

October 16, 2010

During normal operations of the wild horse gather in the Purdy Mesa area, a mare died while tied down after roping awaiting loading into the trailer for transport to the holding facility. I did a thorough external physical exam and saw no marks on her. She was an approx. 3 year old buckskin mare. The sweat had almost completely dried already and there was no sign that she had been lathered. Her gums were a noticeable blue color. The time from when we received word that she had been roped and the time I arrived was approx. 30 minutes. I spoke with the cowboy who roped her – he said that he roped her at the trot and they just continued trotting up the hill to the road with a loose loop over her neck. He said he only tightened the loop to get her down to tie her up and that she was breathing fine and laying still when he left her to go continue with the gather.

I performed a complete necropsy on this mare including completely skinning her neck to look for damage inflicted by the roping event. I found minor contusions distal to the ears on the muscles and a minor contusion over the larynx. The jugular veins, carotid arteries and esophagus all appeared normal with no signs of contusions. I opened the trachea and found no signs of hemorrhage. There was no hemorrhage in the nares or in the mouth. The gastro-intestinal tract was normal except that the veins in the omentum and along the stomach appeared darker and more congested than normal. The liver appeared dark and congested. There was a cyst on the left ovary and the right ovary was dormant, the mare was not pregnant. The lungs were severely congested, but there was no blood in the bronchi, bronchioles, or trachea. The heart had the most obvious abnormalities. The right ventricle was enlarged to approx. twice normal size (so that it was larger than the left ventricle) with a very thin wall. There were approx. 6 – 10 white spots of approx. 1 cm in diameter at the ventral end of exterior wall of the right ventricle, 2 of which were raised plaques. There were multifocal petechial hemorrhages throughout the adipose tissue surrounding the coronary vessels. The left ventricular wall was thickened to approx. half again it's normal size. In dissecting the wall of the left ventricle I found a white area of approx. 1.5 cm in diameter that extended through the ventricular muscle. The heart valves appeared normal as did the major vessels leading to and from the heart.

Given the extensive pathology seen in the heart of this mare I feel that this death was not due to the gather activities other than the increased exercise exacerbated a pre-existing terminal heart condition.

Sincerely,



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