

High achievers

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When Alf Nachemson (1931–2006) was co-editor of *Spine*, he secured financial support from the Volvo Corporation and created the ‘Volvo Award for Back Pain Research’. There were three awards: basic science, bioengineering science and clinical science. These awards were recognized by most of us as the most prestigious in our field. The winners presented their paper at the annual meeting of the International Society for the Study of the Lumbar Spine (ISSLS) and were subsequently published by *Spine*, the traditional partner of the ISSLS.

When after 20 years Volvo stopped financing the award, various generous subsequent sponsors were found to keep the tradition alive, and the awards program was re-named to be the ‘ISSLS Prize’.

Recently, with changes in the landscape of the relationships between the industry and the medical world, there were no takers anymore and the prestigious prize was about to disappear.

Luckily, the Editors of the *European Spine Journal* are in a position where 60,000 US\$ can be offered on a yearly basis to the ISSLS, so that the prizes can be awarded as customary, 20,000 US\$ each. Whereas the privileged relationship between the ISSLS and *Spine* remains

unchanged, the award-winning papers will now be published in the *European Spine Journal*.

The selection of the prize-winning paper in each category is made by an ad hoc committee of the ISSLS under the chairmanship of Bjorn Rydevik and supplemented by a panel of independent reviewers from both *Spine* and the *European Spine Journal*. For details regarding the practicalities, one can find all the relevant information on <http://www.issls.org>.

As the *European Spine Journal* has its own awards, namely the Max Aebi Award and the Grammer Award, and as it also traditionally publishes the EuroSpine Full Paper Award, it felt logical to bring all the award-winning papers together in one single issue of the *European Spine Journal*. The very one you are holding now. Traditionally the *European Spine Journal* also publishes the Georg Schmorl Prize winning paper given by the Deutsche Wirbelsäulengesellschaft.

We look forward to these yearly issues bringing state-of-the-art research in the field of spine sciences. Congratulations to all the winners!

Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest None.

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