



Newsletter

Ruptured bladder

Condylar and sesamoid fracture

Semen collection

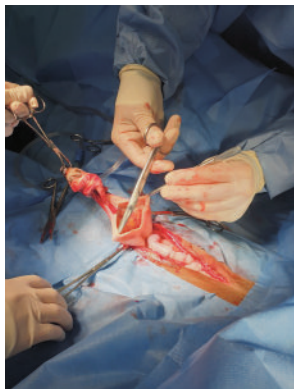
September has been a busy month for us. Not only is horse breeding in full swing we also have had lots of interesting surgery and hospital cases as well.

We had a foal come in a couple of weeks ago. He had been treated on the stud farm by the referring vet for retained meconium but never had been really well since birth. When he arrived he was 4 days old and was very depressed and not really able to follow the mare any more. As you can see in the photo it is apparent he had a very swollen belly and this was especially obvious when lying down. Interestingly the foal had been straining to



urinate and did pass some urine from time to time.

Ultrasound examination soon revealed the problem, a small collapsed bladder sitting in a "sea" of fluid within the abdomen. This is clearly indicative of a ruptured bladder. Important in managing these cases is to determine the degree of toxicity the foals are suffering and to correct this as much as possible before surgery. This is because when the foal can't urinate normally the toxins in the urine are retained within the abdomen and absorbed into the circulation again.



In the photo below you can see the large defect in the bladder just before suturing. In this foal the amount of urine within the abdomen was particularly impressive

with more than 12 litres recovered when we first

opened the abdomen. These defects in the bladder usually occur during foaling and may be more common in colt foals.



This foal was lucky, he recovered relatively quickly and within days was bucking around in the box with his mother. The important lessons from this case is that ruptured bladders can occur during foaling and when they do the foals often still pass urine to some extent and may also have other secondary problems, like retention of meconium, peritonitis and sepsis. Important too is to stabilise the foal medically before taking them to surgery so that they are in the best possible condition to survive the anaesthetic and surgery.

Another case was that of a filly who pulled up very lame during a race. The referring vets where called and diagnosed a displaced fracture of the cannon with a concurrent basilar fracture of the sesamoid. The filly presented to us the following day and the x-rays below nicely show the 2 fractures at arrival in our facility. The days since racing and the long travel had resulted in some more displacement but we felt



it was still something we could improve with surgery. If the only fracture had been the one in the cannon bone and it was not quite as displaced as it was, we would have normally repaired this standing. In this case though, the degree of displacement and the concurrent sesamoid fracture

meant we needed to repair these under general anaesthetic.

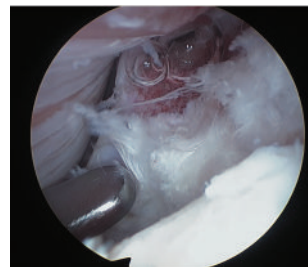
The repair was done using 2 screws to pull in and hold the fragment onto the cannon bone



and using arthroscopy we removed the moderate sized basilar sesamoid fragment.



The screws were placed using intra operative radiographic guidance and again we used x-rays to make sure we completely removed the basilar sesamoid fragment. During the arthroscopic part of the procedure, we also were able to visualise a lot of the articular cartilage within the joint. It was apparent there was severe damage to this all-important surface.



As you can see in the still taken during the arthroscopy, on the left is the condyle of the distal cannon with

severe wear lines and in places complete loss of articular cartilage. The instrument is elevating the fragment at the base of the sesamoid just before removal.



The x ray on the left is the completed repair a couple of days after surgery and demonstrates stability and reasonable reduction of the fracture at the joint surface and complete removal of the sesamoid fragment.

Even though the repair was quite successful, and she has recovered very well we feel it is unlikely this filly can race again and, moreover, this would probably not be in her best interests. Therefore the decision was made to breed from her next season.

Thanks again to all our clients for allowing the opportunity to help with your horses.

The WEV team.

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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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Breeding is now well underway in all breeds. In the thoroughbred industry assisting conception through artificial insemination or embryo transfer is not permitted by the stud book so we need to carefully manage these mares which are all naturally covered to maximise conception rates. This is done by scanning the reproductive tract to optimise timing of cover, and managing any post mating problems like excessive uterine fluid.

In non thoroughbred breeds AI and ET are often used to allow us to manage breeding better. AI allows us to ship chilled semen all over the country and we can also freeze semen to allow it to be stored for long periods and thawed out and inseminated into mares when needed. The first step in using chilled and frozen semen requires us to successfully collect semen from the stallion. This is usually done using an artificial vagina and the stallion is encouraged to ejaculate into it. On the left is one example of an AV we commonly use to collect semen from stallions. Most stallions are reasonably easy to train to do this and they mount a dummy and we can get them to



ejaculate them into it quite readily. Right is a stallion giving us a sample on the dummy mare at Lona recently. Other stallions will only mount a mare in season and for these we can collect off our mare, Socks, whom is usually very co-operative with this. Socks has been ovariectomised (had both ovaries removed or spayed), and we can make her come into season easily with some oestradiol hormone when needed. There is a bit of work involved in collection and processing semen but seeing the foals born as the result of it makes it very worthwhile.

