

## **International Equine Ophthalmology Consortium (IEOC) Symposium**

April 3 - 4, 2009

Lexington, Kentucky USA.

The first International Equine Ophthalmology Consortium (IEOC) Symposium was held April 3 and 4 in Lexington, Kentucky. The Dorothy Havemeyer Foundation of New York, NY supported this symposium. The IEOC is a group of clinicians and scientists dedicated to the study of ocular disease of horses ([www.equineophtho.com](http://www.equineophtho.com)) and the goal of this symposium is to share clinical and basic research on equine ophthalmology and to facilitate the development of multi-centered collaborative research.

Drs. Dennis Brooks (University of Florida) and Brian Gilger (North Carolina State University) organized the symposium. There were 13 invited speakers and 37 additional participants for a total of 50 attendees from around the world (i.e., from Belgium, Italy, Germany, Spain, and the UK). The format included “state of the art” lectures, free paper presentations, and round-table discussions on common equine ocular diseases including adnexal neoplasia, infectious keratitis, non-ulcerative keratitis, glaucoma, vision, cataract surgery, recurrent uveitis, and retinal disease.

Dr. Ann Dwyer of Rochester, New York started the first session of the symposium. Dr. Dwyer is an equine practitioner with many years of experience in ophthalmology. She presented and discussed data that supported the high prevalence of equine ocular disease in general practice. Dr. Elizabeth Giuliano, an ophthalmologist and faculty member at the University of Missouri, discussed the challenges of treatment of periocular neoplasia in horses and she reviewed her exciting work using photodynamic therapy for treatment of periocular squamous cell carcinoma. Dr. Dennis Brooks discussed emerging issues and advances in treatment of equine infectious keratitis followed by Dr. Andy Matthews, from Scotland, presenting information on the diagnosis and treatment of non-ulcerative and immune-mediated keratitis. To conclude the first session, Drs. Avery Woodworth, a graduate student from the University of Florida, and Diana Pate, a resident from NC State University, presented free paper abstracts on their work on immune-mediated keratitis, including development of a standard grading scale (Dr. Woodworth) and histopathology (Dr. Pate). Round table discussions were then held to discuss emerging issues and develop collaborations regarding periocular neoplasia, infectious keratitis, and immune-mediated keratitis.

Dr. Dennis Brooks began the second session of the symposium and shared his experience and advancements in corneal surgery. Dr. Alison Clode, an ophthalmologist and faculty member at NC State University, presented data on pharmacology of medications for treatment of infectious keratitis. Dr. Richard McMullen, also a faculty member at NC State University, reviewed equine cataract surgery and his work on the development of the equine intraocular lens. Dr. David Wilkie, an ophthalmologist and faculty member at The Ohio State University, discussed the challenges and current treatments of equine glaucoma. To conclude this session, Drs. Alison Clode, and Caryn Plummer, who is ophthalmologist and faculty member at the University of Florida, presented free paper abstracts on their work on ciprofloxacin and moxifloxacin treatment (Dr. Clode) and use of amniotic membranes in severe corneal disease (Dr. Plummer). Round table discussions were then held to discuss emerging issues and develop collaborations regarding corneal surgery, cataract surgery, and glaucoma.

The final session of the symposium was begun by Dr. Ann Dwyer, who discussed the challenges in general practice regarding the management of equine recurrent uveitis (ERU). This presentation was followed by a discussion of recent advancements in study of the pathogenesis of ERU by Dr. Connie Deeg, who is from Munich, Germany and is the leading researcher of ERU in the world. Dr. Brian Gilger, from NC State University, presented information regarding studies of advancements in treatment of ERU, including studies of the use of cyclosporine implants, vitrectomy, and rapamycin therapy. Dr. Andy Matthews then reviewed the interpretation of lesions of the ocular fundus. To conclude this session, Dr. Mary Utter, an ophthalmologist and faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania, presented a free paper abstract on a retrospective study cataract surgery in adult horses. Round table discussions were then held to discuss emerging issues and develop collaborations regarding ERU, equine vision, and interpreting retinal disease.

For all round-table discussions, the ideas and plans that discussed will be compiled and distributed to the attendees. Development of an IEOC membership organization and website was discussed and supported by the group in an effort to further advance the science of equine ophthalmology. The second annual IEOC symposium will be held in Vienna, Austria June 3-4, 2010.