Full speed ahead into our second period

This issue begins what may be called the second period in the existence of Annals of Oncology. At the end of last year our initial seven-year contract with Kluwer Academic Publishers expired, and a new one covering the next five years was concluded. The journal remains a joint venture of the ESMO and Kluwer, but because of the success of the enterprise, the financial terms for our society have been steadily improving.

In 1996, more papers were submitted to the Journal than ever before—more than 500—and their overall quality had also risen. This is the main reason why, despite an even tougher review process, our acceptance rate also increased—to approximately 30%. Annals of Oncology is one of the few oncology journals whose subscriber lists continue to expand, even in this period of financial constraint on most libraries.

More important, however, are the innovations which distinguish the beginning of this second period. The most obvious one is the new cover page, conceived to be more user-friendly than the old one. And from now on the journal will be a monthly, appearing 12 times a year rather than only 10, as in the past. This will enable more rapid publication of the most significant papers, which will now be published within 10–12 weeks after submission.

We also plan a much more active role for our Spanish edition, circulation of which begins about three months after the mailing of the regular English edition. Currently restricted to Spain, distribution throughout South America will begin in the near future. We are also preparing to 'go electronic', effective at the latest within two years, while the contents of Annals can already be found on the Internet.

Thus, we can only feel gratified at what Annals has achieved so far. One hope remains: that we can continue to count on your cooperation and contributions.

F. Cavalli
Editor-in-Chief