Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

I read with interest the article: 'Ex vivo accuracy of three electronic apex locators: Root ZX, Elements Diagnostic Unit and Apex Locator and ProPex' written by G. Plotino, N. M. Grande, L. Brigante, B. Lesti & F. Somma (International Endodontic Journal, 39, 408-414, 2006). According to my judgments the authors compared the accuracy of the three devices in an incorrect and misleading way. Reaching the 'apex' or the '0.0' zone in the 'Root ZX' and in the 'Elements Diagnostic Unit and Apex Locator' they had withdrawn the file to the '0.5' mark while in the 'ProPex' they failed to do so. I cannot understand the logic behind such comparison. Reading carefully the 'ProPex' manufacturer's instruction booklet. I did not find any recommendation regarding the ideal point to reach working length. The instructions describe how the display is divided into nine segments in the apical zone and demonstrate it with a figure (Fig. 1), but no recommendation is being made to which point one should restrict the treatment. By comparing only two of the three devices to the same point and the third device to a different point that is longer than the point of the two other devices, no wonder that the author found that the measurements of 'ProPex' were longer than the other two. The right way to compare the three devices was to withdraw the file to the '0.5' mark in the three units, which can easily be performed in the 'ProPex' too. Thus, the conclusions drawn by the authors are misleading and do not represent a true comparison.

I hope that my comment will be published in your Journal.

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Figure 1. Search for the Apex Median zone: Slowly introduce the file into the canal. In the pre-apical zone, ProPex indicates the progression of the file via two vertical arrows. A downward pointing arrow appears when the file descends into the canal, and a upward pointing arrow when the instrument is withdrawn. Pre-apical zone (approximately 2–3 mm before the apex): when the file reaches an area 2–3 mm from the apex, ProPex emits an audible tone (two tones). On the screen, two blinking horizontal arrows appear. Apical zone: The apical zone is divided into 10 segments graduated arbitrarily from 0.9 to 0.0 (apex) as visual information of file progression. In conjunction with the visual information, ProPex emits audible information of file progression via a series of progressive beeps. When the apex is reached, ProPex emits a solid tone. (Permission supplied for use.)

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