

Mayes & Scrine

EQUINE VETERINARY PRACTICE

Newsletter: July 2008 *Issue 11*

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... and much more!

Office Hours:

Monday to Friday 8am til 5pm
24 hours emergency care and access to urgent advice.
Please ring the office number in the first instance.

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Editorial

Welcome to our summer Newsletter. I am sorry it's a little late, just like me on my rounds. The Practice has been incredibly busy. We are very excited about the imminent move into the new offices and facilities and there have been several staff changes and holidays to accommodate. The expansion to five vets (just in time for the recession) is also exciting.

The wet spring and early summer has helped the grass grow and has facilitated the seasonal conditions of sweet-itch, colic, laminitis and a last minute rush for colt castration. The last minute AI and breeding rush is still on! At least Fontwell races are on their summer recess, although I have enjoyed them immensely and I thank Arundel Vets for sharing the rota with us. Hurtwood Polo Club's high goal season continues and we have a televised kids' tournament to cover in August.

Thank you all for your continued loyal support, I look forward to seeing you at the "End of Summer Event", after last year's cancellation due to Foot and Mouth. Let's hope the new premises are ready. Onwards and Upwards.

Ben Mayes



DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: SUNDAY 31st AUGUST

PRACTICE OPENING DAY

You are cordially invited to join us at the practice on

Sunday 31st August 2008 12 to 4pm

for a hog roast, drinks, Live Jazz, Bouncy Castle

to celebrate the grand opening of the new offices
and equine veterinary facilities

All welcome. Please let us know whether you and your guests wish to attend by Tuesday 26th August (see Contact Details).



Out with the old...

After 4 years at the frontline in the offices of Mayes & Scrine, Charlie Kean has left us to work full-time on her husband Richard's poultry farm, Etherley Farm at the foot of Leith Hill. The farm is hugely successful, producing high quality chicken, duck, geese and seasonal turkeys as well as free-range eggs and other products. Despite her obvious dedication to the veterinary job, the farm was becoming just too demanding of Charlie's time. Charlie has worked in veterinary practice administration since the late 1980s, so we are aware how much of a wrench this must be and we wish her all the very best.

...In with the new

Victoria Maheu has recently joined the administrative staff full-time at Mayes & Scrine. We thank loyal clients, Tracey and Justine Harris of Harris Lord Recruitment in Horsham for finding us Vicky; she has a horsey background and is highly skilled in office administration and management. With Charlie's departure and the practice getting busier and busier, Vicky has had to learn the role quickly and efficiently ...well done, Vicky!

Meanwhile, as well as changing jobs, Vicky underwent another life changing experience only a few weeks after joining us. On 5th July Miss Victoria Maheu became Mrs Cunningham. A few of her new work colleagues crashed the reception. Congratulations, Mark and Vicky. By the time this newsletter is published, you'll be back from the Maldives and back to the grindstone.





Judy's bit... Supplements, an overview of a big subject. *Part two of two.*

Part one was published in March's Issue 10, which can be viewed on the website or copies are available from the office.

Respiratory aids

These can be very effective in some cases, especially those where the horse develops resistance to prescribed drugs, or is in competition work when conventional drugs can't be used. We find Cirotex effective in many cases.

Skin supplements

Equine mirraccoat powder seems to be a genuine panacea for skin problems, helpful in everything from dry skin to aggressive dermatitis. Products such as NAF Mud Gard are marketed as oral aids to mud fever prevention/treatment.

Anti-sweetitch supplements include herbal preparations such as Hilton Herbs Top Coat and can be helpful in combination with other treatments.

Garlic is thought to help reduce biting insect problems, but seems to be variable in its efficacy. It certainly has a "blood-thinning" effect which can be beneficial for other conditions including immune system problems.

Calmers

Magnesium is the most proven oral supplement in calming horses. We often advise it for "headshakers" and other conditions thought to have a "nervous"

component. The liquid forms, whilst pricey, are thought to be best absorbed and therefore most effective. Nervous and over-excitabile horses may benefit from appropriate herbal supplements, usually valerian based, or products containing the protein L-tryptophan, but we would suggest trying magnesium first.



Digestive system supplements

Probiotics top up the flora in your horse's gut as they contain live bacteria and yeasts. They are used to treat digestive upsets such as colic and diarrhoea and also to help reduce stress and stable vices. Beware the product that you are buying actually contains organisms that can survive the highly acid environment of the stomach and actually reach the part of the intestines where they can be effective. We advise Protexin as it is an effective product which "does what it says on the tin".

Electrolytes come in many forms to help prevent or treat dehydration. Anything from simple table salt to stimulate drinking up to complex electrolyte mixes with all sorts of different chemicals in them. Beware products containing lots of glucose, which is not helpful and obviously high "GI" but will increase palatability and therefore sales of the product. Many products do not contain enough active ingredients per dose to make a significant difference. Because of this, we actually make up our own electrolyte mix using a recipe developed by Newmarket vets for use in racehorses.

Fenugreek can be given to stimulate the appetite in finicky horses, even a taste on the horse's gums can encourage eating in many cases.

Immune system support

The main player here is Echinacea which has been shown to be effective in clinical trials. Less proven products include Aloe Vera, sulphur and garlic.

And so many others – I haven't even begun on the subjects of homeopathy or Bach flower remedies, seaweed for iodine supplementation, milk thistle for liver problems... but you are probably all asleep by now. Please just ask us! **Judy Scrine**

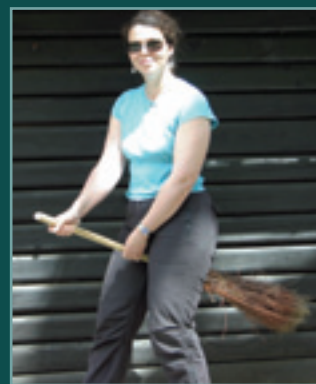
Herbs for Horses

We enclose flyers for Herbs for Horses. These are purchased through a respected client of ours, Susie Cutler. There are many herbal supplements on the market. Susie's herbs are unique in that the herbs are prepared by a fully qualified medical herbalist. Susie takes great interest in each case and uses her horse knowledge and experience to relay your horse's requirements to the herbalist. Very often there is veterinary involvement at this stage and Susie may well discuss the horse's needs with one of the vets. The choice of mix, or a bespoke blend can then be prepared by the herbalist and dispatched to you.

We do not condone herbs or any other complimentary therapy as a replacement for essential veterinary treatment and we may well have to examine an animal before we can make a direct recommendation, but if you do use herbal supplements or have considered doing so, then give Susie a call.



Coming to a screen near you this November...



Mayes and Scrine meets Harry Potter!

To confirm everyone's suspicions, Judy has been typecast as a "drunken witch" in the sixth Harry Potter film. Obviously no make-up or wig was required. Look out for Judy looking somewhat like an Icelandic Troll in the scene set in The Three Broomsticks in Hogsmeade.

To celebrate Judy's venture into the world of Tinseltown, we are inviting entries into our caption competition for the following photograph. Please submit your entries to the practice for your chance to win the exciting prize of a year's worth of wormers for your horse and a Mayes and Scrine baseball cap. The judge will be totally impartial, not being a member of practice staff, instead being the photographer (see also the Antarctic cartwheel in the newsletter Nov 2007)!

Case Study: Pedal Bone Fracture

Liz recently bought Echo, the horse of her dreams - a big, strapping, good-looking warmblood gelding.

Not long before Christmas, Echo was seen to have a bit of a "hooley" in the field and came in lame. At first I was a bit flummoxed as to which leg he was actually lame on... it seemed to vary in limb and severity from day to day. After a couple of weeks the lameness seemed to be isolated to the right-hind only. By Christmas, Echo was lame even at walk.

I investigated Echo's lameness at the clinic early in the New Year. I performed a "nerve block", blocking out pain in the foot region by injecting local anaesthetic in the area around the nerves of the right-hind foot. Whilst I was waiting for the nerve block to work, I took a few x-ray images of the right-hind pastern and foot. I was very concerned about my x-ray findings, and meanwhile the nerve block greatly improved the lameness.

I sent Echo home on strict box rest. I had seen an apparent "crack" diagonally traversing the cortex of the mid-shaft of the long pastern bone, between the two top arrows on the x-ray. I was concerned that this may be an atypical nutrient foramen, the canal that the vein and artery run through to supply the bone marrow in the middle of the bone. However, it was not evident on the left-hind and nutrient foramina are generally symmetrical. The treatment for a crack in the long pastern would be box rest, with regular x-ray checks to monitor progress, so this is what was suggested, along with starting a course of Herbs for Horses "fracture mix".

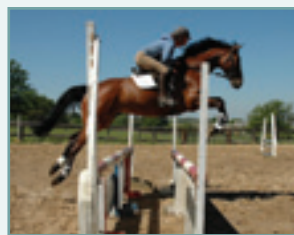
After about six weeks of box rest I x-rayed Echo's right-hind in his stable at home, and we repeated this process five or six weeks later. After this second set of x-rays, I was concerned that the pastern crack had not shown any signs of healing. I liaised with an orthopaedic surgeon colleague and Echo was sent for some bone scans. We then noticed the obvious pedal bone wing fracture, marked by the bottom arrow. We concluded that the pastern crack is actually a nutrient



foramen. Echo's box rest continued, as did his course of "fracture mix", the potency of which had been increased following the new findings. We tried to fit him out with a bar shoe, although he became prone to pulling the shoe off in the stable – a side effect of him trying to fashion new windows out of the walls of his stable with his back feet.

Six months after the original injury, I deemed it safe for Echo to come out of his box, and go out in the field. It was accepted by all involved that he needed to let off some steam. Walking in-hand was probably too much for Echo, at least until after he'd been out. Repeat x-rays showed remarkable healing of the pedal bone fracture... it was barely visible; pedal bone fractures are usually visible for years to come (because they heal with a fibrous union rather than bone). Is this as a result of the herbal "fracture mix"? Quite probably. The nutrient foramen was still visible. The box rest treatment (conservative) is the correct

choice, with varying degrees of bandage, for any non-displaced lower limb fracture.

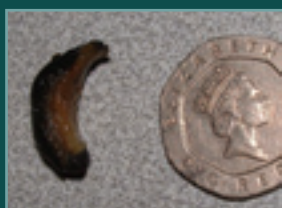


Echo is now back in work, and is getting fitter by the day. We wish him and Liz every success in their future career together.

FAQ: What's this bug on my horse's tummy?

Early July and a client of ours near Horsham, one sunny afternoon before the rains came, found this "grub" hanging by its mouth parts from his horse's belly. I popped in there on the way home out of curiosity ...the horse had been in the field next to the Arun river... a leech.

The fly season has now arrived. It never really gets going until July and will now run through until October with the number of flies increasing as each generation breeds. Good fly control requires the use of fly masks and rugs, permethrins (e.g. Switch or Deosan Deosect – both available from us) and DEET (try Repel or the NAF product). Diluted Kerosene (one teaspoonful in one gallon of water, frothed) is a good fly repellent too. Always beware fly-strike (**maggots**) particularly in older animals, e.g. up the sheath or around "under the tail" melanomas in greys.



During the wettish Spring the **midges** had hit hard and Sweet Itch has been a problem. Unfortunately, the sweet itch vaccine trial was not allowed any new subjects this year so control has involved Boett rugs, Switch (permethrin weekly pour-on) and daily applications

such as Avon Skin-So-Soft bath oil or Benzyl Benzoate. Spring can also bring **lice**, especially in old, young or ill animals. These respond to many treatments, as long as they are repeated. Leg mange (**mites**) can be a problem in feathered equines and usually responds to a Dectomax injection and/or clipping with topical treatment.

The **horse-fly** emergence was as sudden as ever this year, albeit a little early (usually during Wimbledon, not Queen's) as was that of **ticks**. There are two types (in my opinion). The larger sheep tick with a grey body and the small, brown deer tick. The latter can carry Lyme's Disease and we saw our first equine case of this for several years in the early Spring. The signs are of multiple-limb lameness (polyarthritis) and general malaise. It is treatable with oxytetracycline antibiotics. Ticks probably should be removed (they drop off once fed), but only carefully, e.g. with a tick hook, available from pet shops.



I haven't seen any **bot flies** yet. Large and bumble-bee-like, they fly around horses' legs with the egg-tube hanging down and laying those distinctive yellow eggs. They pupate in the horses' stomach, so ivermectin wormers have kept their population down for many years now. I am asked several times a year to look at a back-sore that the owner thinks may be a warble fly emerging. **Warble flies** have been eradicated from the UK for over 20 years and I haven't seen a case of this notifiable (primarily) cattle disease yet.

I find that horses that live near slow-flowing rivers often have nasty biting flies with crude mouth parts living inside their outer ears and making them sore and bleed. Benzyl Benzoate 'wipes' help control these.



Frank's down under...

Loz is back! In a yard near you, but for one month only

Frank Low BSc BVSc MRCVS has been with us for almost two years. However, he does insist on popping back to his homeland down under for the odd month here and there. In fact, apart from a brief spell of 10 days, Frank has been off for almost two months! His excuse has been study leave to take specialist equine medicine examinations in Australia. His time back home is almost up and he will be back towards the end of July. We have just heard that Frank passed these exams. Good for you, Frank. Jane has been kindly looking

after Frank's new English pointer, Dim Sum (or should that be Dim Wit?) and she, for one, can't wait for the prodigal vet's return. We welcome Frank and his partner, Kelly, back into the fold.

Meanwhile, many of you may remember a certain Laurence O'Hara MA VetMB MRCVS who was with us from 2004 to 2006. Laurence has been off learning surgery at the Royal Veterinary College and now intends to return to good old first-opinion equine practice.

Whilst he scours the job section of Northern Vet Weekly we have enticed him back, albeit temporarily, for a bit of southern hospitality. Laurence has been locuming for us whilst Frank has been away.



Five is the magic number... Anna Hammond returns

Anna Hammond BVM&S, CertEM(IntMed), MRCVS is joining the practice full-time as our fifth vet from 21st July 2008. Anna previously worked for us in 2005/6. After a sojourn in Nottinghamshire, Anna couldn't stay away; absence making her appreciate us as employers, and you as clients!

Anna qualified from Edinburgh in 1994 and has worked extensively as an equine veterinary surgeon. This includes an extended internship at Liphook, running an equine practice in New Zealand, stud work in Australia, a three-year Residency in Equine Internal Medicine at the Royal Veterinary College, and working for Mayes and Scrine and in Nottingham in general equine practice.

We are proud to welcome Anna back to the practice and her family, Richard, Mags and Fergus back to West Sussex. Whether you remember Anna or are (relatively) new to the practice yourselves, I am sure you will all appreciate the significant experience, specialist knowledge and skills she brings to Mayes and Scrine.

New Development at Mayes & Scrine, nearly there!

We are really starting to need those new offices at the practice. Now we have five vets and six lay-staff, it is getting a little crowded in the old office. Also, as we increase our medical and surgical capability it is becoming essential that the new stables and the second examination room are available as soon as possible. The new owner of the Ruckmans Estate is also very keen to get us in there and Westpoint Farm Vets are keen for our old office.

So, Jim Yeoman and his team have been working extremely hard on the project. Catherine Mayes is finalising the details on the furniture, phone system and IT, the latter in conjunction with Arnaud Westphal of Centora. We hope to move in to the downstairs sector in mid-August,



Welcome Back Claire....

Talking of unable to stay away, we also welcome back Claire Jeffs, our valued and experienced lay veterinary nurse to the practice. Claire has been with the practice for over ten years and had a lovely baby girl, Isabel, in January. Claire cannot stay away any longer and returns to head up the clinical support team, at least part-time, from 4th August.



Sponsorship from Mayes & Scrine

As the practice gets more well known, we get asked more and more for sponsorship and support. Compared with many companies, our advertising and sponsorship budget is limited. We concentrate on looking after your horses to the best of our ability, and to be honest, it's hard to find time for the practice management side of things... just ask the staff! The Newsletters and website have proved to be very successful. On occasion, when mailing the newsletter, we have enclosed flyers to help out clients and friends of the practice, however it is current policy not to carry ads.

Mayes and Scrine try to support local show venues, particularly if we provide the veterinary care at the associated yard, and we also support several local shows and events. We have a couple of banners that we try to get around when we have sponsored a class. We do not support any individual riders or horses; how can we when we want to help you all by keeping our prices and charges as reasonable as possible! Linda York at Pachesham Equestrian Centre near Leatherhead has been a loyal client of the practice for several decades (sorry, Linda). So we are more than happy to sponsor a jump in the new arena!

