

Case Report

**DICEPHALUS DIBRACHIUS DIPUS DISTOMUS DICAUDATUS
FOETAL MONSTER – A CASE REPORT**

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Abstract: A full term primiparous non-descript buffalo was presented to clinics with prolonged first stage of labour. It was diagnosed as dystocia due to double-headed calf and performed emergency left paramedian laparohysterotomy. Based on the appearance, the retrieved calf was confirmed as dicephalus dipus dibrachius distomus dicaudatus foetal monster. With good post operative care and management, the animal recovered uneventfully.

Keywords: Dystocia, caesarean, dicephalus dibrachius dipus distomus dicaudatus monster calf.

Introduction

Dystocia is difficulty in calving and requires manual assistance for delivering calf (Roberts, 2002). Frequency of dystocia was less in buffaloes compared to that of cow and mostly resultant of foetal abnormalities (Purohit and Mehta, 2006). Incidence of dystocia due to foetal monsters in river buffaloes was reported to be about 7.9 % (Phogat *et al.*, 1992) and more frequent in heifers due to smaller pelvic space proportional to calf size (Jainuddin, 1986). Congenital defects were mostly affecting the skeletal system tuned up to 37.3% (Greene, 1972). Congenital bovine foetal anomalies were due to aetiological factors like toxicity, heredity, infections, etc. (Whitlock *et al.*, 2008). Conjoint twins are mostly monozygotic in origin and may be fused medially at different parts of body and cranial fusion was most common (Roberts, 2002) that occurs during primitive streak elongation or regression. A case of dicephalus dibrachius dipus distomus dicaudatus foetal monster and its retrieval by caesarean operation is being reported here.

Case history and clinical observations:

A five year old primiparous non descript buffalo with a history of prolonged first stage of labour was presented to Teaching Veterinary Clinical Complex, Proddatur. It was further revealed that futile attempts were made by quack to deliver the calf.

Per vaginal examination revealed dry birth canal and confirmed it as dystocia due to a double-headed calf. One forelimb could be palpated under the heads that struck in the birth canal in normal presentation. The dam was active, anorectic and all the physiological were within normal range. As it was impossible for normal parturition, an emergency caesarean operation was planned and executed.

Treatment and Discussion

The animal was pre operatively administered with 2 liters 5% DNS, 15 ml flunixin – meglumine and 10 ml etamsylate. It was restrained in right lateral recumbency and the left paramedian site was prepared aseptically. By a routine laparohysterotomy operation, a female, dead, emphysematous and double-headed calf was retrieved. With all precautions, the incision sites were closed and applied retention sutures. Post operatively, 3 litres ringers lactate, 15 ml chlorphaneramine maleate, 15 ml Tribivet, 10 ml oxytocin. This regimen was followed for next 5 days along with daily dressing. The skin sutures were removed on 12th post operative day and the animal recovered well.

The calf was having two completely formed heads, two fore limbs, two hind limbs, two tails, single vulva and umbilicus. The spines were separate, the bodies were fused medially, and the fusion was more caudally (Fig. 1 and 2). All the internal organs of thorax and abdomen were single and the heart was rounded.

The exact aetiology for present monstrosity is not known but might have resulted from partial or incomplete division of a single fertilised ovum (Roberts, 2002) or fusion of two monozygotic embryos (Biasibetti *et al.*, 2011) or due to arrested development of the different segments of mullerian ducts as opined by Jainudeen and Hafez (2000). Calves born or retrieved by surgery showed morphological variations ranging from partial duplication to almost complete separation of two individuals that fused at few places (Bugalia *et al.*, 2001; Kasiraj *et al.*, 2001). Delivered calf is a conjoined twin whose bodies fused medially showing two spines and two tails but all the internal organs of thorax and abdomen were of single animal. It has no other abnormalities like scoliosis, kyphosis and arthrogryposis (Buck *et al.*, (2009) and Kaptiyar *et al.* (2015). As per Roberts *et al.* (2002), the calf is a monster termed as dicephalus dipus dibrachius dicaudatus calf.

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Fig 1: Dicephalus monster calf. Observe two completely formed heads.



Fig 2: Monster calf. Observe two tails, two spines, two fore limbs, two hind limbs, and single umbilical cord

