

Why No Westies?

It should be easy to spot a West Highland White Terrier excelling in competition.

By Allan Reznik

Q. I have a West Highland White Terrier that I love dearly. When I watch dog competitions, I eagerly wait for the Westie to be shown. It seems that most of the time they bypass the Westie. Why?

A. Westies are very competitive in every discipline from conformation (dog shows) to obedience and agility to earth dog trials. It's probably pure coincidence that the dog shows you've watched on TV did not happen to have a Westie win Group 1 among the Terriers, but they do very well as a rule.

All the wire-coated Terrier breeds need to be hand-stripped, which is a time-intensive job and there are no shortcuts. This means that the handlers who show Terriers are absolute pros, dedicated and at the top of their game.

Go to the West Highland White Terrier Club of America website to find regional breed clubs and see when Westie specialties (a show for just your breed) will be held in your part of the country. There you will see Westies of all ages, from puppies to senior citizens, get to chat with breeders, and meet their dogs. This experience will definitely enhance your knowledge and enjoyment of the breed.