

Latest news

It has been a busy summer for everybody, and we too have been busy launching the new logo, which we hope you have all seen. We would very much like to congratulate Mark Dorgan and Ted for their fantastic round in the Hickstead Derby and we were delighted to see them carry the new logo round the famous course!



It has also been exciting to see the freshly painted jump getting plenty of use (and causing the odd spook!) at shows this summer. You may have seen it at the new show at Super Duper Farm as well as at Farnham Town show. If not then do keep an eye out for it as it continues to tour the area. (Shown: Little H – Sam Gibbins)



Spotlight on supplements

With recent stories in the news of contaminated feeds and supplements leading to positive drug tests in some competition horses, we would like to remind you of the range of supplements we supply, all of which are guaranteed to be free of any substances prohibited under rules (including FEI, BS, BD and BHA). The joint supplement contains the highest available concentration of glucosamine, which research has shown to be beneficial in cartilage regeneration. It may be of great benefit to those horses coming to the end of a long season on quite hard ground, which will increase wear and tear on joints, or indeed for the hunters that are getting fit for the season ahead. Also of great benefit towards the end of the season as horses

begin to tire is the Haemo-tonic; providing the optimum supplemental level of the trace elements, iron and a concentrated level of the B complex vitamins, often giving a boost to energy levels and performance.

Other supplements we supply include a gastric supplement, reducing and preventing the occurrence of gastric ulcers, probiotics, hoof supplement and isotonic electrolytes. Please do ask us if you have any queries or requirements regarding supplementation.

Don't forget that we are currently offering a lovely Kings Bounty Jute bag if you buy two joint supplements (Archie not included!)

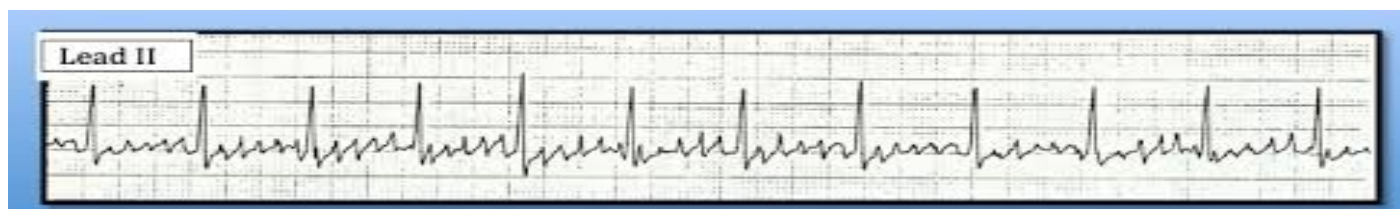


Conditions in the news: Atrial Fibrillation

Arrhythmias, or abnormal heart rhythms, occur commonly in the horse although most of them will have no effect on performance. The exception to this is atrial fibrillation (AF), which is the most common cardiac cause of poor performance and has also affected several high profile equine athletes this year. It causes horses to tire more easily at peak performance but does not cause any signs in the resting horse.

What is it? The normal heart has a very systematic pattern of electrical activity that causes the top (atria) then bottom (ventricles) chambers of the heart to contract at the right time and in the right way. AF means that the atria have lost this normal pattern and instead have random waves of electrical activity that do not cause a proper contraction. It can occur suddenly in an otherwise normal heart or can be secondary to enlargement of the atria, caused by other heart conditions.

How is it diagnosed? It is characterised by an irregularly irregular heart rhythm that can be readily heard when listening to the heart. Once the abnormal rhythm is detected an ECG is performed to confirm the type of arrhythmia. The picture below shows a classic 'trace' of a horse's heart in AF. The big spikes are normal heart beats but in between them are lots of little waves which are the random electrical activity seen in atrial fibrillation. Some horses only develop AF at maximal intensity of exercise and will self-correct within minutes or hours, which can make diagnosis more challenging.



Treatment? Once a diagnosis of AF is made the next step is to image the heart using ultrasonography to check for any structural changes in the heart that may have led to the arrhythmia developing. It is also advisable to monitor the horse's heart rhythm at exercise (known as an exercising ECG) to ensure that no more life-threatening arrhythmias are occurring. If the heart is structurally normal but the horse is still in AF treatment can be used to correct the rhythm. Traditionally a drug called quinidine sulphate has been used effectively but it comes with many side-effects and potential risks. More recently horses have undergone electrocardioversion, where an electrical current is applied to the heart via wires inserted in the main veins whilst the horse is under general anaesthesia, which is proving to be an effective alternative and allowing many horses to return to full competitive work.