

Worshipful Company of Farriers EVSA Award 2024

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I was extremely excited to have been given the opportunity to see placement with Steve Newman through the WCF EVSA Award. I have worked with horses for many years through performance yards to stud yards in New Zealand before coming to vet school. Being able to see a week's work within the farrier industry was a great opportunity for myself to further expand my knowledge in equestrian and to see how we as vets can help the farriers to achieve a better outcome for our equine counterparts.



On our first day we discussed the importance of hoof balance and hoof mapping going through lectures before heading out to local clients. I was able to practice identifying any imbalances through walking/trotting and seeing how the hoof aligns with the collimation of bones. This also involved myself removing shoes and discussing when we would use the method of removing the shoe nail by nail for softer soles or when investigating if an abscess is present. It was great to be able to discuss with Steve the importance of knowing when in the shoeing cycle your client is at to understand if an imbalance is due to the horse being close to the end of its shoeing cycle or due to further external/internal factors. Throughout the week I was able to have a better eye at identifying foot fall and medio-lateral imbalances in each horse which was a great and important learning experience for me. Especially being able to identify where the primary impact point on the heel of the hoof wall was and how a few mms of rasping can help level and correct this, until next shoeing of course.



Preparing and working with the imprint shoe.

We had a great discussion about different glue shoes and modern materials that are on the market. I was able to gain valuable experience of my own Imprint glue shoes and creating my own lateral extension to correct gait and foot placement. I enjoyed learning how this is done and the different ways the imprint shoes can be modified for different cases, such as making hospital plates and using when there is little hoof wall to be able to nail a shoe on. I was fortunate enough to have Andrew Thompson come by and discuss the different glue shoes he uses as well such as the More-Aid squish pad, it was great to see the range available on the market and the success stories of using these glue shoes in

certain cases. I found the theory and practical side of using modern materials extremely important especially as Steve recommended to have a different variety in the car when out on calls in case one is needed placed in an emergency and how helpful it is to have a vet able to do this.

Steve talked me through and demonstrated how to do an abscess investigation and where the most common places abscesses are found such as at the toe and heel of the hoof wall. We discussed through lectures and hands on how to apply dressings in the case of an abscess and the treatment we provide for it. I was able to practice my investigation on each horse we shod understanding what reaction is normal to hoof testers and what is abnormal, as well as looking for bruising within the soles and hoof wall. I found it very interesting in one case that had a ring of bruising growing down the hoof wall from the coronary band. Steve explained to me that when you see a ring all the way round it is indicative of trauma that has been caused further up the limb which was then confirmed by the owner that the horse had a hock injury a while back and this was evident by the bruising ring growing out from the coronary band.

We discussed the different reasons we would cast a horse's hoof including trauma to the hoof wall that has created deficits/ quarter cracks and how using hoof casts can help strengthen the hoof wall. After discussing, Steve gave me a scenario to place a hoof cast after I had just sutured the heel bulb of the horse and how I would protect the sutures from the cast but still have the support of the cast over the heels. We discussed using dental putty to lay over the heels and off I went to try this method out. I applied the putty to the bulbs of the heel and then started wrapping my cast material after prepping. I realised very quickly that ideally, I would have waited till my dental putty had set slightly more before placing as when wrapping it started to spread out more than I would have liked. When we removed the cast the next day, I was able to reflect and discuss how I felt the putty had made the bulbs too moist. If there was indeed sutures & a wound it would have affected the healing process if left like this and ideally a more porous material would have benefited or cutting away some of the putty to allow air flow once the cast had been placed.

I had an incredible week experience with Steve and came away with so much more knowledge than I could have hoped for. I am only sad that this was just a week's placement as I had enjoyed it so much! I would seriously recommend this opportunity to all vet students looking to get into equine practice as it has been incredibly vital.



Working with the hoof cast material & dental putty.