

Muscle and Motility

Volume 2

Proceedings of the XIXth European Conference in Brussels

Edited by

G. MARÉCHAL AND U. CARRARO

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Preface

Twenty years have passed since Prof. Hamoir organized the first Meeting of European Muscle scientists in Liège (Belgium); there the European Muscle Club was informally founded as a genuinely friendly and interactive research association. The Club has since grown into the European Conference on Muscle and Motility, which, over the years, has covered all major achievements in research on striated muscle, smooth muscle and cell motility.

This year the XIXth Conference was held in Brussels from September 10 to 13th. The conference programme was mainly devoted to muscle physiology, although cell biology of myogenesis was well represented, with many outstanding contributions to the field of muscle development and regeneration; equally largely present were molecular approaches, as in the sessions on 'New muscle proteins and their possible function' or 'Genetics and structure of myosins and actins'. As usual, under the light hand of Marcus Schaub, the background of the Local Organizer appeared, without overwhelming the interests of other Muscle Club members.

The excellence of the speakers made the conference up to date and interesting even to non-subspecialists, a rare event in these days of femto-specialization. A pinch of perspectives in Applied Myology attracted physicians and surgeons to the conference. It is a really exciting fact that less than ten years after Dirk Pette edited *Muscle Plasticity* (one of the best editorial products of European muscle research), this basic concept is close to being implemented as essential in biochemical devices, inspiring major breakthroughs in the clinical management of heart diseases, just as successful as the cardiac pacemaker. The rapid development of clinical applications and the accumulation of new results in experimental research were reasons for inviting outstanding specialists in basic research in this field and in that of cellular therapies of muscle dystrophies.

The success of the conference was guaranteed by the contribution of all participants. Thanks are due to all who came to Brussels and contributed to such a friendly and constructive atmosphere.

The XVIIth Conference held in Padova in 1988 also met with great success and the book published then by U. Cararro was named '*Sarcomeric and Non-sarcomeric Muscles: Basic and Applied Research Prospects for the 90s*' (Unipress, Padova). The success of this book prompted us to propose to our colleagues a successor, which, accordingly, has been referred to as 'Volume 2'. Some of the papers presented at the conference and some additional relevant material is published in these Proceedings. This was made possible by funds

granted to cover the publishing expenses of the papers presented by workers from Eastern Europe. We thank here the Belgian Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique and Unipress Padova. It has been the aim of the editors to avoid long delays and to publish the proceedings within six months of the conference. All authors, who handed in manuscripts in time and made the plan feasible, are warmly acknowledged. We are most indebted to all the contributors who represent those in the front line of muscle research in both the most traditional and the very young but exciting new fields. The papers have been reviewed by several of our colleagues during and after the Conference. We want to pay special homage to our colleague, Dr Anne Godfraind-De Becker who checked all the manuscripts and made many important suggestions and improvements. However good the help of these colleagues, the final acceptance and editing of the papers published in this book remain our responsibility.

Dr A. Berquin, Mrs G. Beckers-Bleukx and all the collaborators of the Local Organizer are to be acknowledged by all participants for the valuable help they gave in organizing the XIXth European Conference on Muscle and Motility, which provided the foundation for compiling this book. Thanks are due for her very efficient secretarial assistance to Mrs A. Mollet.

It is our hope that this book will summarize and further stimulate research in free, basic biological science and in object-oriented, applied medical knowledge, so that both of them ultimately will bring benefit to many of the patients with disorders of sarcomeric and non-sarcomeric muscles.

Georges Maréchal
Local Organizer and Editor

Ugo Carraro
Co-editor

Contributors

- ACHAZI R. K., *Institut für Tierphysiologie, Freie Universität Berlin, Grunewaldstrasse 34, D-1000 Berlin 41, Germany.*
- ARPESELLA G., *Chirurgia del Cuore e dei Grossi Vasi, University of Bologna, Italy.*
- ASMUSSEN G., *Carl-Ludwig-Institute of Physiology, University of Leipzig, Liebigstrasse 27, 7010 Leipzig, Germany.*
- AUGIER N., *Pathologie Moléculaire du muscle, INSERM U300, Faculté de Pharmacie, Avenue Charles Flahault, 34060, Montpellier, Cedex, France.*
- AZAN G., *Department of Neurology, University of Pavia, Forlanini 16, 27100 Pavia, Italy.*
- BAKSH S., *Department of Anatomy, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1A8.*
- BALLOCCI E., *Istituto di Anatomia degli Animali Domestici con Istologia ed Embriologia, Via Celoria, 10-20133 Milano, Italy.*
- BECKERS-BLEUKX G., *Department of Physiology, Catholic University of Louvain, 5540, 1200 Brussels, Belgium.*
- BEINBRECH G., *University of Münster, Zoological Institute, Hindenburgplatz 55, D-4400 Münster, Germany.*
- BELLUCO S., *CNR Unit for Muscle Biology and Physiopathology, Institute of General Pathology, University of Padova.*
- BELOUSOVA L. V., *A.V. Shubnikov Institute of Crystallography, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow, U.S.S.R.*
- BENNETT P., *MRC Cell Biophysics Unit, 26-29 Drury Lane, London WC2B 5RC, U.K.*
- BENYAMIN Y., *UPR 8402 (CNRS)-U 249 (INSERM)-EPHE, Montpellier Université I CRBM (CNRS), BP 5051-34033 Montpellier Cedex, France.*
- BERQUIN A., *Department of Physiology, UCL 5528, 1200 Brussels, Belgium.*

- BERSHITSKY S. Y., *Department of Biophysics, Institute of Physiology, Urals Branch of Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., Popova 30 Sverdlovsk 620014, U.S.S.R.*
- BLANGÉ T., *Department of Physiology, University of Amsterdam, Meibergdreef 15, 1105 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- BLESSE N., *Kerckhoff-Clinic, Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, Benekestrasse 2, 6350 Bad Nauheim, Germany.*
- BLYAKHMAN A., *Department of Biophysics, Institute of Physiology, Ural's Branch of Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., Sverdlovsk, U.S.S.R.*
- BOROVIKOV YU. S., *Group of Cell Motility, Institute of Cytology, Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., 194064 Leningrad, Tikhoretskii str.4, U.S.S.R.*
- BRAND T., *Kerckhoff-Clinic, Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, Benekestrasse 2, 6350 Bad Nauheim, Germany.*
- BREDMAN J. J., *Department of Anatomy and Embryology, University of Amsterdam, Meibergdreef 15, 1105 AZ, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- BREUER E. M., *Institute for Veterinary Pathology Freie Universität Berlin, Strasse 518, Nx15, 1000 Berlin 37, Germany.*
- BUKATINA A. E., *Institute of Biological Physics, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Pushchino, Moscow region 142292, U.S.S.R.*
- BURNS K., *Department of Anatomy, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1A8.*
- BUTLER-BROWNE G. S., *INSERM U262, Clinique Universitaire Baudelocque, 123 Bd Port-Royal, 75674 Paris, Cedex 14, France.*
- CARRARO U., *CNR Unit for Muscle Biology and Physiopathology, Institute of General Pathology, University of Padova, Italy.*
- CARTMILL T., *Department of Paediatric Surgery, Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children, Camperdown, U.K.*
- CATANI C., *Institute of General Pathology, Via Trieste 75, University of Padova, I-35100 Padova, Italy.*
- CAVAGNA G. A., *Istituto di Fisiologia Umana I, Università degli studi di Milano, Via Mangiagalli 32, 20133, Milano, Italy.*
- CHANG V., *National Heart Transplantation Program, St. Vincent's Hospital, Darlinghurst, Australia.*
- CHASE P. B., *Department of Radiology, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195, U.S.A.*
- CHINET A., *Faculty of Medicine CMU, 1 rue St Michel-Servet, 1211 Geneva 4, Switzerland.*

- CIRILLO M., *Chirurgia del Cuore e dei Grossi Vasi, University of Bologna, Italy.*
- COULIC V. P., *P. Lumumba, Peoples' Friendship University, Moscow 117198, U.S.S.R.*
- CUMMING D. V. E., *Department of Cardiac Surgery, National Heart and Lung Institute and the Royal Veterinary College, London, U.K.*
- DAHMS S., *Molecular Biology Institute and Rees-Stealy Research Foundation, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA 92182, U.S.A.*
- DALLA LIBERA L., *CNR Unit for Muscle biology and Physiopathology, Institute of General Pathology, University of Padova, Italy.*
- DANG D. C., *INSERM U262, Clinique Universitaire Baudelocque, 123 Bd Port-Royal, 75674 Paris, Cedex 14, France.*
- DANIELI-BETTO D., *Institute of General Pathology, Via Trieste 75, University of Padova, I-35100 Padova, Italy.*
- DE BEER E., *Department of Medical Physiology, University of Utrecht, Vondellaan 24, NL 3521 GG, Utrecht, The Netherlands.*
- DECROUY A., *Faculty of Medicine CMU, 1 rue St Michel-Servet, 1211 Geneva 4, Switzerland.*
- DHOOT G. K., *The Royal Veterinary and University College, University of London, U.K.*
- DOS REMEDIOS C., *Muscle Research Unit, Department of Anatomy, The University of Sydney, Australia.*
- DUNN M. J., *Department of Cardiac Surgery, National Heart and Lung Institute and the Royal Veterinary College, London, U.K.*
- ELZINGA G., *Laboratory for Physiology, Free University, van der Boechorststraat 7, 1081 BT Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- FEDOSOV S. N., *A.V. Shubnikov Institute of Crystallography, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow, U.S.S.R.*
- FUCHI T., *Departments of Physiology III and Pharmacology, Karolinska Institutet, Box 5626, S-114 86, Stockholm, Sweden.*
- GAUNITZ U., *Carl-Ludwig-Institute of Physiology, University of Leipzig, Liebigstrasse 27, 7010 Leipzig, Germany.*
- GERLACH G-F., *Unit of Molecular and Cellular Biology, The Royal Veterinary College, London University, London NW1 0TU, U.K.*
- GOLDSPINK G., *Unit of Molecular and Cellular Biology, The Royal Veterinary College, London University, London NW1 0TU, U.K.*
- GROUND S. M. D., *University Department of Pathology, Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre, Nedlands, Western Australia, 6009.*

- GRUNDEMAN R., *Department of Medical Physiology, University of Utrecht, Vondellaan 24, NL 3521 GG, Utrecht, The Netherlands.*
- GUBA F., *Department of Biochemistry, A. Szent-Györgyi Medical University, 6701 Szeged, P.O. Box 415, Hungary.*
- GUNNING P., *Muscle Genetics Unit, Children's Medical Research Foundation, University of Sydney, Australia.*
- HARRY J. D., *Istituto di Fisiologia Umana I, Università degli studi di Milano, Via Mangiagalli 32, 20133, Milano, Italy.*
- HASSELBAINK H. D. J., *Department of Anatomy and Embryology, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- HAUCK R., *Institut für Tierphysiologie, Freie universität Berlin, Grunewaldstrasse 34, D-1000 Berlin 41, Germany.*
- HEGLUND N. C., *Istituto di Fisiologia Umana I, Università degli studi di Milano, Via Mangiagalli 32, 20133, Milano, Italy.*
- HEILIG R., *Laboratoire de Génétique Moléculaire des Eucaryotes du CNRS, INSERM U184, 11 rue Humann, 67085, Strasbourg, Cedex, France.*
- HELLWIG G., *Institut für Tierphysiologie, Freie universität Berlin, Grunewaldstrasse 34, D-1000 Berlin 41, Germany.*
- HENRIKSSON J., *Departments of Physiology III and Pharmacology, Karolinska Institutet, Box 5626, S-114 86, Stockholm, Sweden.*
- HOUMEIDA A., *UPR 8402 (CNRS)-U 249 (INSERM)-EPHE, Montpellier Université I CRBM (CNRS), BP 5051-34033 Montpellier Cedex, France.*
- HUBER P. A. J., *Institute of Pharmacology, University of Zürich, Gloriastrasse, 32, CH-8006 Zürich, Switzerland.*
- IZAKOV Ya. V., *Department of Biophysics, Institute of Physiology, Ural's Branch of Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., Sverdlovsk, U.S.S.R.*
- JACOBBER A., *Institute of Pharmacology, University of Zürich, Gloriastrasse, 32, CH-8006 Zürich, Switzerland.*
- JAENICKE, TH., *Unit of Molecular and Cellular Biology, The Royal Veterinary College, London University, London NW1 OTU, U.K.*
- JAKUBIEC-PUKA A., *Laboratory of Protein Metabolism, Nencki Institute of Experimental Biology, 02-093 Warszawa, ul. Pasteura 3, Poland.*
- JUNG D. W. G., *Department of Physiology, University of Amsterdam, Meibergdreef 15, 1105 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- KATSNELSON L. B., *Department of Biophysics, Institute of Physiology, Ural's Branch of Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., Sverdlovsk, U.S.S.R.*
- KHVOROV N. V., *A.N. Bach Institute of Biochemistry, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Leninsky prospect 33, Moscow 117071, U.S.S.R.*

- KOHAMA K., *Department of Pharmacology, Gunma University School of Medicine, Maebashi, Gunma 371, Japan.*
- KÖSSLER F., *Central Institute of Occupational Medicine, Department of Work Physiology, Berlin 1134, Germany.*
- KÜCHLER G., *Central Institute of Occupational Medicine, Department of Work Physiology, Berlin 1134, Germany.*
- KUSHMERICK M. J., *Department of Physiology and Biophysic, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195, U.S.A.*
- LAMERS W. H., *Department of Anatomy and Embryology, University of Amsterdam, Meibergdreef 15, 1105 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- LANGE F., *Central Institute of Occupational Medicine, Department of Work Physiology, Berlin 1134, Germany.*
- LEBACQ J., *Department of Physiology, UCL 5528, 1200 Brussels, Belgium.*
- LÉGÉR J-J., *Pathologie Moléculaire du muscle, INSERM U300, Faculté de Pharmacie, Avenue Charles Flahault, 34060, Montpellier, Cedex, France.*
- LÉGÉR JOC., *Pathologie Moléculaire du muscle, INSERM U300, Faculté de Pharmacie, Avenue Charles Flahault, 34060, Montpellier, Cedex, France.*
- LEVITSKY D. I., *A.N. Bach Institute of Biochemistry, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Leninsky prospect 33, Moscow 117071, U.S.S.R.*
- LINSEL G., *Central Institute of Occupational Medicine, Department of Work Physiology, Berlin 1134, Germany.*
- LOUGHNA P., *Unit of Molecular and Cellular Biology, The Royal Veterinary College, London University, London NW1 OTU, U.K.*
- LU D.-X., *Institute of Anatomy, University of Zürich-Irchel, Winterthurerstrasse 190, CH-8057 Zürich, Switzerland.*
- MANUSSEN T., *Department of Biomedical Pharmacology, University of Utrecht, Vondellaan 24, NL 3521 GG, Utrecht, The Netherlands.*
- MARÉCHAL G., *Department of Physiology, Catholic University of Louvain 5540, 1200 Brussels, Belgium.*
- MARKHASIN V. S., *Department of Biophysics, Institute of Physiology, Ural's Branch of Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., Sverdlovsk, U.S.S.R.*
- MARSTON S. B., *Department of Cardiac Medicine, National Heart and Lung Institute, Devehouse Street, London SW3 6LY, U.K.*
- MARTINDALE J., *Unit of Molecular and Cellular Biology, The Royal Veterinary College, London University, London NW1 OTU, U.K.*
- MASCARELLO F., *Istituto di Anatomia degli Animali Domestici con Istologia ed Embriologia, Via Celoria, 10-20133 Milano, Italy.*

- MEDBØ J. I., *Department of Physiology, National Institute of Occupational Health, PO Box 8149 dep., N-0033-8149 Oslo 1, Norway.*
- MEGIGHIAN A., *Institute of General Pathology, Via Trieste 75, University of Padova, I-35100 Padova, Italy.*
- MEYER H. E., *University of Bochum, Institute of Physiology and Chemistry I, Univ.-Str.150, D-463 Bochum, Germany.*
- MICHALAK M., *Department of Anatomy, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1A8.*
- MIDRIO M., *Institute of General Pathology, Via Trieste 75, University of Padova, I-35100 Padova, Italy.*
- MIJNDERS T. A., *Department of Anatomy and Embryology, University of Amsterdam, Meibergdreef 15, 1105 AZ, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- MIKUS P., *Chirurgia del Cuore e dei Grossi Vasi, University of Bologna, Italy.*
- MILNER R. E., *Department of Anatomy, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1A8.*
- MIRACOLI G., *Sorin Biomedica, Cardiovascular Division, Saluggia, Italy.*
- MOENS P. D., *Department of Physiology, Catholic University of Louvain, 5540 B-1200 Brussels, Belgium.*
- MOMMAERTS W. F., H. M. *Max Planck Institute for Medical Research, Heidelberg, Germany.*
- MOORMAN A. F. M., *Department of Anatomy and Embryology, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- MORNET D., *Pathologie Moléculaire du muscle, INSERM U300, Faculté de Pharmacie, Avenue Charles Flahault, 34060, Montpellier, Cedex, France.*
- MUNKEL B., *Kerckhoff-Clinic, Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, Benekestrasse 2, 6350 bad Nauheim, Germany.*
- MÜNTENER M., *Institute of Anatomy, University of Zürich-Irchel, Winterthurerstrasse 190, CH-8057 Zürich, Switzerland.*
- NAKAMURA T., *Department of Othopedic Surgery, University of Occupational and Environmental Health, I-1 Logaoka, Yawatanishi-ku, Kitakyusyu City, 807 Japan.*
- O'BRIEN G. A., *Department of Cardiac Surgery, National Heart and Lung Institute and the Royal Veterinary College, London, U.K.*
- OOSTHOEK P. W., *Department of Anatomy and Embryology, University of Amsterdam, Meibergdreef 15, 1105 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- OPAS M., *Department of Anatomy, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1A8.*

- ORLOVA E. V., *A.V. Shubnikov Institute of Crystallography, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow, U.S.S.R.*
- OSHIDA Y., *Departments of Physiology III and Pharmacology, Karolinska Institutet, Box 5626, S-114 86, Stockholm, Sweden.*
- PAPP Z., *Department of Physiology, University, Medical School of Debrecen, PO Box 22, Debrecen, H4012 Hungary.*
- PARLAPIANO M., *Chirurgia del Cuore e dei Grossi Vasi, University of Bologna, Italy.*
- PASSERINI L., *Istituto di Fisiologia Umana, Università degli Studi di Milano, Via Mangiogalli 32, 20133 Milano, Italy.*
- PATTISON C. W., *Department of Cardiac Surgery, National Heart and Lung Institute and the Royal Veterinary College, London, U.K.*
- PEDROSA F., *Department of Anatomy, University of Umea, 5-901 87 Umea, Sweden.*
- PERMYAKOV E. A., *Institute of Biological Physics, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Pushchino, Moscow region 142292, U.S.S.R.*
- PIERANGELI A., *Chirurgia del Cuore e dei Grossi Vasi, University of Bologna, Italy.*
- POGGI P., *Institute of Histology, University of Pavia, Via Forlanini 16, 27100 Pavia, Italy.*
- POGLAZOV B. F., *A.N. Bach Institute of Biochemistry, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Leninsky prospect 33, Moscow 117071, U.S.S.R.*
- PONS F., *Pathologie Générale, Faculté de Médecine, Place Henri IV, 34000, Montpellier, France.*
- PRITCHARD K., *Cardiac Medicine Department, National Heart and Lung Institute, Dovehouse Street, London SW3 6LY, U.K.*
- RANATUNGA K. W., *Department of Physiology, Medical School, Bristol BS81TD, U.K.*
- REDWOOD C., *Department of Cardiac Medicine, National Heart and Lung Institute, Dovehouse Street, London SW3 6LY, U.K.*
- RINDERKNECHT D., *Institute of Anatomy, University of Zürich-Irchel, Winterthurerstrasse 190, CH-8057 Zürich, Switzerland.*
- RIZZI C., *CNR Unit for Muscle biology and Physiopathology, Institute of General Pathology, University of Padova.*
- ROHÁN J., *Department of Biochemistry, A. Szent-Györgyi Medical University, 6701 Szeged, P.O. Box 415, Hungary.*
- ROMANENKO A., *A.V. Palladin Institute of Biochemistry Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR, 252030, Kiev, Leontovich str.9, U.S.S.R.*

- ROSDAHL H., *Departments of Physiology III and Pharmacology, Karolinska Institutet, Box 5626, S-114 86, Stockholm, Sweden.*
- ROUSTANT C., *UPR 8402 (CNRS)-U 249 (INSERM)-EPHE, Montpellier Université I CRBM (CNRS), BP 5051-34033 Montpellier Cedex, France.*
- ROWLERSON A., *Department of Physiology, UMDS, St. Thoma's Hospital, Lambeth Palace Road, SE1 7EH London, U.K.*
- RUPP-DAHLEM M., *Institut für Tierphysiologie, Freie Universität Berlin, Grunewaldstrasse 34, D-1000 Berlin 41, Germany.*
- SAILER M., *Institut für Tierphysiologie, Freie Universität Berlin, Grunewaldstrasse 34, D-1000 Berlin 41, Germany.*
- SALVATORI S., *C.N.R. - Centre per lo Studio della Biologia e Fisiopatologia Muscolare, cio Istituto di Patologia generale, Università di Padova, 35121-Padova, Italy.*
- SCELSI R., *Department of Human Pathology, Institute of Histology, University of Pavia, Via Forlanini 16, 27100 Pavia, Italy.*
- SCHAPER W., *Max-Planck Institute, Department of Experimental Cardiology, 6350 Bad Nauheim, Germany.*
- SCHAPER J., *Kerckhoff-Clinic, Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, Benekestrasse 2, 6350 Bad Nauheim, Germany.*
- SCHAUB M. C., *Institute of Pharmacology, University of Zürich, Gloriastrasse, 32, CH-8006 Zürich, Switzerland.*
- SCUTT A., *Unit of Molecular and Cellular Biology, The Royal Veterinary College, London University, London NW1 OTU, U.K.*
- SENNI M., *Chirurgia del Cuore e dei Grossi Vasi, University of Bologna, Italy.*
- SHARMA H. S., *Kerckhoff-Clinic, Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, Benekestrasse 2, 6350 Bad Nauheim, Germany.*
- SHIERECK P., *Biomedical Pharmacology, University of Utrecht, Vondellaan 24 NL3521GG Utrecht, The Netherlands.*
- SHNYROV V. L., *Institute of Biological Physics, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Pushchino, Moscow region 142292, U.S.S.R.*
- SOFFERS C. A. S., *Department of Anatomy and Embryology, University of Amsterdam, Meibergdreef 15, 1105 AZ, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- SOHÁR I., *Department of Biochemistry, A. Szent-Györgyi Medical University, 6701 Szeged, P.O. Box 415, Hungary.*
- SOUKUP T., *Institute of Physiology, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences 142 20 Prague, Czechoslovakia.*
- SOUSSI-YANICOSTAS N., *INSERM U262, Clinique Universitaire Baudelocque, 123 Bd Port-Royal, 75674 Paris, Cedex 14, France.*

- SPURWAY N. C., *Department of Physiology, University of Glasgow, Glasgow WG 128QQ, U.K.*
- STELMASCHUK V. J., *A.V. Shubnikov Institute of Crystallography, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow, U.S.S.R.*
- STIENEN G. J. M., *Laboratory for Physiology, Free University, van der Boechorststraat 7, 1081 BT Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- SZCZEPANOWSKA J., *Laboratory of Protein Metabolism, Nencki Institute of Experimental Biology, 02-093 Warsaw, Pasteur str.3, Poland.*
- TAKAGI M., *Department of Orthopedic Surgery, Saitama Medical Centre, 1981 Tsujido-cho, Kamodo, Kawagoe City, 350 Japan.*
- TAKANO-OHMURO H., *The Tokyo Metropolitan Institute of Medical Science, Honkomagome, 3-18-22, Bunkyo-Ku, Tokyo 113, Japan.*
- THORNELL L-E., *Department of Anatomy, University of Umea, 5-901 87 Umea, Sweden.*
- TRAHAIR T., *Muscle Research Unit, Department of Anatomy, The University of Sydney, Australia.*
- TSATURYAN A. K., *Institute of Mechanics.M.V. Lomonosov State University, Leninsky Gory, Moscow 117234, U.S.S.R.*
- TSUZUKI N., *Department of Pharmacology, Gunma University, School of Medecine, 3-39-22, Showa-machi, Maebashi City, 371 Japan.*
- UNGERSTEDT U., *Departments of Physiology III and Pharmacology, Karolinska Institutet, Box 5626, S-114 86, Stockholm, Sweden.*
- van der BENT V., *University Departments of Physiology, Faculty of Sciences, 1 rue St Michel-Servet, 1211 Geneva 4, Switzerland.*
- VAN BUUREN K., *Biomedical Pharmacology, University of Utrecht, Vondellaan 24 NL3521GG Utrecht, The Netherlands.*
- VAN KEMPEN M. J. A., *Department of Anatomy and Embryology, University of Amsterdam, Meibergdreef 15, 1105 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- VEDENKINA N. S., *Institute of Biological Physics, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Pushchino, Moscow region 142292, U.S.S.R.*
- VERMEULEN J. L. M., *Department of Anatomy and Embryology, University of Amsterdam, Meibergdreef 15, 1105 AZ, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- VERSTEEG P. G. A., *Laboratory for Physiology, Free University, van der Boechorststraat 7, 1081 BT Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- VOGTMANN M., *Carl-Ludwig-Institute of Physiology, University of Leipzig, Liebigstrasse 27, 7010 Leipzig, Germany.*
- VOSBERG H. P., *Max Planck Institute for Medical Research, Heidelberg, Germany.*

- VRBOVÁ G., *The Royal Veterinary and University College, University of London, U.K.*
- WEIJS, *University of Amsterdam, Meiberdreef 15; 1105 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- WENINK A. C. G., *Department of Anatomy and Embryology, University of Leiden, The Netherlands.*
- WESSELS A., *Department of Anatomy and Embryology, University of Amsterdam, Meibergdreef 15, 1105 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- WILLIAMSON H. A., *Department of Cardiac Surgery, National Heart and Lung Institute and the Royal Veterinary College, London, U.K.*
- WOUTER H., *Department of Anatomy and Embryology, University of Amsterdam, Meibergdreef 15, 1105 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands.*
- YACOB M. H., *Department of Cardiac Surgery, National Heart and Lung Institute and the Royal Veterinary College, London, U.K.*
- YAZAKI P., *Molecular Biology Institute and Rees-Stealy Research Foundation, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA 92182, U.S.A.*
- YEOH T., *Muscle Research Unit, Department of Anatomy, The University of Sydney, Australia.*
- ZAWADOWSKA B., *Institute of Anatomy, University of Zürich-Irchel, Winterthurerstrasse 190, 8057 Zürich, Switzerland.*
- ZIEGLER C., *University of Bochum, Institute of Physiology and Chemistry I, Univ.-Str.150, D-463 Bochum, Germany.*

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