

Text for Tuesday 28th December 2004

By Nick Horniman

Pets Barn Animal Hospitals, Gloucestershire

Early one morning, just as the sun was rising, Fido the greyhound and his loyal master, Terry, were walking in a park in Gloucester. With no other dogs around, Terry let Fido off the lead for a run around. Little did Terry know but there was also a cat in the park and it didn't take long for Fido to smell the cat and the chase began.

Around the park the two animals ran, with Terry, suffering from a post Christmas hangover, trying to keep up with them. Terry was unable to catch Fido or to call him back and he watched in horror as Fido ran across a main road in hot pursuit of the cat. Luckily, there was little traffic so the chase carried on.

Fido's problems began when the cat went into an alley and jumped up onto a high wall in escape. Fido, being a dog and not so nibble, saw the wall but failed to stop. Running head-long into a wall at 20 miles an hour doesn't do anybody any good and, when Terry caught up, he found Fido lying on the ground in agony with his nose bleeding and his neck twisted.

Fido was immediately brought into Pets Barn Hartpury. His nose bleed had stopped but he was in serious pain and could not walk. Temporary pain relief was given and he was placed on intravenous fluids for the shock.

Usually X-Rays are taken under anaesthetic, but on this occasion, we did not want to anaesthetise Fido as he was in shock. The X-Rays showed that he had seriously injured the bones in his neck, causing a dislocation of the joint just behind the skull. The nerves in his neck were being pinched and the electrical signals could not get through to the rest of the body. He had little feeling in his body and his legs would not work.

Fido needed immediate treatment if he was going to live. Despite the risks involved, we anaesthetised him and gently massaged the neck to re-align the bones. With a sharp snap we heard the bones jump back into place. A large injection of a special steroid was given to reduce the inflammation and a neck brace was placed so that Fido could not move his neck and make the swelling any worse.

On recovery from the anaesthetic, Fido was much more comfortable and was able to move his legs and wag his tail. Within hours he could stand up and, apart from having a sore neck for a week, Fido will make a full recovery. Hopefully, Fido has learnt not to chase cats and to avoid running into brick walls.

Happy New Year!

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For Emergency Treatment contact Pets Barn 24 hrs 01452 830421