

ANOTHER TREATMENT FOR SWIMMERS

By Keith G. Bates

Swimmers seem to occur without a pattern. In other words, you cannot predict in what litter they will occur. It seems also that there is one critical time in the puppy's development when it will either get up on its legs, or it will become a swimmer. The following is a technique that has worked many times, both in Scottish Terriers and in other short legged breeds. In fact, a variation was used on the front legs of an Irish Setter.

The swimmer is usually fat, well-fed, and lazy. After a few attempts to get on its feet, it is just content to lay like a turtle, eat, and sleep. It is at this juncture that you must act.

You will need the following: Three-quarter and half-inch adhesive tape, scissors, and if you have access to it, ether. The purpose of the ether is to make the tape very sticky. It goes without saying, that this procedure should be out in a well ventilated space, with no open flames or electrical contacts that will spark. Ether is very flammable and dangerous.

Cut two sections of three-quarter tape about four inches long, and two sections of half-inch tape about two inches long. Cut one piece of three-quarter tape long enough to fit around the puppy as a belly band twice. Wet the tape with ether and fashion "swim fins" on each of the puppy's rear feet with the three quarter tape. Use the short half-inch tape to go around the wrist of the foot to hold the fins in place. Place the feet in a position as if the puppy were lying with the back feet under it, and tape in place with the belly band. If you have help, you can tape the belly band through the folded end of the fins. It holds better that way.

The result is that you have a very angry puppy that is straining to get its feet out of the fins by pushing against them, which is what you want. Put the puppy back with the litter. You might use some Tabasco sauce on the tape to keep the others from chewing on it.

Change the tape every two days. The puppy will walk in four days.

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