

Notes on the breeding of Black rhinoceroses

Diceros bicornis

at Kobe Zoo

S. YAMAMOTO

Director, Kobe Oji Zoo Society, Kobe Oji Zoo, Japan

Two Black rhinoceroses *Diceros bicornis* have been born at Kobe Zoo. The female has an oestrous cycle of about 28–30 days, according to the rhinos' keeper. Signs of oestrus are decreased appetite, and enlargement and opening of the vulva. Before the rhinos mate they spar together for about 30–40 minutes; copulation lasts for as long as 40 minutes. The first calf was a male, 'Bobby', born on 16 November after a gestation period of approximately 465 days. The second calf, also a male, 'Rock', was born on 2 November

1965 after a gestation period of approximately 462 days. 'Bobby' was measured three times after his birth; at 38 days on 24 December 1963 he weighed 80.5 kg, at 61 days on 16 January 1964 he weighed 118.7 kg, and at 94 days on 18 February he weighed 153.0 kg.

The first oestrus observed after the birth of Bobby occurred seven months later and lasted from 27 June until 1 July 1964; the next oestrus was between 26 and 31 July.