

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-

hexadine or something along that line. I use a five-gallon bucket with disinfectant to drop my instrument into and all we need now is the heifer and an assistant. I find it very advantageous in my practice where most of my herds run from 50 to 250 range cows and some of these owners decide to keep 6 heifers or 50 heifers or whatever the case may be. The reason is it is less traumatic for the heifer, there's no bawling, very little jumping, they don't see any blood and that's a real client pleaser. Post-spaying complications are none, unless you cut a gut! Speed—I find it extremely fast, I didn't have anybody show me how to do this. I just wrote to Dr. Kinley and started in. If you can't do one in 15 seconds you're not doing well. It really goes fast. Probably the biggest thing is client acceptance of it. All you do is get the heifer in wherever you're going to put her. Put in one arm rectally. I use my right arm, and it goes into the rectum, I have an assistant with a back-pack sprayer standing there—gives a good blast on the peroneum, knocks the dirt off. I pick up the instrument from the bucket, with the other hand into the vagina, up over the top of the cervix, into the fornix, and at this point you can see that the spring loads and the trocar comes out at the end. We've got the trocar at the end and your hand in the rectum. Everything's up, out of the way, you give it a push, and you are through into the peritoneal cavity. You drop the trocar, and there you are. Your next thing is to isolate an ovary, whichever one you start with. I start with the left one, reach over pick it up, making sure I have it free from the intestine. That is probably the most important thing. Get it over the hole which is closed, and then open it up. I use my left hand. You can do it all with one hand very easily. You've got the chamber open, and the left ovary in there. Turn it on around to the right and cut it. Before you can completely close your chamber, it is best to move your instrument back and forward a bit to be sure you don't have the rectal wall. It is very simple to tell. Close her off. The spring pushes the ovary up into the holding chamber and you are all set to do the other one. Just the reverse treatment. Close it off, pull it out, discard the ovaries, drop the instrument into the bucket and off you go. It is an extremely simple, very fast technique which is pleasing to the clients.

Question: What do you give the heifer post-operatively?

Answer: Nothing.

Question: How many did you kill?

Answer: I killed two when I started. Cut out a piece of intestine—that sure does it!

Question: What do you do about hemorrhage?

Answer: I have never had a problem with hemorrhage, even when you have a big CL. In that case you do have one problem—it won't fit into the cutting chamber and you have to make two to three cuts, but it is just a matter of cutting a piece off, dropping the next piece in and cutting it off.

Question: What does the instrument cost?

Answer: The instrument cost is about \$250 (Lane Manufacturing).

Cattle Handling Equipment:

Dr. Jim Lewis, St. Paul, Nebraska

St. Paul, Nebraska is 20 miles north of Grand Island

and we have a 3 man practice—Dr. Lyle Raffison, Dr. Any Martinson and myself. Our building is 60 feet by 100 feet with the front half for small animals and the back part for our trucks, pens and what work we want to do inside. We put in a small chute for pickups and horse trailers because we find that one pickup can mess up a lot of pots when they show up. We moved out to the edge of town and built a new clinic so we incorporated a Bowman half-circle with the Powder River runway. We have a Trojan chute which is commercially made in Weatherford, Oklahoma, and it is beautiful. It has a three horse motor and it just does not quit. We process a lot of incoming cattle. We keep a few of the branding irons hanging there. As far as I know, there's no portable hydraulic chute that you can go to the country with, that will work! The only one I know of is one made by a place called Mighty Handy and my estimation of them is they're mighty unhandy! But after we obtained that Trojan, we didn't have anybody that wanted to go implant big steers anymore or preg-check cows. So we've got a young hungry blacksmith and he knows what he is doing and he did this for us. It's Powder River head catch, front and rear, with a horse and a half electric motor on it. Runs on 110. You've got front control, squeeze control and the back control and it does work and you can handle a tremendous amount of cattle. The only time we have any difficulties is when they are fat and black and short and squatty, and that board you see lying along the side is a board that we just place behind so that they can get their belly up high enough to walk in, but, with the advent of Chianias and other big cattle, we don't have to use it too often. It added quite a little weight to it. We have always run fenders so we just had a cable put on the fender that goes down at the front of the chute and you just stand there and turn the crank and it picks itself right up in the air. It can be set up in a feed lot and you can run just as fast as you can with any of the commercial jobs. Also, we don't have an arm and a leg in it. We have the basic chute and we have about \$1800 on top of it in the rest of the equipment. We have them all rigged to where we can tie to the back end of them and we can also adjust for smaller cattle. I don't think there's anything more disgusting than to get ready for one and he's turned around. We try to keep them squeezed in pretty tight. They are just old standard WW that we have rods on. They are simple to make, don't cost anything but they sure save you a lot of work. We carry 2 six-foot panels inside the chute, just to hook up to their equipment, the barn doors, they'll hook anyplace, they'll set anyplace it just gives you a means that if you are in a mud hole you can get out of it.

Our original foot trimming table was very nice and it did a good job for us. But as bulls got bigger, and meaner, it was a wrestling match getting them on there. At the meeting in Toronto last year there was a hydraulic tilt table but I was never able to find out where it came from, but it looked like it would work and it was simple. So we scrounged up an old chute that was not any good but it was big and tall and awkward and we had a blacksmith put it together for us with Powder River head catch and fixed it so that it could dump over and it has cut our wrestling time down. Now we have some energy left to work on them, especially foot trimming, and it has done a beautiful job for us.

We have been using our electric dehorners to trim old long toes and snip them right down. And those things are hard and tough. We use a power air jet dehorner which runs on a CO₂ bottle or a propane bottle. They do a beautiful