





**Fig. 2.** DSEAP flap at the end of the dissection. Left lateral view. Head on the right hand side, midline above. The flap has been raised from lateral to medial and is visible on the upper left corner from its undersurface. Please note the muscle fibers of the panniculus carnosus on the undersurface of the flap. This is a difference with humans, who only have fat. The blue arrow shows the chosen perforator, located in the medial row. The Weitlaner retractor is placed at the cranial edge, to hold the muscle fibers spread and expose the main pedicle. The ruler gives an idea of the pedicle size. Close to the lower edge of the surgical wound, another split in the muscle can be seen, pointed at by the yellow arrow. This is the residual defect after isolation of the lateral row perforators. Each side allows the learner to practice perforator dissection twice: once with lateral and once with medial perforators.

of the human Scarpa's fascia. The rectus fascia is thinner. The perforators are lined in 2 rows: 1 lateral and 1 medial, as in the DIEAP, and the intercostal nerves cross the vessels, as happens in humans. The porcine rectus abdominis muscle is thinner than the human one, but vessels' branching faithfully reproduces the human model.<sup>1</sup>

We identified 5 perforating vessels of more than 1 mm in diameter (2 lateral and 3 medial). We isolated a lateral

perforator first and a medial one last: the latter was eventually used to nourish the flap (Fig. 2).

## CONCLUSIONS

The DSEAP flap allows one to closely reproduce all the steps of DIEAP flap harvesting and also to carry out the intramuscular dissection of 2 perforators for each side (up to 4 for each animal), confirming the adequacy of this pig model for microsurgical training. The deep superior epigastric artery is dominant in pigs.<sup>3</sup> Despite this anatomical difference, the DSEAP allows one to reproduce the main steps of DIEAP flap harvesting, providing an excellent training model.

Moreover, the presence of double perforating rows allows simulating the dissection twice on each side.

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