PER VAGINAL DELIVERY OF A "DICEPHALUS DICAUDATUS XIPHOPHAGUS" MONSTER

K.RAVIKUMAR[1], K.KRISHNAKUMAR[2], R.EZAKIAL NAPOLEAN[3] AND C.CHANDRAHASAN[4]

Department of Clinics, Veterinary College and Research Institute, Namakkal, Tamil Nadu - 637 001.

Received : 15.03.2011 Accepted : 16.11.2012

ABSTRACT

A rare case of dystocia due to a conjoined twin (Dicephalus Dicaudatus Xiphophagus Monster) in a pluriparous she buffalo reported.

Key words: Dicephalus, Dicaudatus, Xiphophagus,Monster, Conjoined twin, Buffalo

INTODUCTION

Conjoined twins arise from a single ovum and are monozygotic. They result from the incomplete subdivision of embryonic axis which occurs at a relatively later phase of development. Fetal anomalies and monstrosities of various types have been recorded in cattle (Roberts, 1971) but incidence in buffaloes are rare (Bugalia et.al.,2001). Arthur (1956) recorded a lower incidence, suggesting occurrence of conjoined twins about 1 in 100,000 births. Fetotomy in large animals is a practical and successful way of relieving dystocia as it reduces the size of the fetus by avoiding cesarean section. It requires little assistance and prevents possible trauma or injury to the dam through the use of excessive traction (Roberts, 1971). This present report is a rare case of conjoined twin (Dicephalus Dicaudatus Xiphophagus) in a pluriparous she buffalo.

1 - Assistant Professor, Dept. of Clinics, Veterinary College and Research Institute, Namakkal.
E.Mail-doctorravikumar@yahoo.com
2 – Professor and Head, Dept. of Clinics, Veterinary College and Research Institute, Orathanadu, Thanjavur-614 625.
3 - Professor and Head, Dept. of ARGO, Veterinary College and Research Institute, Namakkal.
4 - The Controller of Examinations, TANUVAS, Chennai-57

CASE HISTORY AND OBSERVATIONS

A Murrah buffalo at full term in its fourth pregnancy after unsuccessful attempt to deliver the fetus by fetotomy was refered to Veterinary College and Research Institute Teaching Hospital with the history of unproductive labour for 13 hrs. The animal was recumbent and the rectal temperature of the buffalo was normal. Per vaginal examination after proper lubrication revealed fully dilated cervix. The dicephalic fetus was in anterior longitudinal presentation, dorso - sacral position with two fore limbs extended into the birth canal. Repulsion and vaginal examination revealed the presence of a two more fore limbs attached in an abnormal position with knee flexion suggestive of monster or conjoined twins.

TREATMENT AND DISCUSSION

After correcting the postural abnormalities, dead conjoined twin was delivered by manual traction through per vaginum. Routine antibiotic treatments and supportive treatments were carried out following delivery of fetus.

The conjoined twin had separate head and neck (Dicephalic) with normal eyes and ears, four forelegs (tetrabrachius), Four hind legs (tetrapus), two separate tails (Dicaudatus) and the twins were fused to each other in xiphoid region (Xiphopagus). As per Roberts (1971) the condition could be classified as Dicephalus Dicaudatus Xiphophagus monster.

Conjoined twins are non inherited teratologic defects. According to Noden and Lahunta (1984), conjoined twins are monozygotic and monstrosities arise due to incomplete division of embryo into components usually at the primitive streak during the development state. Duplication of cranial part of fetus is more common than that of caudal parts and also duplication can occur at both cranial and caudal ends with the middle area of the monster remaining single (Roberts, 1971). The present case could be a non inherited teratogenic defect of development with nearly complete duplication of cranial and caudal parts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors are thankful to the Dean, Veterinary College and Research Institute, Namakkal for the facilities provided.

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