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A Case of Osteoarthritis of Bilateral Coxofemoral Joints in a Thoroughbred Horse

Hyo-hoon Jeong, Soo-gil Lee, Gui-cheol Choi, Young-jin Yang, Gye-myoung Ahn, Dae-young Song, Gyu-hwan Moon, Hyoung-ho Im, Young-woo Lee, Ha-Jeong Roh, A-ram Kim, Gil-jae Cho[1], and Tae-ho Oh[1]*

Equine Medical Center, Korean Racing Association, [1]College of Veterinary Medicine, Kyungpook National University

Introduction: Equine lameness due to osteoarthritis is the most prevalent cause of athletic function loss and wastage in racing horses. This case report provides the overall clinical findings of osteoarthritis of bilateral coxofemoral joint, which is rarely occurred in racing horse.

Materials and methods: A 3-year-old black Thoroughbred colt weighing approximately 500 kg was referred to the KRA Equine Medical Center due to the chronic gait abnormality of the both hindlimbs. The history revealed that the patient had run onto the fence of the barn about at the age of 1 year old and the lameness had been worsening insidiously since the accident.

Results: On arrival the patient was alert and no abnormalities were observed during routine clinical examination. The degree of the lameness was 2/5 in accordance with the AAEP lameness grading system at hand walking and trot and was exacerbated at lunging clockwise and counterclockwise on both hindlimbs. The marked low arc of flight and reduced cranial phase of stride were also observed. The definitive diagnosis of the osteoarthritis of bilateral coxofemoral joints was established using radiography under general inhalation anaesthesia of the patient. The flexed ventrodorsal and a pair of flexed ventrodorsal oblique views were taken. Mild osteophyte production and an altered contour of the femoral head were observed in the ventrodorsal view. The prognosis was considered to be poor for racing and the colt was expelled from the racecourse eventually.

Clinical relevance: Osteoarthritis of coxofemoral joint is the degenerative joint disease and cause of loss of racing horse. Early diagnosis is needed for the proper management of osteoarthritis in the horse.

*Corresponding author: thoh@knu.ac.kr