

Scottish Terriers 2-14

Introductions

I have been a breeder owner-handler of Scotties for over 40 years. I have also been a professional handler and, currently, an AKC judge. While I am taking a moment to introduce myself, I felt this would also be a good time to introduce the Scottie as my companion and let you know why I adore the breed.

I first met Scotties as a child. Mom remembered a neighbor's terrier from childhood. She loved the fact that the pup was not everyone's friend and chose who would pet her. Mom was one of the few the pup adored. After looking at many terriers she realized the pup had been a Scottie.

She found local breeders with a male pup. They said he might be "show" quality. We had no idea what that meant but it sounded special. We thought he was handsome with his distinguished beard and eyebrows. He took a moment to size us up, deciding to stay put or come to us. He chose to run to my sister and me and roll on his back for a belly rub. We fell in love and took him home.

Per the breeders' advice, we were going to try showing him. Training classes were needed. Macduff was not impressed with obedience. In fact, the very nice elderly woman instructor suggested that she give us private lessons before he rejoined group classes. He wasn't keen on the other dogs especially the larger ones. He thought it was better to tell them off, rather than let them get near us. Next was breed handling and junior showmanship classes. It was much more to Macduff's liking. He could pose and look around. We were ready for our first match show. We packed a picnic lunch and Macduff then met the breeders and one of the trainers there.

Nervously I went into Juniors. I remembered everything I was taught, except Macduff had ideas of his own. As I did my down and back he decided he didn't need to return with me. He snuck out of the lead, sat and watched me return to the judge! Imagine my dismay. He found it rather amusing. He would decide when to return. Later he enjoyed the breed competition and won the puppy terrier group. After getting over my disappointment I realized that I had a most clever pup who would never be dull or typical. He would always see things his own way. 40 years later my Maevis still shares those same traits. When I get up for a snack she waits on the couch for me to bring hers back.

The moral to this story is that this breed is unique in its mindset. They do not pass the trainability tests because in their minds it's not needed. Instead, they think and do the task that is expected of them. The farmer doesn't say "go get the vermin". They simply figure it out. They don't always come when you call, or sit when you want. But if you want a pet with an independent nature that will always have a sense of humor and make you smile, and like MacDuff may watch you walk away with an empty leash, then it is a breed you will adore as I do.

Kathleen Ferris