

## Newsletter

### *Ulna and hock fractures* *New ultrasound machine* *Follow up on swamp cancer* *Embryo transfer*

This is the last Newsletter for 2020. We have had an exceptionally busy finish to the year and we thank all our clients and supporters for having made the year so successful for us. We have been particularly busy with reproduction cases as well as the constant flow of clinical cases and surgery. We have had quite a few surgeries for foals with leg deviations and hernias. In the photo below a foal



with a particularly large umbilical hernia is undergoing surgical repair at Lona. We have been lucky to have another excellent student, Tameka from James Cook University in Townsville, visiting the last few weeks and in the photos she is assisting with the surgery.

Giving keen students like Tameka the chance to be involved is really important for our industry as we need to have students develop interest in Equine practice. Currently there is a significant shortage of students wishing to take up careers in Equine practice and one of the ways we can address this is to give students good exposure to what we do.

This month, as always we treated multiple horses with fractures. The first example is one we considered was close to impossible to treat and so she was euthanased on humane grounds. The thoroughbred filly was presented non weight bearing lame in one forelimb after going through a post and rail fence in a storm. When the filly attempted



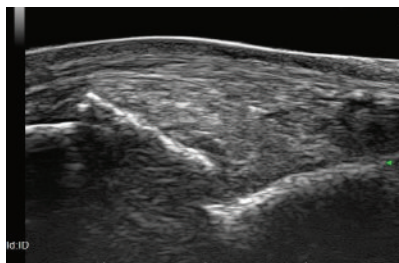
to weight bear on the effected limb the elbow would drop. There was also significant swelling over the elbow region. The x-ray left shows the injury. The big tendons which attach to the olecranon (the point of the

elbow) have pulled a small piece of bone and the tendons off the main body of the bone. This results in inability to carry weight and because it is pulled so far from where it needs to be will not heal well. The fragments were all small so reconstructing the insertion of the tendons would be extremely difficult if not impossible.

Another case was a fracture of the hock. This was in a Thoroughbred gelding and was sus-



tained while exercising on a walker. The gelding kicked out and somehow got his leg caught in the gate sustaining the fracture you can see in the x-ray on the left. This is a fracture of the lateral malleolus and these are particularly difficult to treat. Most fractures which involve the joint are nowadays treated arthroscopically. This type of fracture, while close to the joint and it does have an intra articular component, is largely outside of the joint and associated with the collateral ligaments. In this case we needed to assess not only the fracture but the ligaments as well and for this we use ultrasound.



In the scan above you can see the fracture nicely with the ligament above it. Ultrasound does not penetrate bone, so we can only see the bone surfaces, but it does give us a good way of imaging the soft tissues like ligaments.

With this horse we decided to remove all loose bone which we could access from within the joint and leave part of the fractured bone still embedded in the soft tissues outside the joint.



This was actually the very first clinical case we used our new ultrasound machine on. For cases which can come into Lona, we now have a top of the range ultrasound machine which allows a step

up in image quality from even our top end portable machines. As you can see the machine is about the size of a washing machine so we can't take it off site. This photo was taken with Andreas, who owns the medical imaging company we purchased it from, helping us to set up the machine for the first time.

We thought we would update you on a case previously shown in our newsletter which we have been treating. A recipient mare in foal was presented with a large phycomycosis (swamp cancer) lesion on the fetlock and pastern regions. We treated this for some time before sending it home. The mare received very diligent aftercare over many months and recently we were able to see the results. The mare had delivered a live



and healthy colt foal and the limb was much improved. It still has some way to go but now she no longer is in foal we can use more aggressive medical management which we could not do previously while

she was still pregnant. Although there is still some way to go we feel we are well on the way to having a good outcome for both the mare and the foal.

From all of the WEV team we wish everyone to have a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.



# Warwick Equine Veterinarians

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Excellence in Equine Veterinary Care

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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.

*Embryo transfer is a useful technique to allow owners to have foals from mares which are currently being competed or worked, or it is an option in some cases where mares have infertility due to inability to carry a foal. With embryo transfer the mare is artificially inseminated or breed naturally, and the embryo is flushed out of the mare before it implants in the uterus and then transferred to another mare who needs to be at exactly the same stage of her breeding cycle, but not covered. The recipient mare then carries and delivers the foal and usually nurses the foal until weaning. When done this way the foal has the genetics of the donor mare and stallion. An example of this process was a mare bred recently in our practice. She was a young (2yo) quarter horse mare who the owners wished to keep in training but they were keen to get a foal from her early. The mare was inseminated with frozen American semen, and flushed 7days later. An embryo was recovered and in this case because we had no suitable local recipient mare, the embryo was taken down to West Vets at Marburg in a special transport fluid as they had a recipient mare at exactly the right stage of her cycle available. Fortunately the embryo settled into the recipient mare well and just recently was scanned 30 days in foal . This whole process, while complex and requires some effort, did allow the owners to have both the donor filly to ride and train over the next year while still having a foal from her next year. The photos show Andrew flushing the mare, searching for the the embryo under the microscope, the tiny embryo and the 30 scan .*

