



OFFICIAL
NEWSLETTER
OF THE
VETERINARY
ASSOCIATION
OF NAMIBIA

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Desk 1

VAN News 2

Congress 2023 3

Journal Club 11

Case Discussion 13

The Manga

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PRESIDENT'S DESK



Dear colleagues,

First of all: a big thank you to the VAN Exco of 2023! Well done for organising such a well attended Congress! A special thanks to Theuns, Lyndsay, Saskia and Philip who have all served on the Exco for quite a number of years -your time and efforts are much appreciated!

What a year this has been...I'm sure everyone is feeling the Festive Season's craziness and is longing for a break.

To those of you who are working this Festive Season, please be assured your work is appreciated. Your efforts are meaningful -to the animals, their owners and whole communities, even though it might not always feel that way.

To those of you who get to have a break, I hope you can switch off, enjoy the time with your loved ones and recharge for the fresh challenges and opportunities 2024 will bring.

I hope that each and everyone will find at least a few moments to reflect on the past year. The positive, the things you're grateful for, the important things like relationships, the things that matter to you and that give your life meaning and purpose.

Thank you for entrusting me with this task. I'm grateful for this opportunity and excited for 2024.

It is an honour to be able to serve you and our profession in this way.

Merry Christmas,

Alexandra Marko
-VAN Chairperson



VAN NEWS: EXCO 2024

The EXCO said good-bye to Dr Philip Groenewald, Dr Lyndsay Scott, Dr Theuns Laubscher, and Dr Saskia Stam. Thank you for your dedication and hard work over these past few years!

Introducing the EXCO 2024:

Dr Alexandra Marko: Chairperson, NVC, AFSCAN

Dr Cveta Pudar: Vice-Chairperson, WVA

Dr Andrea Klingelhoef: Secretary, Manga, SAVA

Dr Vincent Sevenster: Treasurer, UNAM

Dr Chanel van der Merwe: CPD Coordinator, para-veterinarians

Dr Jolandie van der Westhuizen: Industry, Rabies

Dr Shalom Phiri: Welfare, WSAVA

Dr Olebile Olibile: AHF, Rabies

Dr Christian Lichtenberg: NMRC

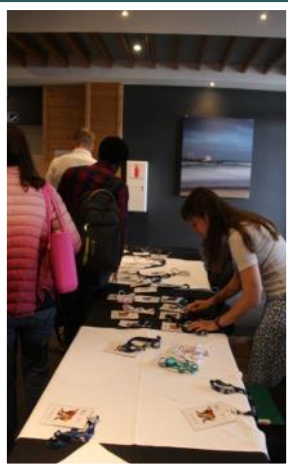


Photo: Beate Voigts

Annual Scientific Congress 2023

This year's Congress took place at the MTC Dome in Swakopmund. We were pleased to have 52 state veterinarians attending this year, making the total number of participants 116, including 13 final year UNAM students.

The first day of Congress was allocated to public health and production animals.

Speakers included Dr Albertina Musilika-Shilongo, Dr Klaus Depner, Dr Hellena Vaino,

Dr Vimanuka Mutjavikua and Dr Dave Midgley.

On the second day, Prof Paolo Pazzi, Dr Guy Fyvie and Dr Louis Loubser provided the latest updates in small animal medicine.

The last morning of Congress was dedicated to UNAM research with Dr John Yabe and Dr Israel Kaatura, and aquatic veterinary practice with Dr Gillian Taylor.

We also had three final year

students give presentations on their research projects, which were all very well presented.

The evening function was held at Memphis Barbeque & Blues, where there was a live band and food was served "street-food/food truck" style.

Thank you to all our sponsors for making this Congress a success!

(Photos have been credited, unless taken by the Editor).



Dr Lyndsay Scott opening up Congress (Photo credit: Beate Voigts)



Photo Credit: Beate Voigts

ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS 2023



Photo Credit :
Beate Voigts



Photo
Credit:
Saskia
Stam

ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS 2023



Drs Jens Kahler, Axel Hartmann, Klaus Depner and Renate Hilbert (Photo credit: Beate Voigts)



Dr Olebile Olibile with Industry representatives (Photo: Beate Voigts)



Dr Dave Midgley providing an alternative perspective on small stock production and veterinary practice (Photo credit: Beate Voigts)



Our personal barista, thanks to Hills sponsorship (Photo: Olebile Olibile)



Dr Vimanuka Mutjavikua teaching about bovine surgical procedures (Photo Credit: Olebile Olibile)



Dr Gillian Taylor lecturing on aquatic veterinary practice

INDUSTRY



Photo Credit: Saskia Stam



Photo: Beate Voigts



Photo: Beate Voigts



The Hills Team: Dr Guy Fyvie and Sr Brigid Goudie (Photo: Beate Voigts)



Winners of the Industry Raffle: MSD's Zodidi Masilela & Christiane Smith, with Saskia Stam

EVENING FUNCTION: MEMPHIS BARBEQUE & BLUES



Drs Hartmut Winterbach, Jens Kahler, Beate Voigts, Renate Hilbert, Ulrike Menne and her husband.



Dr Victoria Voigts, Dr Elvira Kleber and her husband



Dr Josephat Peter

ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS 2023



Dr Murangi's cousin, Sello Maboe (OBP), Dr Johannes Lipinge, Dr Stanley Gomxob and Dr Vemuna Murangi



Final year veterinary student Nemone Williams and Dr Eugene Jacobs in the front
(Photo credit: Saskia Stam)



Danie Smith (MSD), Sr Brigid Goudie (Hills), Prof Paolo Pazzi, Dr Louis Loubser, Dr Guy Fyvie (Hills) and Zodidi Masilela (MSD)

ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS 2023



Dr Sheperd Gadha, Dr Elizabeth Homateni, Dr Homateni's son, Dr Veronica Amunyela and her cousin



Dr Rauna Athingo and her niece



Dr Francis Nyathi and Dr Anna Homateni



Dr Axel Hartmann (Photo: Saskia Stam)



Dr Courtney Geyser and Dr Michael Pretorius
(Photo: Saskia Stam)

ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS 2023



Armand Steyn (Strategic Marketing), Dr Chanel van der Merwe, Dr Danita Liebenberg, Dr Mark Jahnke, Dr Hubertus Otto, Dr Vincent Sevenster and his wife.



Dr Petrus Hausiku, Dr Utaara Murangi and Dr Mahoto Liyemo (Photo: Saskia Stam)



Dr Josephina Kambode and Dr Sara Gottlieb (Photo: Saskia Stam)



Dr Andreas Gaugler & Dr Dave Midgley



Dr Samantha Zealand (Photo: Saskia Stam)



Amanda Foster, Dr Antje Zahradnicky and her husband Dr Lyndsay Scott, Dr Christian Lichtenberg & Dr Olebile Olibile



Photo Credit: Saskia Stam



Photo Credit: Saskia Stam





Journal Club: The year in review

A Journal Club was started in May this year with the aim of getting together in person and online to look at recent literature in small animal medicine and practice critically evaluating such literature. It is supposed to be a safe and fun learning environment where we can get to know each other better and at the same time learning the art of critical appraisal as well as updating our knowledge of what is "out there".

The articles are selected to be applicable to primary care settings with testing/diagnostic options available to veterinarians in Namibia.

May:
"Outcomes of dogs undergoing surgery for gastric dilatation volvulus after rapid versus prolonged medical stabilisation"
 While this article was likely published to justify delaying GDV surgery from after-hours to a more favourable time within hours, it still provided useful information on the type of case where this is an option and how this kind of stabilisation can be achieved in case the need arises.

June: *"Manifestations of hypertensive encephalopathy in cats"*

While this study had a lot of aspects to be critiqued, it was still valuable in terms of raising awareness of systemic hypertension and related CNS abnormalities in cats. This is something to bear in mind when dealing with a cat with neurological signs.

July:
"Medical and surgical management of pancreatic fluid accumulations in dogs: a retrospective study of 15 cases"
 This study provided interesting information on the diagnostic sampling of pancreatic fluid accumulations.

"Comparison of lung ultrasound, chest radiographs, C-reactive protein and clinical findings in dogs treated for aspiration pneumonia."
 This study found the resolution of lung consolidations on ultrasound and normalisation of CRP concentrations to be the monitoring tools that most closely resemble clinical findings of aspiration pneumonia. This might be very useful when deciding when to stop antibiotic treatment, especially in this time where AMR is an important factor to consider.

August:
"Utility of diagnostic tests in vomiting dogs presented

to an internal medicine emergency service"
 While the findings of this study stated the obvious and did not help differentiate complicated vs uncomplicated vomiting, it was perhaps still valuable in justifying why one should or shouldn't do all the available tests at first presentation of the vomiting patient.

"Neutering is not associated with early-onset urethral obstruction in cats"
 While the sample size was small, this information is useful when dealing with pet-owners who might be opposed to neutering their cat for medical reasons, such as possible urethral obstructions.

September:
"The relationships between urine sediment findings and culture results and the presence of proteinuria in canine urine samples"
 While slightly more technical, this was a great article revising the pathophysiology of proteinuria and cautioning against attributing proteinuria to urinalysis abnormalities or positive urine cultures and thereby possibly overlooking alternative causes of proteinuria.

Journal Club: The year in review ctd.

October:

"Bayesian clinical reasoning in the first opinion approach to a dog with suspected thoracolumbar pain"

Sometimes it is good to be aware of how we think about cases -understanding our clinical reasoning often helps in detecting flaws in our thinking patterns. While this article discussed the Bayesian approach, it also presented a good summary of a reasonable approach to working up a case of suspected thoracolumbar pain.

"The use of a Foley balloon catheter to control junctional haemorrhage in a dog with severe vascular injury secondary to penetrating trauma"

This just presented an interesting way of temporarily stopping a bleeder...

November:

"Transient myocardial thickening: a retrospective analysis on etiological, clinical, laboratory, therapeutic and outcome findings in 27 cats"

This was a very interesting article characterising TMT in cats. Although these patients often present in severely compromised states of congestive heart failure and emergency care is usually required. However compared to cats with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, the prognosis is much better, with possible resolution of all abnormalities in a relatively short period of time.

Please feel free to join - either in person or online via GoogleMeet. The dates for next year will be sent out early January.

Please email the Secretary if you would like to join the WhatsApp group.

- Alexandra Marko



CASE DISCUSSION: BOVINE OCULAR NEOPLASIA

By: Dr Olebile Olibile

HISTORY

A batch of cattle arrived at the feedlot from a “backgrounding” facility. During the routine processing of all new arriving cattle, it was observed that a C-grade cow aged approximately 5 years had a purulent discharge from the left eye with increased swelling around the upper margin of the eye orbit. Following the discovery of this problem the cow was taken to the Hospital Camp for full evaluation and treatment the following day.

CASE MANAGEMENT

Day 0:

The cow presented to the Clinic Bay and a clinical examination was performed. The left eye had a severe infection with a large lump that was occupying the dorsal margin of the upper eyelid. Furthermore, there seemed to be a drainage tract extending from behind the eye to the left cheek below the eye with a further lump also located on the left cheek.

Treatment that was initiated:

- Antibiotics (Benzathine Penicillin @12 000 IU/kg) IM for the ongoing secondary infection. (Once-off)
- Lancing and flushing of the lump that was determined to be an abscess on the left cheek.
- Since then, flushing of the eye and the lanced abscess was performed every day.

Following this initial treatment, the animal seemed to be doing better in terms of comfort and health. However, 2 weeks later the lump on the upper eyelid started becoming even larger and then seemed to further affect the eyeball which became necrotic.

Day 15:

The cow presented to the Clinic Bay as her eye was severely swollen and she showed further loss of habitus/demeanour. There was again increased purulent discharge from the eye. The lump on the upper eye further seemed to infiltrate the underlying upper orbit.

Otherwise, all other clinical parameters were within normal range apart from a peripheral blood smear that showed a moderate neutrophilia and a mild lymphocytosis.

BOVINE CASE DISCUSSION

Differential Diagnosis following 2nd evaluation:

1. Lymphosarcoma
2. Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC)

Palliative treatment POA:

- Anti-inflammatory to help reduce the ongoing swelling.
- Antibiotic (Benzathine Penicillin @12 000 IU/kg) to manage the ongoing infection.
- Wound flushing and removal of the remaining bits of the eye globe hence reducing the risk of the infection progressing further.

Ideally one would have liked to surgically debulk the infiltrative lumps or perform an enucleation to give the animal better comfort (palliative treatment). This could not be performed on the day as the necessary materials and resources weren't available. Hence surgical intervention was delayed until then.

Day 18:

All the necessary materials were obtained to surgically debulk the lump on the upper eyelid.

Clinical examination prior to minor surgery:

Temperature: 38.5 C (normal)
Heart rate: 80 beats/min (normal)
Respiratory rate: 30 breathes/min (normal)
Mucous membranes: PMG (normal)
Blood smear: Mild neutrophilia and moderate lymphocytosis.

Surgery:

- The cow was restrained within a hydraulic operated Silencer neck and body clamp that provides "superior and safer restraining compared to the traditional neck clamp".

BOVINE CASE DISCUSSION

- The animal was put under standing sedation and surgical preparation was carried out at the surgical site.
- Further pain medication was given prior to the start of the surgery.
- Once the surgical site was cleaned, local anaesthetic were given to further block the nerves innervating the orbital region of the eye so that the cow was desensitized to the incisions made to excise the lumps.
- The first two incisions were made, and the first bit of the lump removed successfully.
- About 15min into the procedure the cow's hindquarters went down and the hindlimbs slipped underneath the forequarters. As this occurred, the cow hooked its right mandible (jaw) onto the top of the forward extending rail of the neck clamp resulting in an unfortunate death for the cow at an instant.

Unfortunately, the sample of the lesions could not be submitted for a definitive diagnosis because of the owner not wanting to incur any further costs.

Post-mortem examination:

-Following the unfortunate freak accident that resulted in the death of the cow, a post-mortem examination was performed to try establish why the cow died instantly after hooking its jaw onto the forward extending rail of the neck clamp.

-Significant post-mortem findings:

- Dislocation of the upper cervical spine at the junction between the base of the skull and C1 (First cervical vertebrae).
- Bony Infiltration of the orbit by the lump on the left eyelid.



-Other post-mortem findings:

- Moderate enteritis in the ileum section of the small intestine-> possibly an early developing red gut.
- Rumen looked quite healthy.

BOVINE CASE DISCUSSION



-Post-mortem diagnosis for cause of death:

Traumatic upper cervical-spinal injury with associated spinal cord rupture following dislocation at the level of the base of the skull and C1.

The facility maintenance team was contacted to collaborate with the Animal Health team at the feedlot to try and put measures in place that will reduce the chances of a similar accident happening again. Especially in terms of changes to the clamp design and other relevant aspects.

Reflecting on the above case, what could have been done better?

- On first examination the veterinarian could have asked the owners how valuable the animal was to them and how much they were ready to spend on this animal. This was overlooked by the veterinarian simply because we often get so passionate and focused on fixing the problem at hand without considering the economical factors of the owner. This becomes hugely important in intensive production systems where the profit margins are quite tight.
- On Day 0 of examining the animal, the veterinarian could have rather focused on finding a definitive diagnosis rather than going for palliative treatment before determining a definitive cause.
- In this case the better option would have been to cull the cow on day 0 without treatment or initial processing medications being given due to the following reasons:
 - ⇒ Cow was in a good enough slaughter condition. Although it would not qualify for export market because of residency period but could still have gone for local market and owner would have received some returns on investment.
 - ⇒ With the signalment and lack of pigmentation around the eye and nature of the lesions this was most likely an advanced case of **Ocular Squamous Cell Carcinoma** starting to possibly invade the orbit. Hence surgical debulking was a good thought but not the ideal solution thinking of all the medication that would have to be administered post-surgery with a resultant prolonged withdrawal period, meaning a possibly longer standing period on feed with the chance of a negative FCR for the next 7 days post-surgery.

BOVINE CASE DISCUSSION

It was a good decision to follow through with a full post-mortem, as it revealed other information that was quite valuable to the rest of the Feedlot herd in terms of health status and further highlighting some changes that likely needed to implement to reduce the incidence of nutritional related conditions. This is how we as vets working with production animals should think “Herd health orientated”.

Regardless of whether you are presented with a single animal, the herd should always come before the individual patient if we are looking at the economics of a beef production enterprise.

The above case is just a reminder to veterinarians that even if you have all the necessary precautions and equipment in place, in the end unforeseen things will occur which are likely to be beyond your control. What matters is that it was not intentional and occurred in the process of you trying to help better the health status of your patient.

Further sources for information on ocular neoplasia:

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We would love to hear from you!

**Have an interesting case, story
or pictures to share with us?**

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