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## Editorial

Welcome to the 16th issue of our practice newsletter. All the back issues, with information on topics from fly control to ringworm, bandage techniques to worm programmes, are available as PDFs on our website.

The practice continues to go from strength to strength. Our devoted team of equine vets: Ben, Judy, Anna H, Anna E and Laurence are there to help you at all times. Sadly we say goodbye to John Little (see article inside). Thank you for all messages of support with my looming presidency of the British Equine Veterinary Association (currently Junior Vice-President, President 2011/12). I appreciate that I may be harder to get hold of and I thank my colleagues for their unwavering support as my BEVA workload increases.

Summer's arrived and, for the discerning horse-owner, a whole new set of issues. Disease prevention remains a "hot topic" at our practice. Again we have seen devastating outcomes from the equine diseases of colic, laminitis and even worms, the incidence of which can be markedly reduced by careful management. However, particularly in certain animals, e.g. native ponies, those with metabolic disease, foals, horses with intestinal disease and so on, careful preventative measures may not be enough to control these scourges of the equid. Infectious disease remains a constant threat, and we are delighted to announce a change in our influenza vaccine at the practice to ensure we are as up to date as possible with the latest strains (again, see article inside).

To all of our clients and patients, we wish you a sound, disease-free summer and success in all your endeavours: from breeding to eventing, showjumping, dressage or just a pleasant hack in the hills.

**Ben Mayes**



Rudgewick Primary School (see Three Peaks story - back page)

## Stop press... Equine Influenza Outbreak

Equine Influenza has just been confirmed in one premises in Reigate in Surrey. Mayes and Scrine do not have any clients at this premises so have had no contact with this outbreak. We are awaiting more information from the Animal Health Trust concerning the origins of the outbreak and we will make sure we keep you up to date with any new information as it comes in via updates on our website. Please contact the clinic or one of the vets to discuss the significance of this for you and your horse(s).

## Invitation to the Summer Event!

The M&S EVP Summer Event has been revived by popular demand after a quiet summer last year. We invite all clients, relatives and friends to come and join us at the practice on

**Sunday 11th July 2010, 2pm to 6pm**

Live jazz will start at 2pm and refreshments will be available. There will be a bouncy castle for the children. Adam Johnson's hog roast will be served around 4pm (and a vegetarian alternative). There may also be a speech or two, to celebrate the completion of the new building, operating theatre and ward.

**We look forward to seeing you there.**



# Equine Influenza Virus: Updated vaccine is essential

Equine influenza is an economically important contagious respiratory disease of horses resulting from infection with influenza A viruses of the H7N7 or H3N8 subtype as opposed to the H1N1 that you will hear about on the news. The disease is characterized by high fever, depression, coughing, and nasal discharge and is often complicated by secondary bacterial infections sometimes leading to pneumonia and potentially death. All major outbreaks in the past 20 years have been caused by the H3N8 subtype.

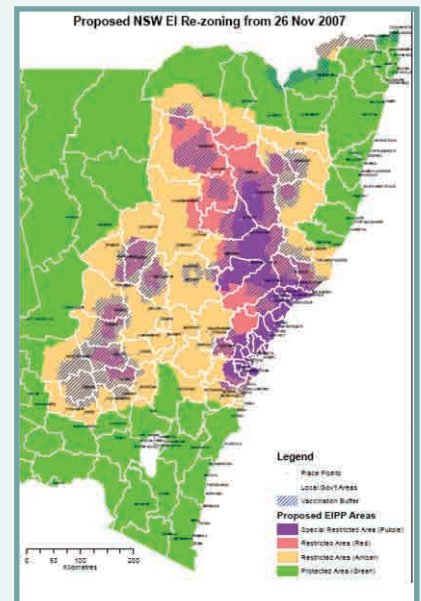
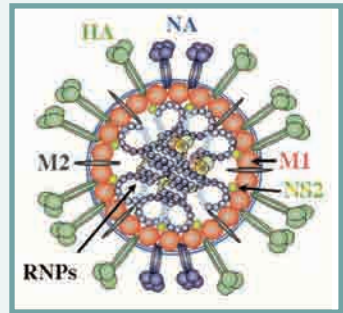
The prevention and control of equine influenza depends heavily on vaccination and application of management regimes. Historically, equine influenza vaccines contain inactivated whole virus and have been available since the early sixties. However despite widespread use, there are periodic failures of vaccine efficacy, which continue to cause disease outbreaks. You may have heard of the huge outbreak in Australia but there were also several, smaller, outbreaks in the UK that year (2007). The Australian horse industry ground to a halt for six months, with no racing, shows or competing at all. Imagine that here! It is now generally accepted that the Australian horse industry had been somewhat lax in their 'flu vaccination programme. About 70% of a population needs to be vaccinated to keep this viral disease under control. Equine 'flu continues to be diagnosed in the UK with about 10 separate instances each year: any one of these could become a full blown outbreak.

The more eagle-eyed amongst you will have noticed that we are changing brands to ProteqFlu™, produced by Merial Animal Health. It has been developed recently with new technology that allows it to have the efficacy of a live vaccine with the safety of an inactivated vaccine. It is also the only vaccine available in the UK that incorporates the most

recent strains of Equine Influenza Virus recommended by the World Organisation of Animal Health (OIE). Many of you may wonder if we've been using a different vaccine initially do we have to start again with the primary course? The short answer is "no" since there is enough cross reactivity from the old brand to the new to allow an easy changeover (this has been proven scientifically with ProteqFlu™).

With respect to young foals, the mother passes on antibodies (MDA) to protect young foals from disease during early life through her first milk. MDA levels vary dramatically from foal to foal, and even low amounts of MDA interfere with active immunisation. Vaccinating foals in the face of MDA may induce tolerance rather than immunity, potentially inhibiting immune responses to repeated subsequent vaccination for up to one year. However, vaccinating foals even from 4 months of age in the face of high MDA levels with Proteq-flu™ uniquely induce PRIMING of the immune system and not tolerance.

As a practice we have decided to use ProteqFlu™ as our vaccine of choice offering you the best preventative healthcare for your horses that we can. Vaccination prices have not changed. We will continue to run a vaccination reminder system, although we stress that ultimately it is the owner's responsibility to keep vaccination up-to-date for competitions. We hope to introduce a text reminder service in the next few months, initially to run parallel with the current postal system. Remember to keep us updated with your personal details. **Anna Hammond**



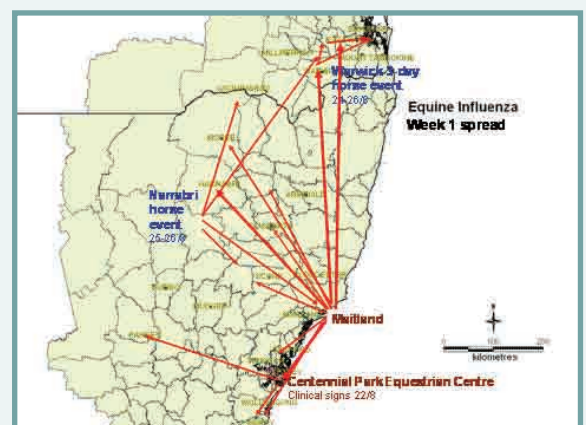
Australian outbreak map



Typical snotty nose caused by influenza and secondary bacterial infection



ProteqFlu™



Spread of disease from index case

# Fat Club

There was keen interest after Anna Ash (now Etherton) presented "Fat Horse Slim" at the Spring Talk in March. Anna has set up a Fat Club and offers free advice and support on diet and weight loss, including visits to the clinic's weighing machine.

Obesity is a major issue for horses and ponies in the south east of England, and can lead to a plethora of health problems, not just laminitis. The cold winter saw some healthy weight loss in many individuals. Some clients were concerned about this, but it is normal for animals to lose weight over winter, they should be lean come Spring!

We currently have a couple of successful weight loss cases in the practice. Below is a picture of Jean Forrest's horse "Sylvaticus". Jean measures Sylvaticus using a weigh tape weekly, and records this in a log book. In March he lost 50kg and in April he lost 25kg (having had to come out of work).



He is being fed 'Safe and Sound' and has limited grazing. Jean has the saying 'many horses out at play, keeps the fatness away!'

If you have a pony that is doing well on its diet, please send pictures and information to [anna.ash@equinevetpractice.co.uk](mailto:anna.ash@equinevetpractice.co.uk) and you may appear in our next newsletter! We are very keen to promote weight loss in our obese patients and anyone requiring guidance, advice or weigh-in clinics should contact the practice and ask for Anna Etherton (nee Ash).

## Picking Up Prescription Drugs

We are happy to dispense repeat prescription medicines for animals seen in the previous six months, if ongoing treatment is considered suitable by our vets. We can drop off ordered items at yards or



homes, and there is a charge for this unless we are already in the yard or nearby. Similarly we can post out medicines, but not liquids, for a P&P fee. Alternatively, medicines, bandages and liquids can be picked up from the practice. Payment is required at the time of ordering for drop offs/posted items or at pick up. There is an arrangement for out-of-hours pick-up (in this case payment is requested beforehand).

## Summer approaches and with it those skin problems

Unfortunately as the weather improves (?) the flies are on the increase and with them, the fly associated problems.

The most significant problem associated with flies is of course the Equine Sarcoid. Not to be confused with the human form of sarcoid which is a very different disease, equine sarcoids are infectious non-invasive skin tumours of horses, ponies and donkeys. Sarcoids are therefore able to spread between horses, in most cases we believe carried by biting insects, but horses have to be unlucky enough to have the right genetic make-up to support sarcoids before infection results in tumours.

Sarcoids can present in a variety of ways – anything from a slightly changed patch of hair coat up to large ulcerated masses within and under the skin. The different descriptive terms for sarcoids such as "verrucous", "occut" or "nodular" merely describe their appearance. There is no way of predicting the future behaviour of sarcoids by their size, number, type or position. Only time will tell. Because of their varied appearance, it can be difficult to diagnose sarcoids definitively on clinical examination alone. We are likely to photograph the lesion(s). Further tests such as biopsy may also be needed. If there is any risk a skin lesion might be a sarcoid, a biopsy should include a good area of normal skin around the lesion to ensure it is fully removed. Partial removal can make the situation much worse. In fact, any sarcoid treatment must be

carefully considered and planned as ineffective or partially effective treatment of sarcoid will reduce success chances of any future treatments by 40%. Please therefore do not be tempted to use over-the-counter elixirs to treat your horse's sarcoid without consulting us first.

Since they are spread by flies, sarcoids will occur at sites where flies are most likely to bite or feed such as the eyes, lips, sheath, groin, axillae (armpits) or in wounds. Sarcoids around the eyes, at sites where they are at risk of being knocked or where they interfere with tack are the most problematic and the most likely to need treatment and/or affect sale of your horse.

Many other skin lesions can be confused with sarcoids and sometimes the only way to be sure is to carry out a biopsy. Ringworm, fly bite hypersensitivity, warts and other sorts of skin tumours can all have a similar appearance to sarcoids. So if you are worried that your horse may have sarcoids please call us out, or get us to have a look whilst at your yard and we can discuss the options, an estimate of costs and the prognosis with you.

Judy Scrine



## Mad Fund Raising Ventures

At extreme cost to her feet (and in iTunes fees for audio books to listen to whilst training), Judy completed this year's Playtex Moonwalk back in mid-May in just over 7 hours. For the uninitiated, this is a powerwalking marathon starting in Hyde Park in London at midnight, in aid of Breast Cancer charities. Judy trained extremely hard for this event and raised one thousand pounds. The money is still being collected, and many thanks to those of you who supported her. The training continues as Judy intends to climb to the very top of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania this September. This will be a much more serious challenge, with African logistics and the extreme altitude to contend with.



Judy's Moonwalk ensemble



Meanwhile, many thanks to all those who supported Ben on the Yorkshire 3 Peaks Challenge, which he completed within the allotted 12 hours at the end of March. 10 dads from Rudgwick Primary School managed to raise over £6,000 for the school and trekked 25 miles up and down three mountains in the Yorkshire Dales, all over 700 metres, through bogs, snow drifts and drizzle.



### Anna Ash Gets Married to Guy, and becomes Mrs Etherton MRCVS

Congratulations to blonde Anna, who has been with us almost a year and is proving to be an outstanding equine practitioner! Anna joined us last year after completing her veterinary studies at the Royal Veterinary College. On that hot, beautiful Saturday 22nd May, Anna temporarily downed tools and rectal



probes to marry Guy, her devoted policeman partner who has recently transferred to Sussex. The ceremony at Okewood Chapel was emotional and raucous, with the bride looking stunning and radiant. Clients Jane Biggins and Anne Charlesworth contributed on the organ and in the choir respectively, whilst friend of the family, Laura, did an amazing solo of "Morning Has Broken". Then it was back to Tony and Sue's in Kingsfold for Pimms, champagne, feasting and dancing to the awesome 8-piece jazz funk band "Fusion". A fantastic time was had by all. Many thanks to Laurence for covering the calls that day so the rest of us could attend and be merry. We wish Anna and Guy and all their animals the very best for the future and, remember, "it shouldn't happen to a vet".



## Vale John,

### Charismatic vet leaves practice for pastures new

This is little note to say a big GOODBYE to all my faithful clients. I am hoping that I have been around and seen most of you in the last three months or that most of you have heard through the grapevine that I am leaving. Thank you all for your warm wishes and farewell messages.

I have been with the Mayes and Scrine Equine Veterinary Practice since April 2nd 2007 and have enjoyed my time here. Time flies when you are having fun. I had an amazing time in South America from December '09 to January '10; travelling through Argentina and parts of Chile, Brazil and Paraguay. One of you (a client) said before I left to Argentina, that a trip to South America would be 'life changing' (this stuck in my mind). She was right. This time out has allowed me to think about the bigger picture and what I want to do next. I have decided to take a year or so out of clinical work to try something different. I have applied for several different jobs in the UK and also one in Ireland. If I get a job in London I may remain in Guildford. I am looking into stud work, racing work and non-clinical veterinary related jobs. For me this is an exciting period as time unravels what my next step in life will be. However if the right job doesn't come up soon I plan to continue my travels in South America and continue learning Spanish.

As most of you know my parents have a stud farm in Ireland where I keep my horses, so my first port of call will be a trip home to help them on the farm, with fencing and also to see the foals. Thank you all for your support and trust in me over the past three years. Mayes and Scrine are blessed with very knowledgeable and trusting clients. I will stay in touch with all at the Mayes and Scrine EVP and they have my email, so updates on your horses would be much appreciated via the practice.

John Little BA BSc BVM&S MRCVS