

## Preface



Paul Cooper, MD  
*Guest Editor*

External fixation, once relegated to open fractures and tibial osteomyelitis, has undergone a rapid evolution over the past decade. Nowhere has this become more appreciated than in lower limb salvage for periarticular trauma, deformity correction, osteomyelitis, and fracture nonunions. Most recently, applications in the management of the diabetic foot have been described. External fixation has been effective in treating Charcot deformities, associated osteomyelitis, and wound healing. This has now become a powerful adjunct in the limb salvage community, where amputation in many cases had been the only option in the past.

This issue of the *Foot and Ankle Clinics of North America* focuses on the preoperative planning and technical considerations involved in limb salvage of complex foot and ankle disorders. Recognized leaders in external fixation and limb salvage discuss the unique aspects of approaching difficult conditions such as pilon malunion and nonunions, Charcot stabilization, osteomyelitis, and arthrodesis. Preoperative planning for both conventional and spatial frame fixator types is detailed in several articles. It is hoped that

this issue will serve to provide a foundation for those involved in the challenging but rewarding area of lower limb salvage.

Paul Cooper, MD  
*Foot and Ankle Center*  
*3800 Reservoir Road NW, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor*  
*Washington, DC 20007, USA*  
*E-mail address: [pcoope@mac.com](mailto:pcoope@mac.com)*