2003 BVCS CONFERENCE

- Venue

Wallingford

- Guest Speaker

Dr David Anderson, Ohio State University

- Topics

Periapical tooth root infections

Difficult birthings/C-section

Coccidiostat toxicity

- Other presentations

Deaths associated with general anaesthesia

TB

Meningitis in an alpaca cria

Schistosoma reflexus

Three years of clinical cases at Bristol University

Internal parasites in Australia

Angular limb deformity

Diseases seen at VLA regional centres

Milk fever

Dog attack

The successful repair of a fractured radius and ulna in a young llama

Postop

- Practical sessions at Bozedown Alpacas

Basic camelid handling, management and basic techniques including single handed venepuncture

Drainage of a tooth root abscess in an adult alpaca. Other demonstrations included trans-abdominal and rectal ultrasound scanning for pregnancy diagnosis and investigation of infertility, dentistry, and blood collection for plasma production

- Report

This year's British Veterinary Camelid Society conference took place in October. The pattern is now well established: a mixture of practical sessions, lectures from a distinguished guest speaker and lively discussions when we all share our experiences

This year's guest speaker was David Anderson of Ohio State University. Those of you who attended the British Camelids conference will know that he is incredibly knowledgeable about llamas and alpacas, and a witty and persuasive speaker who manages to impart a lot of valuable information in a short time

Joy Whitehead of Bozedown Alpacas was our host this year for the practical sessions, and we spent two afternoons with her animals. The Friday afternoon workshop concentrated on the basics of camelid handling and management. David and others gave us some very helpful tips and we also learnt a useful technique for single-handed blood sampling

I think that it is very significant that we had a number of vets from Defra attending the weekend, with a couple especially interested in the Friday afternoon workshop. We know that with increasing numbers of camelids in the UK it is inevitable that they will be included in future legislation and it is encouraging to see that Defra vets are keen to find out more about them

Following a group discussion later in the weekend, concerning tuberculosis in camelids, the head of veterinary endemic diseases at Defra has sought a meeting with Bob Broadbent, BVCS president. Again, it is very important to ensure that the real welfare issues as experienced by camelid owners and their vets are considered when policy is decided

Returning to the main business of the weekend, one of David Anderson's specialisations is in facial abscesses, so it was good to follow up Saturday morning's classroom session with the drainage of a tooth root abscess in an adult alpaca at Bozedown during the afternoon. Other demonstrations included trans-abdominal and rectal ultrasound scanning for pregnancy diagnosis and investigation of infertility

There was a very full programme of papers and case studies on Sunday morning, with a broad spread of clinical and surgical cases presented by members. These included a discussion on sedation and anaesthetic procedures following a number of anaesthetic deaths, a report on the successful treatment of meningitis in an alpaca cria and the successful repair of a fractured radius and ulna in a young llama

BVCS conferences have always been great social occasions as well as opportunities to learn. This year we discovered one long-standing member is also an extremely accomplished performer on the Highland bagpipes. This may not have endeared him to other residents of the conference hotel when he insisted on piping David Anderson and his wife back to their room at midnight!

The annual conference is a really important part of the work of the British Veterinary Camelid Society, and an excellent way of sharing knowledge and experiences. If your vet is not a member of BVCS then please urge them to find out more at www.camelidvets.org. We would love to see them at next year's conference