

#### Newsletter

- **Breeding**
- **Lameness**
- **Stifle cysts**
- **Roaring in racehorses**



### BREEDING LAMENESS AND WIND PROBLEMS

Breeding season is now in full swing in South East Queensland and with a big proportion of thoroughbreds now in foal or waiting on their first pregnancy test, Frank and I are starting to spend more of our time on artificial breeding in other breeds. Although there are always a number of disappointments generally we feel we have had a good season so far with conception rates. Much of our breeding is work is done as out calls but with the artificial breeding it generally is more efficient and economic to leave the mares at Tias' farm Lona for a few

days at the critical time.

The diagnosis and management of lameness forms a big part of our practice. Every day we see cases of lameness and we enjoy the challenges of helping these horses perform the best they can.

Recently we have had cases of collateral ligament injuries of the coffin joint, stifle problems including cysts and meniscal injuries, suspensory ligament injuries as well as many cases arthritis of various joints.

Each of these cases is managed differently and we try to tailor treatments for each individual horse. For arthritic conditions for some time now we have been using a number of approaches including physical treatments which can include trimming and shoeing changes, systemic medications (orally and by injection), and sometime injections into the joints



Tiana with a lovely WB mare Jah Jah at Lona

themselves.

A new product on the market which we have started to use on a number of cases is Epitalis. We have for a few years been using 4cyte as our most commonly recommended oral joint product and when used in appropriate cases has had very good results. Its use has not been as widespread as it could have been because it has remained quite expensive, and also an occasional horse does not like the taste.

Epitalis is one of the components of 4cyte and is much more economic to use and comes in a gel form which most horses tolerate very well. It is early days yet for us to have personal experience in a good number of our own cases but the study results have been good and so far we have been happy to use it where we can't use 4cyte.

### Stifle cyst in a filly

This month we had a case of a thoroughbred 3yo filly. She had been broken in and went lame during her pre-training and sent home to Allora.

When we examined her she was 3/5 lame in one hind limb and had stifle joint effusion. Xrays taken showed a large stifle cyst.

Stifle cysts are most commonly seen in young fast growing breeds but can also be seen secondary to soft tissue injuries like meniscal problems. If

treated early usually by arthroscopic surgery good results can be had.

Unfortunately in this filly the cyst was very large and we felt there was a high change of secondary changes within the joint making surgery less appealing.

Therefore we recommended a period of small yard rest and retirement from her racing career. With rest her lameness has improved enough to enable her to start on her breed-

ing career.

Stifle cysts are a commonly seen condition and there are some new treatments being tried by some surgeons including the use of stem cells, IRAP and PRP during and after arthroscopic treatments. Tias has been watching the results of these treatments carefully and at this time feels there is no one best treatment for all cases so tries to select from the treatments available the best option for each individual case.



A large medial femoral condylar cyst was seen on x-rays of the stifle

# Roaring in Racehorses

Laryngeal paralysis or roaring is one of the more common problems which prevent racehorses finishing their races well. Often associated with a loud inspiratory noise it results from a nerve problem which effects the horse from holding its larynx open sufficiently to allow adequate airflow during hard exercise.

Laryngeal paralysis can range from mild which does not have any effect on performance to severe. The most common signs are noise in work and inability to finish well. Roaring can effect horses used for other disciplines but it is most significant in racehorses and eventers. In these disciplines having maximal ability to breathe is essential to success.

The diagnosis can be straight forward and usually involves endoscopy. Tias and Frank perform this procedure often and this is one of the more commonly diagnosed airway conditions. Sometimes diagnosis is much more difficult. There may be subtle loss of performance or the horse is not performing quite as well as expected. These can be difficult judgements for the trainer to make.



*An endoscopic image of a mild case at rest. On the left of the image the arytenoid cartilage is opening well but on the right, which is the horses left side the arytenoid cartilage is not opening properly. These milder cases often require dynamic scoping to diagnose whether this is a significant problem for the horse under heavy exercise.*

In some of these cases when endoscopy with the horse at rest is ambiguous we use “dynamic endoscopy”, that is taking a video of endoscopy of horses while they are exercising. We don’t have one of these dynamic scopes at Warwick Equine Vets, but fortunately Gold Coast Equine Clinic where Tias regularly operates has one. We have been able to diagnoses several cases of horses which did not have any abnormality with resting endoscopy which did have problems diagnosed with dynamic scoping to have significant airway collapse under heavy exercise.

Surgery, retirement or lower level exercise are the only options available for these horses once a diagnosis of roaring has been made. This surgery, while difficult and sometimes

associated with adverse complications can work well. We have had a quite a few cases which Tias has operated which have done very well recently.

One case is Bronco owned by John and Gay Harvey. Bronco has now won 4 out of his last 5 starts after having a laryngoplasty surgery for laryngeal paralysis. Lohnie Rocks, another Croyden Park horse had his first win recently after surgery for roaring.



Lohnie Rocks

Another exciting case recently has been Weinholt. The Basil Nolan and family owned gelding had been not quite finishing as well as expected for some time. Resting endoscopy on multiple occasions revealed no abnormality. However, on dynamic scoping it was apparent his larynx was collapsing at the very end of a hard gallop. Tias and his team operated him successfully at GCEC one Thursday and he has come back from his surgery well. Weinholt, trained by Peter Moody in Melbourne, won his last race in Geelong convincingly and will start again at Flemington on Melbourne Cup day.



Weinholt

It is one of the great rewards in our careers as vets to see horses we have helped go perform to their potential and we wish these and the many other cases we deal with all the best!

# Warwick Equine Veterinarians

## STAFF

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Our goal is to provide excellence in clinical service to all our equine patients.

A professional, compassionate and caring approach with good communication, and up to date services.

Excellence in Equine Veterinary Care

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