

THE DOG WHO PLAYS POOL AND THE DOG WHO BOSSES A CAT



ON WEEK DAYS JUNE SMOOKES A PIPE

PHOTOS BY HALEY



OLD WISE JUNE



JUNE TAKES THE CAT FOR AN AIRING



CRITICIZING THE PLAYING OF HIS MISTRESS



THE BREAK



RED BALL FOR THE SIDE POCKET

By Robert Bolton

THE only dog in the world that plays pool is "Toots."

The claim has stood for a year or more without challenge, and there is a game in which challenges do not go unanswered. It is pool. Moreover, pool players are a clannish lot and know what each other are doing the world over.

William Clayton, who owns "Toots," makes the declaration, and as he has refereed three world's championship pool contests, he knows what's what in his sphere.

Let us hope, however, that there is another, for then a match could be arranged between them.

Clayton is named as owner of the dog, but her pool playing proclivities are credited to Mrs. Clayton, for it was she who put the little pup a month old on the table and painstakingly taught her what she was to do. Mrs. Clayton now has her so thoroughly trained that when she has nothing else to take her time she puts the dog on the table and plays her a game. It would be going too far to say that "Toots" knows when she wins, but she certainly shows her appreciation of the attention when she brings applause by the cleverness of her shot, and sits up barking and wagging the stump of her tail ecstatically.

Mostly Fox Terrier

"Toots" passes for a large sized fox terrier, but when you look at her closely you can see that the strain is not pure. Her face has the shrewdness of a street urchin, and her eyes are too intelligent. As she glances over the table looking for some choice shot she seems actually to think about it. After she has found it she walks with supercilious face to the edge of the table and, after the approved manner of all pool players, chalks her cue—that is to say her nose—and makes the shot with the due amount of deliberation—the kind that impresses the spectators.

There was a great barking and swishing around the pool table the day I first saw "Toots," and I inquisitively peeked in to see what it was all about. At the unusual sight of a fox terrier standing in the center of the table and eying the balls, now and then letting out short yelps at her mistress, who was taunting her in her perplexity, I stopped to watch.

"Go on, why don't you play?" laughed Mrs. Clayton. "That one is easy. See, stupid, kiss the four at the side pocket and you will make it all right."

She motioned with her hand across the table toward the "four" ball, and "Toots" seemed to understand.

Leaning back on her haunches with her nose held about an inch from the ball, she took careful aim and, swinging her head forward and at the same time throwing the weight of her body with it, she sent the ball rolling at a

good clip across the table. Her aim, however, was a little off, and the ball kissed the "four" too soon, bouncing against the cushion. With a short bark she jumped forward to poke it into the pocket, but her mistress stopped her.

"My shot," she said. "Toots" quieted down, sitting on the edge of the table with her paws on the cloth ready to lift them should there be danger of a ball rolling that way, and growled while Mrs. Clayton put two balls into the pocket.

They were playing "rotation." Mrs. Clayton had put in the "two" and "three." The "four" had rolled over against the cushion. That was one of "Toots" favorite shots. She walked over with the air of a pool player who thinks the shot so easy that it is not worth while doing it with any care. But, while other pool players usually miss these shots through overconfidence, "Toots" put it into the corner pocket with a swish of her nose and looked around for the next shot.

Without being coached she sniffed around until she spotted the "five" ball, which she edged in. "The 'six'" was not so easy. She found that between it and the cue ball intervened the "ten." Of course "Toots" plays without a cue ball (that would be too much to ask of a dog), but she is bound by the position of the cue ball in her plays, which she does not understand but accepts as a condition of the game. In the present instance her mistress would have had to make a "jump" shot to hit the "six," so "Toots" had to do the same. She was for sending it in without further delay, but her mistress intervened, picked up a triangle and held it over the "ten."

"When she was a pup," Mrs. Clayton explained, "she used to jump through; now she goes over."

"Now put the 'six' in," she said to "Toots."

"Toots" eyed the "six" over the barrier to get a correct gauge on its position, leaped lightly over the triangle and, hitting the ball with the end of her nose, sent it rattling into the pocket.

The "seven" she missed, leaving an easy "lay" for Mrs. Clayton, who in turn missed the "eight," which rolled within an inch of a corner pocket. "Toots" sprang toward it, avoiding the other balls with marvelous dexterity, and nosed it in. She then looked around for the "nine," which was at the other end of the table, and, finding it after smelling around two or three others, gave it a double shot, which is allowed her when the ball is too far away from the pocket to expect such an uneven cue as a nose to make a long shot correctly.

The "ten" lay close to a side pocket. She aimed badly and hit the cushion, but before the ball could bounce back she reached out with her foot and edged it into the pocket; then, as if she had not cheated at all, she hunted up the

"eleven." And so the game went on, played in earnest by both sides. Sometimes "Toots" wins; sometimes she loses; but her interest never flags. She seems to understand that there is a contest on and watches her mistress shoot with an apparent knowledge of what she is about.

Of course, "Toots" is only a dog after all, and her cleverness must always fall

short of actual intelligence. She had to be taught everything and the tricks which make the spectators gasp are the result of painstaking care.

"Toots" was barely able to pad about at the age of a few weeks when Mrs. Clayton put her on the table for the first time. She began by placing a ball close to a hole and pushing it in with the pup's nose, but after a few weeks

she merely stimulated the action with her own nose. This aroused "Toots" emulation, and she was soon knocking the balls into the pockets, no matter where they stood.

It took long, hard months of work and infinite patience, however, to carry the pup's education to a point where she knew the balls by their numbers. In this respect her education is still in-

complete, as she only knows them up to six individually, although she can distinguish them up to fifteen taken as a set.

When Clayton is showing off the dog he likes to have the spectators call out the numbers of the balls.

"Three," some one cries, but "Toots" pays no attention until Clayton cries: "Three, 'Toots,' three."

The rudimentary intelligence that serves "Toots" for a brain and makes her know the difference between "lie down," "go home" and "come here" has formed what psychologists call a habit of associating the sound of "three" as expressed by Clayton or his wife with a ball striped after a certain fashion, so she puts that one into the pocket.

Long association with the pool table has taught "Toots" just what balls belong upon it. Clayton is at sea about this himself. If any ball which does not belong among the others is placed there, "Toots" immediately roots it out, takes it to the edge of the table and drops it upon the floor. Mrs. Clayton has colored several white balls to imitate the proper ones, but "Toots" is not to be deceived. In time Mrs. Clayton has accumulated black, tan, blue, gray, yellow, pink and purple balls, as well, which she likes to place unostentatiously on the table while "Toots" is busy with a shot. To her great delight "Toots" always discovers the ruse immediately.

Any ivory ball besides the cue ball "Toots" also disposes of, knowing that only composition balls are ordinarily used.

What appear to be the most pronounced acts of intelligence are the combination shots she makes. She kisses off balls, sends two into the pocket with the same shot, and when two or more balls lie bunched near a pocket, sends them in one after another with several little short jabs.

When "Toots" Is Stumped

There is one fancy shot that mystifies her and seems to arouse her envy, as she always watches it with great interest, yelping and jumping up and down as it is successfully carried out. This is the difficult six ball shot invented by Alfredo de Oro, champion pool player of the world for 14 years. One of the accompanying photographs shows Mrs. Clayton taking this shot, and "Toots" her feet carefully drawn out of the way, absorbed in watching it.

The play must be made exactly right. Six balls are placed as if in two arcs with the convex sides toward each other, the two center balls in each being so close together that the cue ball can not pass between, but hits each at a sharp angle. When properly executed a ball is sent into each of the six pockets. It is a very pretty shot, the balls all hitting the pockets at the same instant. "Toots" has studied this hundreds of times, but she can not grasp it. She looks up at Mrs. Clayton, whining and wagging her tail as if to say: "Can't you explain?" But all that her mistress can do is to pet her and give her a piece of chocolate.

Her playing is frequently an occasion for laying a few small bets, which in some doggy way seems to be communicated to her. As soon as money is laid on her she bucks up and plays a better game, and if it is her master or mistress who is betting she plays marvelously. At least, so several people asserted in all honesty. However, I do not vouch for this.

"Toots" has the ways of pool players and must have the electricity burning over the table, no matter how light it is. Sometimes her mistress turns it off as she is engaged in making a shot, but "Toots" immediately stops and

stands on her hind legs, slapping at the light and barking.

She has proper scorn for an imitation game, and once when placed on a toy pool table she would not play.

Here is another story about her which will have to be taken on faith. Having no cue ball she can not "scratch." So Clayton, to teach her better manners, declares each scratch she takes at herself with her hind foot to be equal to a "scratch" in the game, for which she is fined a ball. She does not like to be fined, so she does not scratch.

"Toots" is merely the outcome of constant and tireless training. She knows the meaning of the slightest inflection in the voices of her master and mistress. She has learned scores of words and she acts on these solely. No one could play pool with her as well. If one of the two were not there to help her over the rough places her lack of actual intelligence leaves her helpless. But, even considering that, what she does seems impossible. The pool players all know her and make a pet of her, and owners of pool playing establishments are always glad to see Clayton coming in with "Toots" at his heels. In two minutes she is on the table playing her master a game to the delighted surprise of the dazed spectators.

June Cares for Cats

"It's luncheon time, June! Where's your basket? Hurry, now."

The speaker was Dr. Ira Barker Dalziel, the veterinary surgeon, and fancy the surprise of the newspapermen to see, not a little girl, as the name would suggest, but a full blooded shepherd dog, who came bounding toward Doctor Dalziel for a moment and then, turning sharply, ran to the yard outside and after a few sharp, imperative barks, returned with a large basket in his mouth and, looking neither to the right nor to the left, ran through an open door and down the street.

Responding to the inquiring looks of his newspaper friend, Dalziel explained: "That's my dog June. He has gone to my house for the cats' dinner. Wait a moment and you'll see how they welcome him on his return."

Then Mr. Dalziel became meditative and reminiscent.

"You see," he said, "I think a lot of June. I did not suppose when I took him in just after the fire that I would grow to value him so much. He would prove to be such an appreciative and lovable companion. June is really a refugee dog. His owner, who was obliged to leave San Francisco immediately after the earthquake, brought him around to my place, feeling very badly at having to part with him; in fact, he was actually crying, and said his wife and daughter were really sick because they had to give up their pet, so then I agreed to look after him, and now I have become so attached to him that I would not give him up for any price. Here he comes now. You see he has made good time with that lunch basket."

Just then June came bounding through the door with a well filled lunch basket that might almost have fed a picnic party, and from the yard at the same time came bounding a half dozen sleek, fat cats, moving impatiently as is the habit of cats, until the contents of the basket were removed and placed at their disposal.

June, meantime, lay down by his master's chair and blinked complacently, but his work was not yet finished. Again came the command:

"Here, you June, get your smoking outfit and your hats, and show the gentleman how you look when you're engaged in doing something really interesting."

Obedient to the word, June again left the room, returning immediately with a pipe and several small hats, and hopping upon a chair, posed good naturedly for the photographers' camera.

"Much obliged, I'm sure," said the newspaperman. "Perhaps that pipe is strong. Would you like a cigar?" And June took the cigar.