page) and although it will be valuable for the specialist, I doubt it will sell many individual copies. It will be a useful reference on the library shelves and the reviewer is certainly pleased to keep his copy.

P. J. SYKES

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