

Worshipful Company of Farriers Equine Veterinary Studies Award 2022

I am so grateful and delighted to be awarded the Equine Veterinary Studies Award this year. This award enabled me to spend a week with Steve Hewitt AWCF and his family in York, learning all things hooves! I was welcomed into the family with open arms (and paws) and thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience, gaining hands on experience throughout the week.

Many of the horses that Steve shoes for are racehorses, this is something I had not had much exposure to. I was very excited to not only learn about the difference in shoeing these horses but also how the yards and horses were managed. The first horse I encountered was a complicated case and highlighted the importance of a good working relationship between both owner, vet, and farrier. As shown in figure 1, this horse had to have a hoof cast due to the defect in the hoof wall following removal of infected areas of the hoof due to seedy toe.

The removal of this hoof wall was performed by the farrier whilst the vet was present, they worked together to ensure the best treatment could be



Figure 1 – Application of a hoof cast.

administered and therefore a good outcome for the horse. The defect in the hoof wall was filled with copper sulphate paste (B Gone), a hoof cast was applied with water and acrylic glue was spread onto the dorsal surface of the hoof to aid attachment; the cast was then covered in cling film whilst the material set. The cast was cut out around the heel to allow the hoof to expand and contract as the horse would still be working whilst casted. A shoe can then be nailed into the cast, allowing the hoof wall to be preserved. In this case, 3D half pads and dental impression material were also applied underneath the shoe. Following this, the horse was able to return to full training and racing.

The day continued to throw interesting cases at us, and the next horse we visited presented with a



Hoof with canker

week-long history of a proliferative frog. The frog had a canker like appearance, and readily bled on superficial debridement. This was later confirmed by the visiting vet to be canker. I was lucky enough to be to follow this case throughout the week, the horse underwent treatment with liquid nitrogen and a hospital plate was fitted following this. This case



Hoof post treatment

opened my eyes to the complexity of planning and producing a hospital plate and allowed me to appreciate the time required to get this done. The hospital plate needed to be planned and made in time for application post treatment which required good communication and planning between the two professionals. Again, this highlighted the importance of a good working relationship and communication between both vets and farriers.

During the week I was able to practice my shoe pulling technique. Steve and I talked about many techniques and methods to remove a shoe, from using nail pullers, to a buffer and mallet, or rasping back the clenches. I practiced using a buffer and rubber mallet followed by pincers to lever the shoe

from the hoof. By the time I had pulled off a set of shoes, my coat, gilet and two jumpers had come off, yet I was still breaking into a sweat! Having only had to pull off the odd shoe previously I had a whole new appreciation for the physical strength and stamina required to pull off shoes all day, let alone put them back on! I hope I will one day be able to make pulling a shoe look as effortless as farriers make it look! This was such a good opportunity to have as you don't get too much practice doing this before graduating, and I feel much more confident having been able to practice this on so many horses throughout the week.



Following these cases, we treated ourselves to some of the best ice-creams around at Brymor Ice Cream

Parlour, which was a secret favorite drop-in shop of Steve's previous apprentices!



Towards the end of the week, I got the opportunity to attempt to make a horseshoe from start to finish.















Steve demonstrated a step and then I copied.....and took at least ten times as long! It was such a great experience, but very frustrating when it didn't go right straight away. A few hours after starting I did manage to produce something that resembled a horseshoe, which is now sat on display at home! Following this, we discussed the many different shoes available and when and in which situations these might be used. This highlighted the wide

range of options that are available to help horses with treatment or management of many common injuries or conformational problems, allowing them to perform well and stay as sound as possible. In the table below are just some of the shoes we discussed.

I couldn't have chosen a better week to come, the evenings were filled with dog cuddles and Liverpool football matches in front of the log burner - a great end to a busy day! I have had the most fantastic week and feel I have learnt so much, coming away with a greater understanding of both standard and remedial shoeing. We also saw more common day one veterinary problems such as abscesses, enabling Steve to talk through and show me how to use hoof knives to help treat it.



I would like to thank the Worshipful Company of Farriers for this fantastic opportunity to have such a hands-on placement with such a knowledgeable farrier who is enthusiastic to teach. Thank you to Lydia, who has been amazing in organizing the placement between Steve and myself and sorting out all the admin that comes with it. I just want to say another great big thank you to Steve and his family for being so welcoming and accommodating to me, I have thoroughly enjoyed my week with you and have come away with a greater knowledge and appreciation of both the theoretical and practical side of farriery.

	SPAVIN SHOE		ALUMINIUM RACING PLATE
	LATERAL SUPPORT (SHOE MACHINE MADE)		STEEL BAR SHOE WITH ALTERAL SUPPORT SHOE OF THE HEEL
	SIDE BONE SHOE		ALUMINIUM EXTREMEN BREAKOVER LANDING SHOE
	HALF HEART BAR SHOE		ALUMINIUM SUSPENSORY SUPPORT SHOE The theory is that it prevents toe sinking when working on a soft surface which reduces the pull on the suspensory
	STEEL COLLATERAL LIGMANET SUPPORT SHOE		ALUMINIUM COLLATERAL LIGAMNENT (of DIP joint) SUPPORT SHOE Wider base on the affected side, stops sinking of the affected side. These can be used for both medial or lateral collateral ligament injuries.
	CAULKIN WEDGE SHOE		ALUMINIUM RACING PLATE WITH HALF MESH 3D PADS AND DENTAL IMPRESSION MATERIAL UNDERNEATH PAD Increase frog pressure and protect caudal heel.