

# Letters to Editor

Dear Sir,

With considerable interest, I read the article in the November issue of the Journal (Crow & Ash, 1996), describing the 'hands free' method for the accurate placement and bonding of a multistrand wire splint.

The identical method was described and published by us 12 years ago (Becker & Goulttschin, 1984), in a widely-read orthodontic journal. We subsequently published a follow-up study in another well-known orthodontic journal (Becker, 1987), evaluating the efficacy of this method. In order for it to reach a wider readership, the publisher of that journal had it translated and re-published in the Italian edition of yet another popular professional journal (Becke, 1987). Incidentally, the latter article described a second method which allows the placement and bonding of the splint, while the fixed appliance is still in place.

These two methods have been taught for many years at our Dental School, from approximately 7 years prior to their publication and they have been eminently successful and in ongoing use in Israel and elsewhere. We have found them to be particularly relevant for longterm and permanent retention in orthodontic cases and of enormous value in the more advanced periodontal cases, where drifted teeth have been re-sited.

While it is pleasant and even complementary to see others inventing the wheel all over again, it would not seem unreasonable to expect authors and journal reviewers to have made at least an elementary literature search of a subject, before proceeding to publication.

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## References

**Becker, A. (1987)**

Periodontal splinting with multistrand wire following orthodontic realignment of migratedteeth: report of 38 cases.

*International Journal of Adult Orthodontics and Orthognathic Surgery*, **2**, 99–109.

**Becker, A. (1987)**

Splintaggio parodontale con filo a piu trefoli in seguito ad allineamento ortodontico do denti soggetti a migrazione: relazione su 38 casi.

*Quintessence International*, **3**, 837–848.

**Becker, A. and Goulttschin, J. (1984)**

The multistrand retainer and splint.  
*American Journal of Orthodontics*, **85**, 470–474.

**Crow, V. and Ash, S. P. (1996)**

Bonded retainers 'hands free',  
*British Journal of Orthodontics*, **23**, 313–314.

Dear Sir,

We would wish to acknowledge Professor Becker's 'splint' (Becker 1984) however the two approaches could not be considered 'identical'. Becker and Goulttschin (1984) continued their wire retainer from the lingual aspect onto the labial surface and only embedded the labial portion of the wire in cold cure acrylic. Our design differs in that the acrylic extends onto the occlusal surface of the incisors and canines and passes from the occlusal of the premolars to the lingual aspect. The increase in area of contact provides the carrier with positive location on the teeth so that it is self retaining, hence the title, 'Hands Free' and it is this advantage we emphasised in the paper. This design is also rigid and unlike the 'splint', which only contacts the labial surface, will not easily distort, so that the wire retainer is precisely positioned. As stated, our technique allows the carrier to be used with a fixed appliance in position and therefore does away with the additional and time consuming 'heavy wire' connecting the two posterior acrylic sections that Professor Becker describes in his 1987 paper on periodontal splinting.

The technique is not purported to be 'new' and we would not wish to claim originality for the idea. The method is a modification of many that have been described in the literature. The paper offered technique advice and so did not intend to exhaust ALL references.

We would like to thank Professor Becker for bringing his designs to our attention and duly acknowledge his earlier contributions.

VICTOR CROW,

Senior Registrar Royal London Hospital.

SIMON ASH,

Consultant in Orthodontics,  
Whipps Cross Hospital.

Dear Sir,

I have recently commenced a Career Registrar position in Orthodontics based in Exeter and use a considerable amount of Kodachrome colour slide film during the course of my clinical work. The films are returned from the developers by post in rigid plastic boxes to users and most orthodontists then file them in plastic slide holders to facilitate storage in filing cabinets. As a result of this system the vast majority of these plastic boxes are redundant although perfectly undamaged.

It therefore occurred to me that these boxes could easily be recycled or reused and I contacted Kodak processing head office to find out if any recycling system was in operation. I enclose a copy of their response. They are very happy to reuse the boxes and equally happy to pay for return postage for these boxes. They have provided some flat packed cardboard boxes with prepaid postage to return the plastic boxes to head office for reuse.

In these times of increasing environmental awareness I

hope this facility will be of interest to other orthodontists especially considering the vast amount of film used by the profession.

NICOLA JOHNSON BDS FDS RCS (ENG)  
Registrar in Orthodontics

Dear Ms Johnson

Thank you for your recent letter with reference to the boxes Kodachrome slides are supplied in.

We would be very happy to re-use the boxes, however, most of our Customers use them to store their slides in and as a result, few of our Customers show little interest in recycling.

As I am sure you can appreciate, the distance between us makes a collection of difficult option. However, we would be more than happy to pay for the return postage of these boxes. Therefore, I have enclosed some flat packed boxes with pre-paid envelopes to attach for your use at your convenience.

In the meantime, I would like to thank you for your conscientious approach to this matter and if I can be of any further assistance in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

STEPHANIE MAYES  
Customer Service  
Kodak