Reviewer's report

Title: The impact of rheumatoid arthritis on foot function in the early stages of disease: a clinical case series

Version: 3 Date: 13 November 2006

Reviewer: Karen Lohmann Siegel

Reviewer's report:

General

The authors have carefully addressed the prior comments and their response has eliminated earlier concerns. The text and diagrams in Fig 1 have clarified the variables and the sign conventions. It is now clear that the ground reaction force is expressed perpendicular to the plantar surface of the foot, so values below body weight are more understandable. The discussion nicely relates multiple variables to one another to propose a mechanism of foot dysfunction in early RA, and the new paragraph on study limitations is a nice addition to the section. This paper will make a valuable contribution to the literature.

There is only one very minor point that may need addressing. In the version of the manuscript that I printed for review, the toes were offset from the rest of the foot in panels 1A and 1C of Fig 1. If a consistent problem, this needs to be fixed prior to publication.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests