



#### Newsletter

- **Ulna fracture**
- **Hernias, rings and complications**
- **Gastric ulcers**

April has been a month of public holidays, which in our business brings quite a lot of problems. Horses get injured and sick at much the same rate regardless of holidays and so we have been struggling at times this month to get to everyone. Despite this it has been a great month for interesting and rewarding cases though.

We were lucky enough to have Andrew Hopgood help us a couple of days this month. Andrew is a local boy who went on to study vet, and is currently working in the UK. He spent some time with us as a school student many years ago and it is was great to see what an accomplished professional he has matured into.

We seem to always present in our newsletters successful outcomes therefore I thought we should have a reality check and describe a couple of cases this month that did not end so well. Always when taking on higher risk and complexity cases there is a risk of things going badly but sometimes it still is worth the attempt.

Such a case was that of an older mare in her late teens. It was about the time of the floods and the owners found her suddenly severely lame. The referring vets diagnosed an ulnar fracture. Interestingly this mare had suffered an ulnar fracture in this limb many years before. The concern was this was what we call a pathological fracture, that is one which occurs due to disease not trauma. These are always much more difficult to treat because there is an underlying process which has resulted in the fracture.



The fracture was repaired using a bone plate and screws. We were quite happy with the surgical repair we achieved. We attempted to perform what we call an assisted recovery, where we use ropes and people power to stabilise the horses during recovery. However, when she first attempted to stand she refractured the limb, this time the radius was fractured.



This case illustrates how hard it can be to get good results on occasion. Ulnar fractures are one of the fracture types in horses we can manage usually quite successfully, but sometimes even these go badly.

We have talked about umbilical hernias in these newsletters before. The methods of treatments vary, with surgery usually considered safest but elastrator rings still commonly used due to economics and convenience.

This next case was a foal which had been treated by another vet and practice for an umbilical hernia using elastrator rings.



This is an illustration from my files of an umbilical hernia which has been treated by rings. Mostly what happens is the inflammation created by ligating the skin and tissue beneath rings causes the defect in the abdominal wall to close.

In this foal the "stump" did fall off but the defect in the belly wall continued to get larger. A vet from a second practice eventually was asked to examine and treat this foal, but realised something much worse than a hernia was now occurring. What had happened was there was now a large amount of intestine in the sac outside the belly wall and this bowel had become compromised.

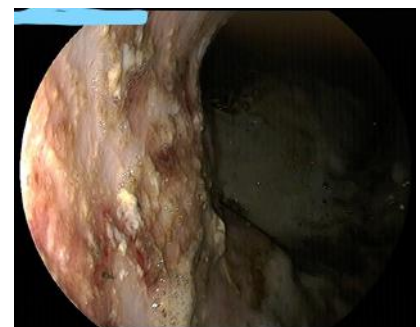
She immediately sent the foal into WEV for surgery. After a quick initial assessment and some treatment, we anaesthetised the foal and explored her abdomen surgically.



At surgery it quickly became apparent the trapped intestine had ruptured some hours previously. When there is this degree of contamination of the abdomen there is no chance for survival so euthanasia again was the only option.

Now for a case with a much better outcome. A filly had been in racing in Brisbane where she had been performing well below expectation. She had been on omeprazole, one of the available stomach ulcer medications. She was sent home to the stud for a spell and we could find no lameness or musculoskeletal problems which could explain her poor performance. We did note she had changed from being a good eater to a very picky eater.

We scoped her stomach and found a case of severe gastric ulceration.



This is a still of the video taken when she first came home to the stud. We suspect that when galloping there was enough pain from these severe ulcers being splashed and traumatised with stomach contents to significantly effect her performance.

See next page for the rest on this case.

# Warwick Equine Veterinarians

## STAFF

Tias Muurlink BVSc (Hons) FANZCVS Registered Specialist in Equine Surgery  
Caitlin Doyle BVSc (Hons) Veterinarian  
Chaylee Joe Kong Vet Nurse Cert IV  
Skye Ripphausen Vet Nurse Cert III  
Danielle Assen Vet Nurse  
Rita Gangemi Administration

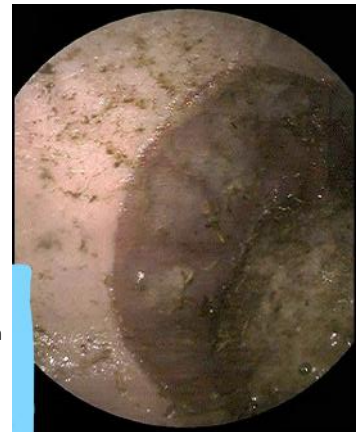
Our goal is to provide excellence in clinical service to all our equine patients.

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

## Excellence in Equine Veterinary Care

*Continued from previous page*

As said previously this filly was already on ulcer medication during her training in Brisbane. Therefore we elected to take her off all treatments and simply put her in a paddock on good Lucerne based pasture for 6 weeks. It is well known that non-stressed horses on pasture seldom get stomach ulcers as grazing for a large part of the day allows the natural protective mechanisms like saliva to do their work. In contrast, when in race training, many horses are only eating a relatively high concentrate feed for a very small part of the day.



This filly was rescoped 6 weeks later and her stomach was completely normal, an amazing turnaround considering she was off all medications. The challenge in this case will be managing her in a way to reduce the chances of recurrence when she goes back into work.

Once again thanks to all our clients for their support this month.

## OUR CONTACT DETAILS

**Business office and postal address: 185 Bracker Road, Warwick, Q 4370**

**Email address: [office@warwickequinevets.com.au](mailto:office@warwickequinevets.com.au)**

**Website: [warwickequinevets.com.au](http://warwickequinevets.com.au)**

**Facebook: Warwick Equine Vets**

**Tias Mobile: 0438 791 804**

**Caitlin Mobile: 0487 791 885**

**Office and Chaylee (BH): 0400 977 564**



**Warwick Equine Veterinarians**