Dystocia due to Schistosoma reflexus in a Nellore brown EWE: A case report

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Abstract
A Schistosoma reflexus presented with its extremities delivered successfully per vaginally in a pleuriparous Nellore Brown ewe was reported.

Keywords: Schistosoma reflexus, per vaginally, pleuriparous, Nellore ewe

Introduction
Schistosoma reflexus is a fetal congenital disorder seen most commonly in cattle but rarely observed in small ruminants (Roberts, 1971) [8]. The thoracic and abdominal viscera are exposed and fetal head lies near its sacrum are the characteristics of Schistosoma reflexus. The limbs are usually ankylosed and rigid. A true schistosome is classified as a case with both viscera exposed and inversion of the spine. This congenital anomaly generally occurs during embryonic development of the fetus. Schistosoma occurs mainly due to the transfer of autosomal recessive genes having incomplete penetrance to the developing embryo (Laughton et al., 2005; Balamurugan et al., 2020) [3, 1]. Successful per vaginal management of Schistosoma reflexus presented with its extremities in Nellore Brown ewe is reported.

Case history and clinical observations
A pleuriparous Nellore Brown ewe was presented to the Veterinary Clinical complex, College of Veterinary Science, Proddatur with a complaint of straining since early hours of the day. The ewe was standing and four fetal limbs were protruded from the vulva (Figure 1). All clinical parameters were within normal limits. Upon per vaginal examination fetal head was present at pelvic brim. Based on this, a tentative diagnosis of dystocia due to malpresentation was made.

Treatment and Discussion
After giving epidural anaesthesia, limbs with rigid joints were repelled to take out fetal head. The birth canal was lubricated sufficiently to remove the forelimbs and by careful traction removed schistosoma dead fetus (Figure 2). The head of the monster was normal and abdominal wall was not fully developed and all viscera remained outside with curved spine and ankylosed limbs. The ewe was treated with antibiotic, anti-inflammatory and antihistamines in prescribed doses parenterally for five days.

Schistosoma is a rare kind of fetal monstrosity seen primarily in cattle. Schistosoma reflexus may be presented viscerally or by its extremities. Natural birth in visceral presentation is fairly common (Noakes et al., 2009) [5]. Suthar et al., (2011) [11], Singh et al., (2017) [9] and Promod et al., (2020) [1] reported per vaginal delivery and Tsuma and Abuom (2008) [16] recorded correction by caesarean section in visceral presentation of SR in ewes and does. However Motunrayo et al., (2015) [4] published pervaginal delivery of Schistosoma reflexus conjoined twins in ewe. When a Schistosoma reflexus presents by its extremities together with ankylosis of joints, is likely to prevent manipulative delivery. However, the present case was exceptional as schistosoma presented by its four ankylosed limbs, could be delivered per vaginally using mutational operations as the birth canal was sufficiently relaxed and well lubricated.
The cesarean operation was suggested for this type of presentation unless the fetus is small by Noakes et al., (2009) [5]. Like the present case, Kumar et al., (2016) [2]; Prabhakaran et al., (2020) [6] recorded ventro transverse presentation and per vaginal delivery in does and Kumar et al., (2016) [3] opined that extremities presentation common in does compare to visceral presentation.

Fig 1: Nellore Brown ewe suffering from dystocia with exposed fetal extremities

Fig 2: Schistosoma reflexus with exposed viscera and ankylosed limb

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References