

Treating White Line Disease

BY DAVE FARLEY

"WHITE LINE" DISEASE is a problem that is affecting all breeds of horses. It can be an absolute nightmare to deal with. It knows no boundaries. I have seen it in many areas of the United States and in all breeds. I have seen it in barefoot as well as shod horses and it occurs in the best barns as well as the worst.

In Fran Jurga's new book, *Understanding the Equine Foot*, it is mentioned that until recently there was no name for the microorganism that causes this cancerous like invasion of the hoof wall. According to Jurga, Dr. Chris Pollitt (a research scientist at the University of Queensland in Australia) has named them keratinolytic microorganisms. He describes them as aggressive organisms of unknown origin. Unfortunately, no one knows for certain whether the microorganisms come from dirt, water, or even air. We only know that it seems to thrive in warm, moist environments.

If you notice a hoof that has a separation that does not want to grow down, beware. It may be shelly in appearance from the outside and you may have difficulty keeping solid clinches in that area. The exterior wall may even fall out when rasping and clinching.

When the hoof is dry you may notice a chalky appearance in the area of separation. These are all signs of this aggressive disease.

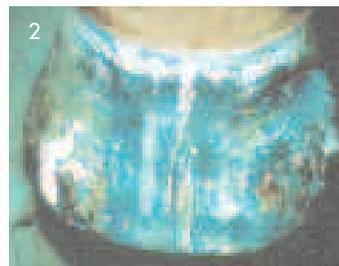
If you look at a hoof with these problems you will notice that the separation is in the hoof wall itself, just outside the white line. You will also notice that the problem may only affect one foot. It may begin with problems in one or two areas you nail in, but soon the problem is magnified as we help the spread by attempts to get solid nails. We create more openings for the movement of the disease. On improperly balanced feet or horses with conformation faults the hoof wall often suffers even more separation resulting in difficult flares, long toes (seedy toe), and underrun heels that crush and become hollow. The hooves are soon falling apart, losing all consistency.

It soon becomes obvious that we have a serious problem. When it is in the early stages the temptation is to patch the weak wall with various repair materials. In fact, by patching we are enhancing the environment in which white line thrives. Moisture is trapped below the repair material and no oxygen reaches the affected area.

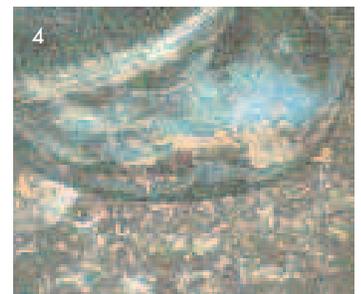
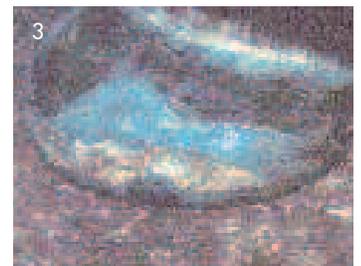
Treatment of this disease requires complete debriding of



Muddy, wet conditions seem to increase likelihood of white line disease.



2. This foot was patched without debriding and treating for white line first. Notice that wall is undermined on both sides. 3. On another foot, this lateral view shows an area that has been debrided. Clipped shoe to help hold. 4. Medial side of same foot - you have to take out all the infected area.



the affected area. Be careful not to damage the white line itself. Remove only the outer wall that is cracked, shelly or undermined. Once the area is de-

brided treat with a product like merthiolate or Fungadye. Life Data is also coming out with a product for treating white line
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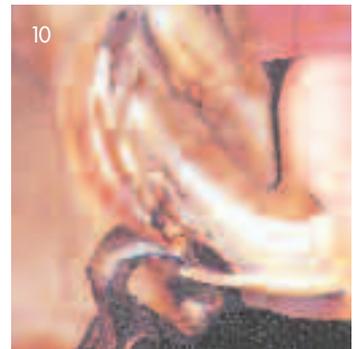
Treating

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disease. Keep the feet dry and treat daily. Severe cases may require pulling the shoes and putting the horse on stall rest.

Don't patch at this time. Allow the hoof time to grow down and replace the affected areas. I use clipped shoes and even heartbars to support the wall which has been weakened. There are various hoof supplements on the market that can help speed up the process of growing new, healthy wall.

Once you've exposed the hoof and cut away the affected area your owners need to do all they can to keep the feet as dry as possible. Horses that are in wet, muddy areas seem to be affected more frequently than those in dry environments. Good, basic hygiene means the feet have to be picked regularly and given regular hoof maintenance. Stalls have to be cleaned well and should be disinfected and kept as dry as possible. The



environment is involved in most of the cases I have seen.

It is a difficult, if not impossible, problem to diagnose in the very earliest stages. If you have any suspicions that you may be dealing with a white line problem treat it immediately. The longer you go before

treatment the more damage you will have to contend with. ■

For more information on Understanding the Equine Foot, by Fran Jurga, contact Fran at 978-281-3222 or email at franjurga@aol.com. Fran also has a website at www.hoofcare.com

5. Use your hoof knife to pare away weak, undermined wall. 6. Be careful not to damage white line. 7. Hoof debrided before applying shoe. 8. SX-8 clipped shoe applied after debriding. 9 & 10. In some cases you can use your nipper to start removing wall that is undermined.

WHITE LINE DISEASE TREATMENTS

Treatment

- Debride the affected area, completely removing any weak or undermined wall
- Medicate daily
- Pack large voids with cotton soaked with medication
- Stall rest in a clean, dry environment

Some advice for your owners

- Try to keep the horses out of muddy, wet areas
- Dry the feet immediately after bathing, including the bottom of the hoof
- Clean stalls thoroughly on a daily basis and pick as often as possible
- Allow wet stalls to dry out completely and lime to help disinfect
- Pick the feet several times a day, especially after horse has been in a wet or muddy area
- Don't ask that the affected area be covered with repair materials - this will only make matters worse

FYI

The Natural Angle Website has recently been updated. If you haven't had an opportunity to visit the site, you are sure to find a lot of useful information. The site will also allow you to access links to other equally informative sites. You can find the site at www.naturalangle.com.

Also...

Don't forget to let your distributor know if you have a **change of address**. This will insure that you continue to receive all of your issues of the Natural Angle.

THE TOOL CORNER Tool Tips

BY ROY BLOOM

1. ALWAYS WEAR YOUR SAFETY GLASSES. You are striking steel against steel and working with hot material. Anything can happen, so be safe.

2. ALWAYS STRIKE THE TOOL IN THE CENTER OF THE STRIKING SURFACE. Striking off center or on the edge will cause breakage and possible injury.

3. ALWAYS STRIKE THE TOOL WITH THE ROUND FACE OF YOUR HAMMER. Striking with the flat face causes deflection off the rounded surface of the tool. The round face of your hammer produces a solid hit.

4. ALWAYS PRITCHEL AT A BLACK HEAT. This allows you to shear the material and avoid heat buildup in the pritchel. You will get much longer life from your pritchel and better nail holes.

5. ALWAYS MAINTAIN YOUR TOOLS. If your tool should mushroom on the struck end, grind off the mushroomed area. If the working end should deform for any reason, regrind to the proper size and shape. Do not overheat.

6. NEVER LET THE WORKING END OF YOUR TOOL GET TOO HOT. Allowing your tools to remain in hot material too long will create a heat buildup in the working end of the tool

that will destroy the heat treat and hardness of the tool. The result will be deformed working ends. This is especially critical with the forepunch and drift.

7. NEVER PUT THE TOOLS IN THE FIRE TO ADJUST THEM. Excessive heat will destroy the heat treating and render the tool useless. Excessive heat will also destroy the weld on some tools and cause the weld to crack. (An exception would be tong adjustment and pritchels which can take some heat)

8. NEVER QUENCH YOUR TOOLS IN WATER. If your tools get hot they should be allowed to air cool. In normal work we recommend that you dip your tools in Forshners Hoof Packing to provide cooling and lubrication.

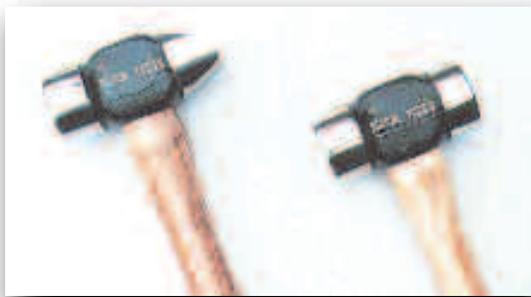
9. NEVER QUENCH YOUR TONGS IN WATER. If you make adjustments to your tongs do not quench them. Allow them to air cool before you use them. In normal work, you can quench them in water provided there is no color in the tong. ■

1. This steel handled bob punch needs immediate dressing of the struck end. Never let your tool reach this stage before dressing. Notice the missing pieces. You'll need a full suit of armor to protect yourself if you let your tools get to this point! **2.** From struck end you can see again the dangerous situation that has developed and needs immediate attention. The struck ends of these tools are softer to avoid damage to your hammers, but must be dressed on a regular basis. **3.** This punch has been in hot material for too long, resulting in the heavy coloration seen here. Get your tools in and out of the material quickly

and don't allow this kind of heat buildup. The damage that results is because of misuse, not because the tool is defective.



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How much you should sock away each month, and how much you can afford to sock away each month, are two issues that - unfortunately - can have very different answers. For those who have been working on their own for some time, the question of what you need to put away for those golden years often has been answered - but deciding the best place to put it can be another matter entirely.

Preparing yourself for the years ahead when you'll while away the days playing pinochle can be daunting in the best of circumstances. While Social Security will add a little to your monthly income, in no way can the Social Security System provide retirees with enough to live comfortably, even those who pay twice as much into the system as everybody else - i.e., the self-employed.

Anyone who works on their own can vouch for the sting of the self-employment tax, which requires those working on their own to pay both the employee's and employer's share of the tax, or about 12% of what they earn. Toss in the required contribution to Medicare, and that percentage jumps to 15.

On top of that 15%, the self-employed absolutely must consider opening either a Keogh Plan, an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), or a Simplified Employee Pension (SEP). These three are the most popular choices for retirement saving among the self-employed, perhaps

Planning Ahead

RETIREMENT CAN BE A TOUCHY SUBJECT FOR ANYONE, BUT FOR THE SELF-EMPLOYED, IT CAN BE ESPECIALLY STRESSFUL.

in part because all are recognized by the Internal Revenue Service.

According to Grace W. Weinstein, author of *Financial Savvy for the Self-Employed*, these tax-qualified plans have two distinct advantages: 1.) Your money grows faster because you don't pay tax on interest and dividends as they accumulate; and 2.) Due to the rather stiff penalties induced you're unlikely to raid the account should your cash flow hit a dry spell.

That, say retirement experts, is key to having a secure future.

So just what are Keogh Plans, IRAs and SEPs? And which is best for you?

Determining which of the qualified retirement plans provides you the best benefit may require the assistance of a professional accountant or investment broker. However, for those both willing and able to do a little research, deciding which plan to use can be done on your own.

some flexibility in meeting future retiree needs. Information on establishing a Keogh Plan can be gotten at almost any bank, mortgage house, brokerage firm or insurance company.

The well known IRA is another viable option for the self-employed, especially those earning below \$25,000 individually or \$40,000 as a couple. The IRA allows you to put away up to \$2,000 a year for retirement, but the contribution is only deductible if you earn below the amounts specified above. The IRA contribution is partially deductible up to a \$35,000 annual income for an individual or \$50,000 for a couple; anyone making more than that, however, cannot deduct IRA contributions. The earnings continue to be tax deferred, however.

The retirement plan many financial experts think worth investigating, however, is the Simplified
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Planning

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4
Employee Pension (SEP),
because it is simpler to oversee
and more flexible than both the

Deciding which plan is
best for you can be the toughest
part - once your retirement
account is set up, taking care
of it typically becomes part
and parcel of doing business.
And remember, the plan that

THE RETIREMENT PLAN MANY
FINANCIAL EXPERTS THINK WORTH
INVESTIGATING, HOWEVER, IS THE
SIMPLIFIED EMPLOYEE PENSION (SEP),
BECAUSE IT IS SIMPLER TO OVERSEE
AND MORE FLEXIBLE THAN BOTH
THE KEOGH AND THE IRA.

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requires less IRS paperwork,
another plus, especially for the
self-employed individual who
takes care of their own tax work.

provides the best fit today may
not fit 10 years down the road,
so, as in every other aspect of
self-employment, remain flexi-
ble. Your retirement plan may
change because you take on
employees, or because your
income rises significantly.
Whatever the case, revisit the
issue every five years or so. Hav-
ing a strong pension plan is cru-
cial to a healthy retirement. ■

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