

Practitioners' Practice Tips

Dr. Lavon Koger, Presiding

Dr. Koger: In the interest of time we'll try to streamline the program tonight and get as many gems, as much meat, as much words of wisdom as we can. Therefore I've asked the speakers to limit their presentations to 5 to 8 minutes. We will take a couple of quick questions afterwards. And then, at the end of scheduled presentation, we will have something of a general forum, an open forum, for people with burning questions, we'll try to get them here to the micro-

phone so that all can hear and we'll try to get the questions repeated so that everyone can hear. I think that we need to say nothing more about it except that I would ask you to withhold applause until we complete the schedule. I will introduce the speakers by title and name only. Our first speaker, Jim Curtis will speak on Skin Chips and Automatic Applicator. He will appear also in the other session so he will leave this as soon as he has completed.

Skin Clips and Automatic Applicators

Dr. Jim Curtis, Malta, Montana

Dr. Koger was very flattering when he titled the talk "Skin Clips and Automatic Applicator"—what I'm really talking about here is a device to rapidly close many incisions, such as when you are spaying heifers. I hope I don't set veterinary medicine back too far, but what I have here is nothing more than one pig ring and an automatic hog ringer. Now before you all walk out on me, I'd like to say that when we're spaying heifers time, is of the essence, and for years I was a purist and I was very proud of my suture work and my fancy knot-tying and was very disdainful of such a device and was finally talked into trying it. I found out that if you're doing large groups of heifers—2, 3, 4, hundred a day—this is almost indispensable in the interest of time. After you do a few hundred you have a grip like King Kong, but it's a very handy device, very cheap and comes from Nasko Supply which probably all of you are familiar with. The only adaptations I've made were I braised in a little lip on the edges to hold the rings in a little more securely, put a pop rivet so that when your hands are wet and you're in a hurry you can just grab that, slide it back, to reload. I have found that it has speeded up our surgery time. The stockmen report they heal much more rapidly than when they are sutured, I'm sorry to say. We have never had a problem with abscesses or wound dehiscence. We have had heifers spayed, loaded in truck and had the trucks tip over and no problems, the wounds hold—the heifer might not hold!, but the wounds hold. Come fall, when it is time to ship these heifers to the feedlots in the Midwest the retention is very low in brushy country. There's no retention in open country such as mine. We see less than 1% of the heifers carrying skin clip.

I have one more device, I'm not familiar with. This was loaned to me by Dr. Bill Patton of Cascade, Montana. It's a home-made incision maker. Now Bill Patton is about 6' 7" and has a hand like an orangutan. You have got an incision, he tells me! The blade in it just slips right out and he swears by this device. He says your incision is uniform and rapid. It is not an elaborate affair, and Bill spays several thousand heifers each spring and claims a device like this is the answer. Thank you Dr. Koger.

Advantages of the Kimberly-Rupp Instrument in Spaying Heifers:

*Dr. P. R. Rice,
Cranbrook, British Columbia, Canada:*

I am in a small practice—mixed practice in Cranbrook, British Columbia and so some of the things I talk about are adapted for my type of situation. Specifically, the one cow, two cow, one pine tree and three stump kind of things! First thing I'm going to show you is just a halter rigged up. I'm sure a lot of you don't need to use a halter, you have a squeeze chute—a lot of times I don't have that. It's something that has worked very handy for me and hopefully it will work for you. All I take is a piece of braided nylon rope—I think it's for waterskiing, if you're a waterskiing buff. Anyway, stick it all together and on the one side put a quick release honda. For those of you with squeeze chutes, it doesn't matter, for me with my tree, it helps a lot! Some of them get back pretty tight and it's a quick way to let them go. You just pop the quick release and off they go. Nothing to it. I did have this save one cow's life. I had her tied up to a manger in a barn, and somehow she got all twisted up and had the end of my rope tied around her neck and was going bleah! and so I popped it open and that was it. You should note that that won't hang up around the horns like the commercial quick release halters. This slides over her head.

Another type of spaying heifers to counter-act what Jim just said, I started using the Kimberly-Rupp technique this year. I'm sure a lot of you are familiar with it, probably a lot of you have used it far more than I have. I found it very advantageous in my practice which is small. Several reasons preparation time on these heifers where in many cases I don't have a squeeze chute, or we have to drag one in from somewhere, is none. We cut them off feed and water for twenty-four hours and preferably 36 hours. There's no clipping to do, and no scrubbing. We just run them in when we are ready to work, and that's that. Just a head catch certainly works very adequately for doing this technique. All we need is the Kimberly-Rupp instrument which you've probably seen. I use a back-pack pressure sprayer to scrub the peroneal region; I just load it up with water and a good disinfectant, chloro-