



Lessons to Be Learned From Our Combat Surgeons

The *Journal of Surgical Orthopaedic Advances* (JSOA) is pleased to present this special emphasis issue on trauma. It highlights and details the experiences of our military surgeons in the recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, there is an article about the challenge of treating a natural disaster in Haiti and the role of external fixation in lower extremity fracture care.

Three years ago at the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons meeting, it became apparent that there was significant value in providing a format for our military surgeons to present their experience in the peer-reviewed medical literature. After discussions among leaders of the Society of Military Orthopaedic Surgeons (SOMOS¹), DT MedSurg, LLC (a Data Trace Company²), and the Board of the Southern Orthopaedic Association,³ a series of special emphasis issues within the *Journal of Surgical Orthopaedic Advances* was envisioned. Educational support provided by Stryker has allowed this project to reach fruition. As part our mission, the JSOA, Stryker,⁴ and Data Trace are committed to the Disaster Preparedness and Trauma Care Toolbox initiative, which includes these special emphasis issues of the Journal, a quarterly newsletter, online information and syllabus in *Wheeless' Textbook of Orthopaedic Surgery*,⁵ and an interactive blog.⁶

The following feature and primary articles are presented for the edification of our readers and to stand as an archive of experience of our military surgeons in caring for our wounded warriors in austere and foreign environments. The tragic injuries inflicted on both our soldiers and the indigenous population of Afghanistan and Iraq are chronicled, in part, in many of these articles and the incredible proficiency of our combat surgeons is documented. Included among these articles is a discussion ("External Fixation and Temporary Stabilization of Femoral and Tibial Trauma") of the importance of the availability of portable, self-contained, sterile external fixation military field packs and the role of external fixation as a temporizing measure in the management of long bone injuries in an austere and/or battlefield environment.

Through the treatment algorithms designed and refined by the dedication of our military surgeons, countless lives and limbs have been and will be saved. It is with great pleasure that the *Journal of Surgical Orthopaedic Advances* dedicates this issue to our valiant combat surgeons, the warriors they treated, and the civilian casualties of these tragic conflicts.

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Editor

¹ www.SOMOS.org

² www.DataTrace.com

³ www.soa-assn.org

⁴ www.Stryker.com/trauma

⁵ www.Wheelessonline.com

⁶ www.Disaster-Rx.com