



THE SHOGUN C H R O N I C L E S

The life and
times of the
newest member
of the Marks
family

PREY DRIVE IN OVERDRIVE

In terms of motivation, there is no doubt that Shogun's "prey drive" -- the natural desire to hunt -- is in fine working order. After our first puppy training class we were given the guidance of fixing a fuzzy "squirrel" to a cord as prey. In our case the critter of choice was what I can only describe as a tentacled octo-fox, but with a dense rubber ball for a belly it has great weight and lots of floppy, furry limbs trailing behind.

Now every day has at least a couple really good sessions of chase and Shogun has become a four-footed homing missile. It is terrific exercise for **everybody** involved (hey, have YOU ever tried to stay two steps ahead of a German Shepherd? Its tough!!)

And talk about smart, it took him only a few minutes to connect turns in my upper body to turns in his prey and now he starts cutting corners when I shift so he can intercept his prey even faster.



Chase is a game played in short little spurts; just two or three runs of maybe 10-15 yards at a time, with frequent breaks for Shogun to catch his prey and enjoy the thrill of victory and a shower of praise. The exercise makes crate time much easier as Shogun is all too happy to curl up and sleep after a rough & tumble round of hunting in the wilderness of the back yard.

BITE-SIZED NEWS

MOVING TOWARDS DÉTENTE

The term “like cats and dogs” generally infers chaos and mayhem. Thankfully, the relationship between Shogun and Ninja is settling down, albeit by very tiny steps and not without the occasional border skirmish. But thanks to some high-ground refuge options, and a couple invaluable baby gates to give Ninja some turf to call his own, it looks like the two furry superpowers in the house are moving towards peaceful coexistence. We expect talks on fur-eign policy soon.

CALL IT A... BARK MITZVAH?

In the Jewish faith, a Bar Mitzvah marks a time of passage into manhood, and for Shogun, one of those little milestones came with his first big day out in the public. First stop was Home Depot, where Shogun helped select the proper grinding head to finish the removable deck going into the truck for his crate. Then it was off to Coldstone Creamery and PakMail in Winchester to meet friends and greet the many folks anxious to fawn over a cute little puppy. We worked the *watch* and *sit* commands throughout the excursion and he is amazingly attentive, even amid distractions. Mazel tov!

VITAL STATISTICS

According to the vet today, Shogun’s rate of growth and body mass is great, he weighs in at 34lbs now and continues to develop more and more the subtle signs of the mature dog he will be one day. All the vets and tech concur that Shogun will be “quite a bruiser” when he grows up!



BUSTED!

OK dear reader, this next part is, well, shocking. But for the sake of journalistic integrity, we must report that John and Elise, our beloved mentors in all things GSD*, have suggested, nay outright accused Mike of spoiling the dog and giving him so much attention that Shogun is taking his presence for granted, having a mitigating impact on his attention during training sessions. I’ll give you a moment to catch your breath.

Sadly, while Mike was strategizing his anti-defamation legal defense group, it turns out that Alla is serving as a mole, snapping compromising Saturday nap-time photos that might, just MIGHT, sorta support the allegations. A little.

Oh hell, I’m so busted.

MAYBE TOO SMART IF YOU ASK ME

Sometimes smart is a good thing, until you realize your little angel is thinking two steps ahead of you. Playing out in the yard I needed both hands for a second so I dropped the leash. When Shogun tugged I simply put my foot on it and gave him “The Eye.” and he settled down with a soft huff. So a few minutes later I have the leash in my hand and give a gentle tug as I call Shogun to come inside. I kid you not, he puts his paw on the leash and very frankly gives me The Eye right back. Fluke you say? Probably - but it is just one of many instances where Shogun reminds me that he is always watching and always thinking!

* GSD = German Shepherd Dog

