



Dog Suffers Matted Fur & Infected Wounds After Boarding, Pet Owners Advised To Choose Trainers Carefully

by Jonathan Yee, MSNews, Jan 4, 2023

A difficult-to-control dog that boarded with a trainer ended up with matted fur and infected wounds after its owner returned from overseas. Full article here
Warning: Graphic Images

A welfare group shared the story to warn against choosing trainers that promote aversive training tools like electric and prong collars.

Dog grows to large size & can't be controlled

According to Chained Dog Awareness Singapore (CDAS) in a Facebook post, a first-time pet owner named E got a Golden Retriever named Cody (not his real name), aged three months old. As a first-time dog mum, E was unfamiliar with training a puppy, though she was eager to shower him with love.

Eventually, the active and playful Cody grew to 35kg but was not adequately trained, resulting in him becoming harder and harder to control as time went by.

He soon outgrew his playpen and even learned to open the balcony gate within three weeks of E trying to train him there.

Without being taught any boundaries, E started allowing him to roam freely, which caused him to be excessively active, despite having multiple walks daily.

Although she sought help from a trainer that uses positive reinforcement methods, Cody “remained out of control”.

E was on the verge of giving up and letting Cody go until she chanced upon a dog trainer, C.

C recommended B&T (board and train) and also showed her tools to use on Cody. As E was at her wits' end, she decided to send Cody for a three-week training with C.

E noticed after the boarding that Cody actually improved, so when she went overseas, she left Cody in their care again for 10 days.

Dog returns from boarding with matted fur, infected wounds

But things didn't go so well the second time.

E caught Covid-19 after returning from abroad and could not collect Cody, and she noticed that updates from C were fewer than before.

And when E's friend helped to fetch Cody home, she was shocked to find that he was dirty and had matted fur. Worse, there were wounds on his neck that were infected and even filled with pus.

E was unaware that Cody was in such a bad state as C had not highlighted the severity of his condition.

After treatment, Cody, now 12 months old, is staying with his owner, CDAS told MS News.

CDAS also said they are "confident enough" that the injuries were caused by the use of aversive tools.

Welfare group advocates less aversive training methods

"We advocate the use of LIMA approach (Least Intrusive Minimally Aversive) because, most importantly, any training method and tool must not cause harm," CDAS said in its post.

While aversive methods and dog boarding can be effective sooner, the welfare group argued that they aren't as humane as they are based on fear and pain. It actually teaches the dog nothing but fear and negative association to the event that triggers the pain and the person inflicting it.

While CDAS understand that pet owners can be stressed dealing with difficult fur babies, it urged them to train with kindness and seek trainers who prioritise dog welfare.

Regardless of results, please DO NOT use methods that cause harm. We believe that humans, as the most intelligent species, should be capable of being kind to our beloved pets that provide us with so much joy and companionship.

"There is no easy way out," CDAS said in response to those looking for such trainers. "Just like a kid that goes through 15-18 years of education, what makes anyone think that a young puppy should be trained in 2-3 weeks?"



They said owners are recommended to learn as they train and that it should be a lifetime aim to find humane solutions to help their pets.

Lastly, CDAS urged readers not to speculate or cast judgment on E as she is sharing her story to spread awareness.

According to CDAS, the matter has been reported to NParks.

MS News has reached out to the B&T facility for comment, but they have yet to respond.

Have news you must share? Get in touch with us via email at news@mustsharenews.com.

Featured image adapted from Chained Dog Awareness Singapore on Facebook.