

A very cold Cria

YUKI.....

Story by Jean & David Daddo, Pitchingga Ridge Alpacas

We didn't think he had a chance - newly born, he lay, cold, wet and inert in the horizontal freezing rain that whipped across our property, heralding the second front for the day.

All the other mums and babies had moved through the gate and were well settled in the shed. But Muffin had delayed almost as if her tiny lifeless bundle might just get up and follow like all the other crias.

But he didn't.....and reluctantly, she seemingly resigned herself to the inevitable, and joined the herd.

Yuki was so cold and listless, we didn't even stop to take his temperature. I grabbed him up in my arms and rushed him up to the house. We rubbed him briskly, wrapped him in a dry towel, then set him in kush position in a cardboard box packed with fleece and 2-litre OJ bottles, filled with hot water. Over the top to trap the warmth, we placed a thermal blanket. All that was visible were two lifeless nostrils. And there he lay.

Every now and then I would rub him briskly, and cover him again.

An hour had passed when I noticed there was a slight movement under the blanket. Yuki was starting to shiver...his eyes were responding, and his nostrils were moving. Another hour later, his temperature was finally registering on the thermometer at the lower end of "normal".

I syringed 60 mls of glucose and warm water into his mouth....ever so slowly!

Minutes later, Yuki lifted his head for the first time and sucked down his first 60 mls of Impact.

Then, miraculously, he was out of his box taking his first wobbly steps on our slippery floor - three hours after we had found him so close to death.

We felt then, that he would make it!

Yuki stayed in the house for three days. During that time Muffin stayed in the shed, always looking hopefully over the gate. We milked her every four hours that first day to give Yuki the much-needed colostrum. For the first two days, his two-hourly feeds were topped up with Impact. On the third day we changed to three-hourly feeds of Di-Vetelact.

The fourth day, we put Yuki in the shed with Muffin. It was a wonderful joyous reunion... and Yuki went straight under for his first drink from his mum.

All was well until the next morning, when we noticed that Yuki wasn't quite the same. Maybe there was some major underlying problem. We took him to the vet, who found nothing out of the ordinary but mentioned that his drastic start in life could have caused some damage to his vital organs.

Although probably destined to be just a wether, Yuki had come so far and we wanted him to have every chance. We decided to give him plasma. We left him at the clinic, resigning ourselves to what could be a sad ending.

Two hours later, we returned to the clinic to be met by the vet nurse, in fact the entire clinic staff followed closely by Yuki, skipping brightly along behind.



Yuki didn't look back after that day. We continued the four-hourly supplementary feeding with Di-Vetelact for about two weeks until Yuki suddenly refused his bottle.

Yuki is now 9 months old - a lively, friendly little appaloosa.

We are glad we put in the time (and the \$) to save him... and we think he might even appear at the Red Hill Show in March - Section 11 - Class 1101 !