Thirty Years after Paul Randall Harrington (September 27, 1911-November 29, 1980)

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November 29, 2010, is 30th death anniversary of Dr. Paul Randall Harrington (Fig. 1). Almost 100 years back Paul was born in September 27, 1911 and thereafter educated in the Kansas City school system. He is graduated from The University of Kansas School of Medicine in 1939. He obtained orthopaedics training at St Luke Hospital in 1942.

Fig. 1. Paul Randall Harrington.

After World War II military service at the 77th Evacuation Hospital, Paul Harrington entered into practice in 1945, settling in Houston and Texas [1].

As a scientist, Paul is best known for the invention of dual distraction rod fixation device for spine that put the evolutionary landmark in the field of orthopaedics. Initially Paul designed distraction rod system for correction of the scoliosis deformity but later his instrumentation attained wide acceptance in the use for traumatic dorso-lumbar spine also. After 60 years of his invention we still are able to reciprocate magical results in fixation and deformity correction of spine (Fig. 2A and 2B).

During his chairmanship of the Scoliosis Research Society in 1972-1973 had been one of the eventful years in the Society's history. He delivered instructional course lectures on scoliosis correction almost every year. Over the course of his career, Paul published many papers and gave countless lectures [2-4]. He received numerous awards in recognition of his contributions.

Paul Randall Harrington will always be remembered for his enormous contribution to the orthopaedics.

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Fig. 2. Lateral radiograph shows fracture dislocation of D11 with severe kyphotic deformity along with fracture of superior end plate fixed with harrington dual distraction rod system. Post operatively radiograph revealed excellent correction of kyphosis and restoration of vertebral height. Reduction of end plate triangular fragment shows bio mechanical strength of fixation system.

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