



[13.45–14.00]

## **TREATMENT OF ANGULAR LIMB DEFORMITIES IN FOALS USING RADIAL EXTRACORPOREAL SHOCKWAVE THERAPY: A PROSPECTIVE TRIAL**

*Rowlands D.S., Boening K.J. and Bathe A.P.* (NEWMARKET)

Angular limb deformities (ALD) are a common problem in foals. Experimental work has suggested that extracorporeal shockwave therapy (ESWT) may have a growth retardation effect on the physis. Our hypothesis was that ESWT would modulate physeal function sufficiently to be a non-invasive method of treating ALD in cases that would otherwise require surgery.

Seventeen Thoroughbred foals were selected for treatment on the basis of radiologically confirmed ALD. Treatments were applied to the region of the physis on the convex side of the deformity, aiming to slow growth on that side, and performed at weekly intervals under sedation using a radial shockwave generator (Swiss Dolorclast Vet). The foals were monitored on a weekly basis and treatment was stopped when the limb angles were deemed satisfactory ( $<4^\circ$ ).

Age at start of treatment ranged from 7 to 120 days, median 24 days. There were 12 unilateral cases of carpal valgus and one bilateral case; 2 cases of unilateral carpal varus; one unilateral fetlock varus case and 3 unilateral cases of fetlock valgus. Five foals were graded as mild, 4 as moderate and 8 as severe.

The number of treatments ranged from 2 to 5, median 3 treatments. The time until satisfactory straightening was 15–76 days, median 25 days. Fifteen out of 17 cases (88%) were successful and 2 cases underwent surgery due to only a partial improvement achieved with ESWT.

Our clinical experience, supported by the results above, has shown the use of ESWT to be beneficial in the treatment of ALD in foals.