

TED THE WEST HIGHLAND TERRIER, CRABTREE, TASMANIA

Small in size but mighty in spirit, this terrier is a character.

As they say, looks can be deceiving, and that's certainly true of an adorable little fellow named Ted. Ted is a much-loved five-year-old West Highland terrier who lives with Betty, a four-year-old Chesapeake Bay retriever, and their owners Laura and Boz Shield on a four-hectare farmlet at Crabtree, 39 kilometres south-west of Hobart. "Ted is a lovely little dog who will come right up to my face and gently put his nose on my nose; and though he sleeps in his bed on the floor, when we wake up he'll be on our bed where he likes to drape himself over my neck," says Laura. Yet behind this loveable exterior, Ted has an iron will.

"Yes, he looks very sweet, and has a very gentle side but he is also known for his rebelliousness — everyone knows if they come to our house they have to close the gate or he will go hunting and not come back," Laura says with a sigh. Married for three years now, Laura, a school teacher and Boz, who works for Huon Aquaculture, were longing for a dog when they moved into their weatherboard house four years ago. "We'd both grown up with dogs and it was strange not having them in the house, so we kept borrowing my parents' dogs — but we pretty quickly got onto buying Ted."

The couple chose a West Highland terrier as they knew the breed (Laura's parents already owned one) but also because they wanted a dog that was more reliable than other breeds their families had owned. "We always had Jack Russells but they got up to so much mischief and trouble, so Boz and I decided a Westie would be a good choice," Laura says. "They're not really a lap dog, but they've still got attitude and are cheeky!"

Six months later, Ted was joined by Betty, who seems to be the only one who puts him in his place. "Chesapeake Bays are known for their dominance and if I am giving Ted a pat, she'll barge right in as if to say 'You've got to pat me! It's all about me!'" Laura says. "Poor old Ted, but we all know he's the star of the household."

Meanwhile, Ted takes out his frustration at being pushed out of the limelight on his favourite blue ball. "He goes nuts over it, playing soccer, and he will come for miles when he hears it squeak— luckily Betty hasn't destroyed it," Laura says. "They play together, but Betty is such a brat she will take the toy away, ruin the game and poor Ted will be sad."

While in his short life, Ted has survived a snake bite, and dreams of a showdown with his rival down the road — "his archnemesis is a Rottweiler called Buddy, who can't get out of his yard, but I'm afraid Ted could get in, and that would end in disaster" — most of the time he is the perfect well-mannered, little gentleman. "Every year we dress Ted and Betty up in a little Christmas costume, take a photo and make a card," Laura says. "Betty is usually a reindeer, while Ted has been Santa one year, then an elf another. He is always quite impressed by that!"

Read Laura's blog at crabtreeheightsblog.wordpress.com

West Highland terrier Ted exploring a brook. **BELOW** Jenny Paul with her border collies Molly and Tui. **FACING PAGE** Molly having a quiet moment.



MOLLY AND TUI THE BORDER COLLIES, MILTON, NSW

This mother-and-son duo are relishing life in the country.

There are many reasons guests love staying at The Old Schoolhouse Milton on NSW's South Coast, but one of the biggest attractions is owner Jenny Paul's two border collies, Molly and Tui. "A lot of people actually send me an email and say 'I want to make sure your dogs are going to be there,' and 'Are we allowed to play with your dogs?'" Jenny says with a smile. "The guests love them."

Luckily, the feeling is mutual: Molly, eight, and Tui, five, "stick like glue to guests because they know they're going to get lots of pats," Jenny adds. While both relish the attention, it's Tui who lives for human contact — he shadows Jenny as she goes about her day, while his mum Molly is more independent. "She just does her thing," Jenny says.

Molly came into Jenny's life after her previous border collie pup passed away unexpectedly. The next time the same breeder had a litter, Jenny picked Molly. Molly's sister had won the junior bitch class at renowned UK dog show Crufts. A few years later Molly had her own litter — and Tui was one of seven pups. "When the pups were seven weeks

old, I broke my leg and Tui sat by my bed and never left me, so we figured he chose us," says Jenny. "His loyalty was so evident, even at seven weeks old."

The dogs' affectionate, easy-going nature extends to other animals, too. When one of Jenny's neighbours had a lamb that was rejected by its mother, it came to stay for a while at The Old Schoolhouse Milton and was readily adopted by Molly and Tui, tagging along on daily trips to the beach and into town. "It was a little black-and-white lamb we called Lambie, and it thought it was a dog," Jenny says. "All three of them would sleep on a dog bed, and if the dogs decided to chase something down the road, they'd take off, and she'd get up and she'd look, and then she'd just run after them. She was very funny."

When they're not entertaining guests, Molly and Tui love swimming at the beach, chasing sticks and exploring the countryside with Jenny. Molly also has a taste for fresh eggs, and has developed a habit of sniffing out the spots where Jenny's free-range chooks have laid their bounty. "The freedom of the country is ideal for them both," Jenny says. "It's a dog's life here." >

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