

### **The Roughy Toughy Coated Terriers**

Just what to do with those Terriers that are required to have a wiry harsh outer coat and a softer undercoat when it comes to ring preparation and presentation? A good many of the Terriers such as the Airedale, Aussie, Border, Cairn, Wire Foxie, Irish, Lakeland, Norfolk, Norwich, Scottie, Sealyham, Welsh and Westie standards require the outercoat to be hard or wiry and some even state to be presented in a natural way.

However, none of the standards mentioned that the coats were to be unwashed and in fact, the Cairn standard according the AKC book I have, requests the coat to be clean. Now just how clean does clean really mean? The purists I have met are adamant that the Terrier coat should not be washed in order to retain texture and that probably works for them. Most have their own techniques for addressing the issue of clean but I for one like a coat to be really clean. Clean can mean a dust and brush with a dry cleaning style powder or just a regular dunk. Whatever method you prefer it's nice for the judge to have a clean dog to go over.

The trick is to have the coat retain that harsh texture that is repeated in all these standards. So how does one bath and keep texture? The secret is simply not to soften the coat and not to use anything that does soften. There are several ways of doing this but the one that seems pretty reliable is to use a low foaming, non softening style of cleanser such as a very diluted wash of Plush Puppy All Purpose Shampoo at the ratio of 10:1 i.e. water to shampoo or if bathing often, the PP Hydrobath and Bath Wash which just kind of rinses and cleanses and gets rid of odours. Don't use conditioners as these will soften the coat.

People tell me that everything they use softens their dog's coat which suggests that the coat is likely too soft to start with so here again there is a way around this too. Use a very diluted solution, 10:1 of PP Body Building Shampoo to add extra texture.

Quite a number of these standards mention the side areas of the coat can be softer but the top areas ought to be harsh. If you are concerned at the texture after washing, then bath your dog a few days prior to the show and then just hot towel and wash again the undercarriage and face.

Now the grooming. This really can be so individual as many coats of even the same breed will vary. Remember whatever you choose to use must appear and feel natural. These dogs are all no nonsense little working fellows and are robust and weather resistant. I am not adverse to a tiny amount of a coat oil worked into the hands and then "lightly" touched onto the outer areas. This can satisfy the fears of the owners who worry about losing the "natural" oils in the coat and won't soften the coat.

A good comb through with a couple of combs of varying teeth width right through from root to end helps to remove the dead hair and keep the coat healthy. A finer comb through on the face and ears too. Does anyone else use a cattle dryer to get rid of the dead coat and make a shedding coat look fuller if needed?

Some of the breeds look kind of cute with their little face framing hair and some need that chunky bitsy pieced out look to their coats. This is where your styling skills can come into play really easily. The veterans in the breed - well, they are experts at trimming and hand plucking but for the novices this can help till you learn to get the shape just right. Plush Puppy have a great product called Sit N Stay that is lightly sticky and when applied to the hands and worked into the base of the coat will help hold it all where you want it without feeling like you've done something artificial. Then just piece and mold that coat where you want it to go.

If your little guy is a real outdoors man then you don't want to have coat fade especially if he is a Scottie. You want to keep that shiny black exterior. You need to rub in a good moisturiser that won't soften the coat but prevents sun damage. The sun can get fierce the further north you go. The PP Reviva Coat is a good foaming moisturiser that just gets lightly worked into the coat and just enough to keep him looking good between shows.

I do like to see a healthy clean and low level shine to these coats so a light spray with PP Shine & Comb doesn't go astray just before going into the ring. Don't forget a good smelling dog is nice to meet too so I use PP Odour Muncher to kill any doggie smells and leave a wonderful fragrance.

These fearless little breeds are a joy to behold with their feisty natures and their loyal and hardworking attitudes. They too can be glamorous and beautiful and still be a picture of a stouthearted working dog.

## **CHERYL LECOURT**

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