

ST DAVID'S EQUINE

VETERINARY SURGEONS

NEWSLETTER

KEEPING IN TOUCH
SPRING 2011

LOWER COSTS AND IMPROVED ROUTINE HEALTHCARE FOR YOUR HORSE IN 2011

GREATLY
REDUCED
VACCINE PRICES
FOR 2011 AND
NEW ROUTINE
HEALTH CHECK
SERVICES



With the cooperation of the suppliers of our new vaccine range, Intervet-Schering Plough, we are pleased to be able to significantly reduce the cost of routine vaccination to our clients. Our new vaccine prices will be £22 plus VAT for a flu vaccination and £25 plus VAT for combined flu and tetanus which makes them highly cost competitive.

Together with vaccination we are also pleased to offer a thorough routine healthcare examination which will include a range of routine healthcare services at a highly subsidised price of £15 plus VAT. We would advise our clients to take advantage of this service as our aim will be to try to pick up signs of disease early to allow successful diagnosis and treatment.

You will receive a full colour summary of your horse's routine healthcare examination, together with any recommended treatments or actions.

Services included in the routine healthcheck are:

- **Examination of the heart and lungs at rest.**
We will aim to pick up early signs of allergic airway disease. This is a disease which is preventable and, in the early stages, fully treatable, often by management changes alone.
- **Examination of the eyes with an ophthalmoscope.**
Problems with eyesight can affect both your horse's performance and behaviour. Horses are particularly prone to recurrent uveitis which can cause repeated episodes of eye pain and progressive damage to the eye.

- **Examination of the teeth, including the use of a gag (full mouth speculum).**
Dental problems can lead to problems in eating, dropping of food (quidding) and weight loss. They can also have a marked impact on performance, tolerance of the bit and head carriage during work.

- **Examination of the back, joints and feet visually and by palpation for signs of joint disease or issues of foot balance.**

- **A trot up in a straight line on a hard surface to detect early signs of lameness.**

Lameness is the commonest cause of retirement in ridden horses. However, many lamenesses can be cured or treated successfully if caught early on, before arthritic changes become established.

- **Discussion of your worming programme.**

- **A free faecal worm egg count.**

Faecal egg worm counts can indicate whether your horse needs worming and if so, which wormer it needs. Please provide us with a labeled small fresh sample of your horse's faeces for us to take back to the surgery for immediate analysis. Results will normally be available within 24 hours.

- **A free blood sample for tapeworm** (the external lab fee will be charged at cost price)
- The blood test for tapeworm will reveal any need for tapeworm wormers.

As well as these services, additional services will be offered, again at greatly reduced prices:

- **Optional extra services will be:**

- **A routine blood health profile (haematology, biochemistry or both).**

The blood sample will be taken free of charge and the blood screen carried out at less than half price.

- **Preferential prices for microchipping**
- **Preferential prices for worming products**

Our worming products are deliberately priced to be competitive with other suppliers and are regularly price checked to ensure they remain competitive.

Further or more in depth examinations carried out at the same time as vaccination will be charged at our normal prices.

Please contact St Davids Equine for further treatment information on 01392 876622

WEIGHING IN AT ST DAVID'S!



We have recently purchased a new weighbridge which will weigh horses, ponies and donkeys to a high accuracy of less than half a kilogram. It is a similar model to that used at all of the main events in this country, manufactured by Horseweigh. The weighbridge is extremely useful to us in accurately dosing both medications and anaesthetics for our hospitalised horses. We hope that it will also be useful to our clients for weight monitoring horses that are suspected to be losing weight or for weight control programmes in obese animals.

If you would like to have your horse or pony weighed at the surgery, please ring the equine office to arrange an appointment with our nurses.

LECTURES

CLIENT LECTURE SERIES – SPRING 2011

Following the successful and well attended series of client evenings at the end of last year we are pleased to announce the dates and subjects for our new spring series of meetings. As before, lectures in the series are free of charge and will take place at the Estuary Room at Darts Farm. Numbers will be limited, so please contact the practice to register your interest and book a place.

THURSDAY 10TH MARCH 2011

7:30PM START

Lecture and Discussion:
“WOUNDS AND INJURIES IN YOUR HORSE. WHEN SHOULD YOU WORRY?”

SPEAKER: BOB BARKER MRCVS OF ST DAVIDS' EQUINE PRACTICE
 VENUE: DARTS FARM

WEDNESDAY 23RD MARCH 2011

7:30PM START

Lecture and Discussion:
“SARCOIDS: WHAT ARE THEY AND HOW CAN THEY BE TREATED?”

SPEAKER: RICHARD FROST MRCVS
 ST DAVID'S EQUINE PRACTICE
 VENUE: DARTS FARM

WEDNESDAY 6TH APRIL 2011

7:30PM START

LECTURE AND DISCUSSION: “FEEDING THE OBESE HORSE OR LAMINITIC PONY?”

SPEAKERS: NICOLA TYLER OF “TOPSPEC FEEDS”
 BEN CRISP MRCVS OF ST DAVID'S EQUINE PRACTICE
 VENUE: DARTS FARM

Please contact St David's Equine for further treatment information on 01392 876622

NEW DIGITAL RADIOGRAPHY SYSTEM INSTALLED



St David's are pleased to announce that, in line with our ongoing dedication to diagnostic excellence, we have invested in a new direct digital high definition x-ray system.

This has the ability to produce high quality digital images within 5 seconds of the image being taken. The extra advantage is that the system is completely portable and the pictures can be e-mailed or left on a disc for you or your vet or farrier to view.

This system will also complement our gantry mounted high power generator installed at the practice for those 'difficult to get' shots of spines and chest x-rays, or just for even higher quality limb radiography.

The system differs from most other cheaper digital radiography systems.

- **Our new system is a DR digital system.**

The key feature of this system is that the image is directly captured onto a digital plate and immediately saved onto the computer. This has big advantages in that the image production is very fast and the image produced is of a very high quality and detail.

- **We are currently the only vet practice in the south west to offer this system.**

• **So called CR mobile digital systems are cheaper but the image that they produce is usually of poorer quality.** They capture an image in a similar way to normal X-Ray film and this image is then “digitised” when it is fed through a “digital processor”.

- **Most other mobile digital systems in Veterinary Practice in the South West are of this CR type.**

There are several advantages of this new system to our clients.

- **Mobile veterinary radiography.** It is much easier to produce high quality images out at your stable yard as we do not need to transport X-Ray plates back to the clinic to be developed.

- **Foot balance radiography.** Images can be immediately produced at your yard or stable. We can even produce X-rays before and after foot trimming. This will be useful for laminitis or to allow you and your farrier to immediately see the affect of remedial trimming or shoeing.

- **Vetting X-Rays.** Multiple, high quality X-rays can be carried out quickly.

NEW SUPPLEMENT

NEW SUPPLEMENT LAUNCH, ZYLKENE FOR CALMING HORSES IN DIFFICULT OR STRESSFUL SITUATIONS

Horses, like humans can experience stress in certain situations. This can sometimes result in unwanted behavioural patterns or reduced performance at competition. Zylkène Equine has been developed to help horses and ponies overcome difficult or stressful situations such as prolonged confinement, a new environment, new people or new horses, weaning, “breaking”, travelling, teeth rasping or vet or farrier visits. The product favours rapid and smooth adaptation to changing situations and has formerly been used successfully and widely to manage stress in dogs and cats in small animal practice.

Zylkène is a natural product and contains a compound derived from the milk protein, Casein, which acts on GABA receptors which are involved in the regulation of emotional states. It consequently acts as a calmer without causing sedation. Because of this it can be used in ridden horses and may be helpful in horses in which the stress of competition causes reduced performance.



Zylkène Equine can be used for both short and long term stress. It can be particularly useful alongside behavioural re-training to help horses adapt to changing situations.

For anticipated short term stressful situations such as travelling or a change in environment, Zylkène Equine can be used from 2 days prior to, and for the duration of, the stressful event. For chronic, longer term behavioural problems, Zylkène Equine can be used on a continuous basis.

Zylkène Equine is a natural product and is available in an easy to give, once daily, apple flavoured powder which can be mixed with a small amount of food. Zylkène Equine has not been associated with side effects such as sedation, lack of inhibition or memory loss at the recommended daily intake.

ST. DAVIDS EQUINE STAFF CORNER

JANIE MCDONALD

HI, MY NAME IS JANIE MCDONALD, I'M 32 YEARS OLD AND I AM A EQUINE NURSE AT ST DAVID'S.



I have been working for St David's for 6 years and love every minute of it! My day to day role is meeting clients and their horses, looking after the horses from the time that they arrive to the time they are collected, anything from theatre to routine treatments, lameness work ups, dentals, bone scans, ill and injured horses. Before I worked at St Davids I worked for the Donkey Sanctuary for 7 years and before that worked in a competition yard, anything from show jumpers, eventers to national hunt horses.



In my spare time I have 3 horses of my own, Monty a 13 year old TB, Killie 21 year old ID X TB and Dunty a 7 year old Connamara x TB who I love to care for and compete. I've been riding horses ever since I was two years old, my first pony was a Shetland called Thomas the Tank. I live in Sidmouth with my boyfriend and our two dogs Ollie and Pickle.

I'm just completely horsey mad!!!!

This is a regular column in our newsletter, the purpose of which is to introduce, over time, all of our staff to clients who may not yet have met them or only talked to them on the phone.

MATTHEW HALL

UPDATE FROM OUR SPONSORED RIDER MATTHEW HALL

I own and run a small livery/competition yard near Okehampton, Devon, in an ideal situation 5 mins from the A30 and on the edge of Dartmoor. I specialise in producing and competing showjumpers at all levels and enjoy a busy schedule of competing throughout Devon and further afield. 2010 was another busy year, not only with competitions but we also made further improvements to our facilities. We have extended our outdoor arena to 50m x 25m and replaced the surface, and more recently rebuilt all our internal stables.



The conclusion of the indoor season in the early part of 2010 was somewhat disrupted by the snow in February when we unfortunately were unable to attend two Premier shows at the Hand Equestrian in Bristol. Our own Cinnamon II (Carnival Drum) and Tom Butler's Valae (Calvaro Z) then both contested the 7-8 year old classes, and jumped tough 1.40m tracks to progress to the 2nd rounds. Other shows at this superb venue resulted in placings in various classes and completed qualification for 2nd rounds of both Newcomers and Foxhunters later in the year for Cinnamon, Wadonna (Voltaire) and Valae.

The outdoor season began with Redpost Equestrian and SWSJC at Bicton, which provided some good results. An addition to the team was a talented 4 yr old by an Irish son of Darco (owned by Jo Luscombe) who is a serious

horse for the future with promising performances at both venues. Valae tackled the atmosphere and imposing tracks in the Accumulator and 1.30m classes at Devon County for the first time. Although missing out on a place she coped well under pressure and will hopefully compete at the Show again this year.

Cinnamon II later produced some good performances and won both a Newcomers and Foxhunter at Bicton (Clinton Estates) at an autumn show.

With a disrupted indoor season at the end of 2010 due to the weather we had a great start to the new year at the Grange EC with Tom Butler's 7 year old Wadonna qualifying with a 2nd place for the Bath & West Senior Novice Championship, and we also have qualifications for this year's Newcomers and Foxhunters 2nd rounds. We have however, said goodbye to Sabina III, Tom Butler's German bred mare by Espri who has retired to be a broodmare, and stallion selection is now a hot topic of discussion!



With a strong team of horses, and superb facilities we are looking forward to a successful 2011 and would like to thank St David's Equine for their continued support.

Photographs are reproduced courtesy of Debbie Fuller email: debbiej.fuller@virgin.net



MATTHEW HALL HAS LIMITED VACANCIES FOR FULL AND COMPETITION LIVERY.

- ALL AGES AND ABILITIES CONSIDERED •
- HORSES ALSO TAKEN FOR BACKING, SCHOOLING AND SALES •
- EXCELLENT FACILITIES AND SUPERB LOCATION •

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

07721 506455/01837 840454. EMAIL: moorsidestables@btinternet.com

OR VISIT: www.matthewhallequestrian.com.

A CLIENT TESTIMONIAL!

FILLY - KISSING SPINES. BY DEBBIE SOMERFIELD

This is the first in an occasional series of articles written by clients who have had horses treated at the practice. They give their own first-hand accounts of the symptoms they noticed and the treatment they received.

Filly is my 16.3hh, Trakehner/TB Dressage mare. 2007 proved to be a good and successful year at Advanced Medium and at home we were working towards PSG. Then, in early 2008 she began to struggle with her work. Exercises she had previously been coping with well were becoming more difficult. Our results were worse, percentages dropped off alarmingly and the judge's comments repeatedly mentioned that Filly was hollow, not working through, short behind and so on. Then I saw some photos from a show and I was shocked. She looked appalling - much worse than she was feeling. As a result I booked her in for a work up at the Practice - nothing very specific for them to go on, I just knew she wasn't right. I had also noticed that she tended to stand in a rocking horse pose - front and back limbs out slightly.

Initial investigations showed her to be mildly lame behind with some discomfort on hock flexion and so her hocks were x-rayed. Results came back that she had the beginnings of bone spavin in both hocks - fairly common in older, more advanced dressage horses and not the end of the world. She was treated with Tildren and for the next 2 weeks was fabulous but then she began to deteriorate and struggle again so back she went. Tony Kaye and Clare McDonald watched her lunging indoors on a soft surface. They felt that she was holding her back rigid and splinted at canter and had significant back pain so she was booked in for further investigations - x-rays of her spine and ultrasound scans of her supraspinous ligament. I think everyone was pretty shocked by the results because she really hadn't been complaining much but she had multiple kissing spines along the length of her back, several of them classed as category 4 (out of 4)! The spinous processes were irregular and she had marked damage in the supraspinous ligament, which, on ultrasound scan, showed many tears and fluid filled areas. Poor mare - I felt so guilty but she really hadn't been complaining - a testament to her generous spirit.

Traditionally, in the UK, surgery has been the only option for treatment but increasingly in Europe and the USA medical treatment of the condition has been developed. I didn't want to consider the invasive option of surgery and pretty much thought her ridden career was over but fortunately Tony and Clare suggested the

medical route. They had attended a course in Vienna the previous year run by prominent vets in this field from both France and the USA. Medical therapy included Mesotherapy (a large number of fine needle injections some 350) were given along both sides of her back (under sedation to give a pain relieving effect) and she was also given an IV infusion of Tildren (a new drug which promotes bone production in conditions where bone is being eroded and also has a direct pain killing effect on bone). This was followed by a course of laser therapy and physical therapy from Clare and a programme of rehabilitation exercise on the Pessoa supervised by her.



I took Filly home to begin an intensive 6 week period of rehab work using the Pessoa, with Filly also taking oral anti-inflammatories to relieve her hock pain and allow her to do the essential work to build up her abdominal muscles and the soft tissues over the back. The idea is you break the cycle of pain and poor posture that exacerbates pain in this condition and that by strengthening the abdominal muscles while working very round in the Pessoa you provide the horse with muscle support which protects and supports the spine and at the same time opens the gaps between the spinous processes by altering the horses posture. Its a bit like Pilates for horses!! She built up well but because she was a severe case Tony decided she would benefit from a second Mesotherapy and Tildren treatment, followed by further work in the Pessoa.

Alongside the veterinary treatment there was also the incredibly important aspect of Remedial Farriery. Filly's foot/leg conformation is not the best - long in the toe, narrow in the heel and long sloping pasterns. This meant that that she had no real support and standing with her hind legs out behind her tended to drop her back, exacerbating any kissing spine problem. Ben Chamberlain saw her every 5 weeks and has totally changed her foot balance. Her feet are much more 'under her legs' now, giving her the support she needs. She now stands up properly four square. She is shod with long heels and generous lateral heel extensions in order to support the down forces of her frame. Initially she was shod up with Equithane filler and pads but now she just has standard natural balance shoes on front and wide web hinds with the heel extensions.

I began to ride her again in the following January 2009. I am a slave to her management programme - she works in the Pessoa twice a week and each ridden session begins with 15-20 minutes of essential deep and round stretching work in all three paces. Collected work spells are kept short and interspersed with stretching. She is turned out as much as possible - out 24/7 throughout the summer. She is still shod every 5 weeks. I also use an Equilibrium Back Massage pad on her for 30 minutes before and after every work session to warm up and work down her back muscles - it can only help. She is checked every four months and has a good back massage.

By May 2009 she was working softly over the back again and back out competing and at home I started to push forward with the training again. She rewarded me by competing in our first PSG in October 2009 and gaining our first point at the level! She has continued to go from strength to strength and 2010 was a fabulous year for us; Qualifying and competing in three classes at the Winter Regional Championships, competing at the Pet Plan Advanced Medium Finals at the Harptury Winter Championships, being on the Team to compete in the Senior Inter Regionals at The College, Keysoe and over the summer achieving six results of 64% - 65.5% at Advanced and PSG. Not bad for a write off! She has been a super star and owes me nothing so, as she is now 15, I have decided to do the right thing by her and retire her as a brood mare while she is at her best rather than push on until she can't cope. She has gone down to Verity Perry in Cornwall where she will enjoy a happy retirement and I can't wait to see her first foal.

Kissing spine is a shocking and traumatic diagnosis but it really doesn't have to be the end of the world. However, a successful recovery isn't just a case of paying for the treatment. You do need a school and it is a lot of hard work and a huge commitment - every day for the rest of your horses ridden career! But well worth it in my book.

Thanks to Tony, Clare and Ben (and all the other staff at St David's) for giving Filly the chance to fulfil all my dreams.