

The Secret Lives of Show Dogs

Up close and personal with Westminster contenders.

Nikki Moustaki

Ch. Hurleaze Bristol Blue
Call name: Bristol.
Breed: Cavalier King Charles Spaniel.
AKC group: Toy.
Age: 4.
Owners: Shirley Henry; Bruce Henry, M.D.; Betsy George.
Handler: Clint Livingston.
Home: Dallas, with his owners; travels with Clint on show weekends.

Favorite toy: An old, plush ball.

Favorite rewards: Liver treats, sharp cheddar cheese, and broiled chicken sprinkled with garlic salt.

Best canine buddy: His competition, the Petit Basset Griffon Venden from England.

Canine nemesis: He's friendly with all other dogs.

Favorite contraband treat: Anything he can steal at dinner. He especially likes chicken.

Quirks: He makes a funny quacking sound when he is really happy and excited, and alternates the quacking with a sporadic bark and a great deal of twirling around and wagging his tail.

What drives him nuts: Tennis balls!

Sleeping spot: On the pillow with his ears draped over Shirley's face.

Typical show day: Up at 5 a.m. for exercise time in the pens, then a small breakfast to give him energy for the day. Then some light grooming and off to his crate for a nap. Two hours before show time, he's on the grooming table for a thorough wash and dry. When it's time, he enters the ring to trot around and be admired. Afterward, he takes another nap. If he wins Best of Breed, he gets to run around a larger ring and play with the other Toy breeds while the group is judged. Then comes dinner time, one last run in his exercise pen, a final coat brushing, and it's off to bed.