

# New BIR president encourages younger generation

■ **LONDON** — Fernando Duranti was surrounded by a swarm of well-wishers as he stepped down from the podium after giving his inaugural speech as president of the Bureau of International Recycling. Counting the handshakes as he edged his way towards the exit, one could not fail to conclude that he was an immensely popular choice.

"I was a bit emotioned by it," he said in fluent Italian-English, as he began to relax and reflect on a hectic four days of conference activities in Oslo. Duranti, the first Italian to be elected president, has become a well know face at BIR



**Fernando Duranti**

conferences. His first experience of a Bureau meeting was in Venice in 1972. His then manager had brought him along to meet the 300 or so scrap merchants who had congregated in the Italian city. Since then, he has missed only a handful of the Bureau's bi-annual conferences, which would go some way to explain why almost every one of the 600-plus delegates at last week's event had already met the man.

The years have not withered Duranti's enthusiasm for the Bureau and the organisation will benefit from his youthful zeal: departing president Barry Hunter described the role as "a full time job".

One of the new president's key aims is to encourage a new generation of scrap men and women to participate in the BIR. "Our future substitutes are the young generation. We have to do a lot to attract them," he said. The post-war boom years of the metals industry — and its subsequent decline — has restricted the possibilities for people under the age of 40.

"We have to teach and instruct them. They have to become curious about the industry," said Duranti, explaining the various initiatives the Bureau has started, such as organising exclusive field trips for its 'young traders group'.