

Preparing for the Arrival of Baby with Your Boykin Spaniel

Preface: I had briefly written on this subject on the Boykin Spaniel Yahoo! Group after someone posed the question about how to prepare your Boykin for the arrival of a new baby. Consequently, the BS Journal editor requested that I expand on the subject for an article here. I am happy to oblige and hope this provides some help for couples with canines who are planning on expanding their families with the addition on a new human bundle of joy!

Our dogs had been our family for many years. When we planned for the arrival of our first child we already had 5 dogs in the house that were actively competing in various dogsports. While they were accustomed to the excitement and action of dog shows and extensive travel, none of them had been exposed for any period of time to babies.

It was easy to find many articles written on the subject of babies and pets. Most of them focused on jealousy, setting rules for the dogs & children to respect each other and otherwise integrating the new baby into the household "pack". Many articles recommended training the dogs before the arrival to not get on the sofa, to be "crated" and to cure and behavioral problems before the baby comes home.

Luckily we did not have any serious bad behavior issues and our dogs are used to staying off all furniture as well as crating and being separated from us behind doggie gates. This gave us an advantage but we soon found out that our real life problems were not covered in most of the articles.

We continued to train the dogs for competitions daily as soon as the baby was home

and consequently the dogs did not feel much had changed in their life except that a tiny mushy human was now toted around and spent time in it's own crate we called a "crib". The dogs were used to walking on lead while I pulled the crate dolly so they easily transitioned to me pushing the stroller without fear of the wheels. Our daughter attended her first agility trial at 2 months old.

However, our first major issue was at nap time. Our dogs like to bark. It was not an issue to us; I can practice selective hearing to tune it out. I quickly found out that I cannot tune out a crying baby who was awakened from her nap! If it was only one dog barking we could have worked through the problem with training, but 5 dogs barking at once required more drastic measures. When traveling, we always used citronella collars in motel rooms & for one persistent dog we had a automatic anti-bark shock collar to keep them quiet. I just had to remember to take them off when we were awake & recharge them so they would be ready for nap time.

As our baby began to eat solid food, our dogs found a new hobby in watching the highchair area for falling snacks. This was easily rectified by separating the dogs into another room by baby gates. As the baby grew into a toddler our food problem evolved and then multiplied with the addition of a second baby in the family. At times the toddler offered snack in hand to the dogs; other times the snack was removed from her hand without her approval. We were usually alerted to the latter with a piercing screech, and the former caused all of the dogs to gain weight. Shutting the dogs behind doors or locking them outside worked as well as trying to require the toddler to eat

at the table. Anyone who has children knows that this is easier said than done!

Unique to families to who travel, we encountered the problem of crate rivalry in motel rooms. The dogs who are tired and ready to rest want to hole up in their bed to sleep. The toddler who is ready to play wants to use the crate for her fort, or occasionally finds it is more comfortable than the bed to sleep in. To avoid the conflict we simply packed an extra crate and strictly enforced the rule that the toddler is only allowed to enter an empty crate and is never allowed to crowd a dog out of the crate they have already settled in.

As the children have grown up we are now experiencing the problem of a pre-schooler who wants to have her own dog. She has taken an older retired conformation dog in a few BSCBAA hosted UKC shows in the Junior Showmanship classes and is working her way to earning the responsibility of a dog for her own. Our current dogs have difficulty understanding her voice; in fact most humans other than mommy and daddy have trouble understanding her! We'll work on that puppy bonding with her and learning the sound of her voice and hopefully in time she will be encouraged to continue training her pet to a competition level if she chooses.

Only time will tell if her younger brother will enjoy the dogs as much and what activities he chooses to pursue with them if any. No matter what our children choose to do with dogs in the future, we know that our dogs and children are happy and safe living together as a family.

- Chris Prince



AKC Hunt Test Results - Connecticut

A recent trip from South Carolina to Connecticut to run Boykin Spaniels in an AKC hunt test was long, but proved very successful. Seven Boykins ran on four separate tests earning 23 qualifying scores out of 28 tries. HR, UH Pocotaligo's Philly earned 3 Master qualifications and HR Hi-Brass Harley, SH earned 2 Master qualifications. Five of the seven Boykins returned to South Carolina with titles: Junior Hunter Pocotaligo's Bess, JH, owned by Barry Beal/Kim Parkman); Senior Hunters: SHR, Fist Full of Dollars, SH (owned by Chad Funderburk), Pocotaligo's Taylor Made, SH (owned by Barry Beal), Pocotaligo's Juke, SH (owned by Sandra Johnson/Kim Parkman) and SHR Lulu's Captain Nemo, SH (owned by Butch Shivers).



Waggin' Tails



"Hollow Creek's Wylie"

Investigator Ligon with the York County Multijurisdictional Drug Enforcement Unit in York County, South Carolina purchased Wylie from Hollow Creek Kennels with hopes of using him to be a narcotic detection K-9. Investigator Ligon is also an avid duck hunter. Wylie is already working off of hand signals and doing 30 to 40 yard retrieves in the water along with blind retrieves. This is truly exceptional for a puppy that is only 6 months old. Investigator Ligon says that he is probably the smartest dog that he has ever owned.

Investigator James M. Ligon
York County Sheriff's Office
Narcotics / SWAT- Entry Team Leader



"CH Hollow Creek's Amos" - Josh Young, Texas



"Hollow Creek's Jackson" is certainly a water dog. He really enjoyed his first day at the duck club. Owners: Dr. Rick & Susan Nichols - California

