Author's response to reviews

Title: Shoulder posture and median nerve sliding.

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Response to reviewers comments

Problem 1
The 3 subjects with additional measurements of protraction during imaging were part of the original group of 13. We have therefore combined the paragraphs into one. In the following paragraph relating to nerve bowing, good quality images could only be obtained from 4 subjects because of dense tissue overlying the nerve, which has now been explained in the text.

Problem 2
The preferred arm position of 90 degree abduction was used for measuring nerve movement during neck side flexion since this same position had been used in a previous study. This has allowed us to compare both sets of data. Furthermore, reliable nerve excursion values during neck side flexion can be more easily obtained with the arm at 90 degree abduction. This has now been explained in the text.

Problem 3
We have produced a figure (Fig 1) showing how the different measurements were made. Other figures have been renumbered.

Problem 4
The relationship between strain and blood flow in discussion. We think this must refer to the sentence "… that shoulder protraction may cause a neurovascular impingement…” in the first para of the section headed "Effects of protraction on the transmission of median nerve movement through the shoulder region". The reference was felt to be insufficient. We have added a recent review (Mackinnon and Novak, 2002) that makes the same point and also has further citations if readers are interested in pursuing them.

Problem 5
The last sentence in the conclusion has now been removed.