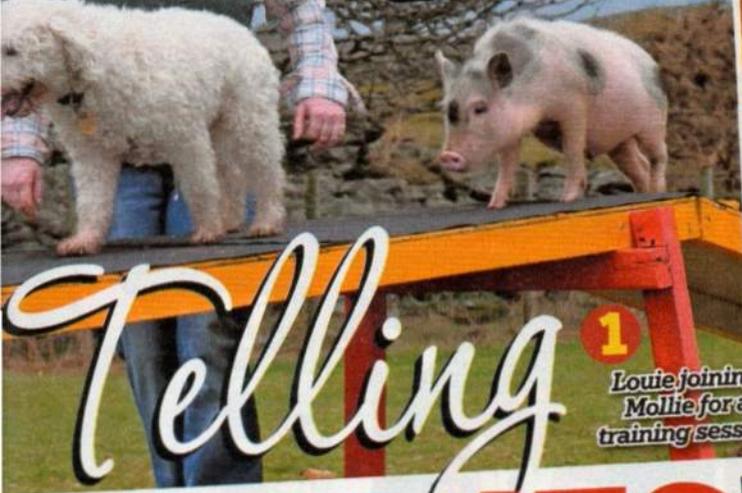


Top DOG!

Sue's pet pig was hot to trot-ter!



1
Louie joining Mollie for a training session



2
Louie and Mollie jump in sync!



3
Louie being put through his paces

Telling PORKIES!

With his big, dark eyes, snub nose and wiggly tail, my new pet was adorable.

And when Louie joined me for a walk with my dogs, he certainly turned heads.

I guess it wasn't every day you saw a piglet out on a lead!

A dog trainer, people probably thought I was barking mad, but I'd developed a real soft spot for little porkers.

My first pet pig was Purdy, a Kune Kune. I'd bought her in 1998 and she'd got on famously with my dogs and the other animals at our kennels in Porthmadog, Gwynedd.

Over the years, me and my husband, Derek, 55, had bought other pigs to keep her company.

And when our latest one, Peggy, died in June last year, I worried Purdy would be lonely.

'The lady up the road has got some piglets,' I told Derek. 'I'm going to take a look.'

Louie, a potbelly cross, had stolen my heart immediately.

I made him a little bed in the utility room because, at just eight weeks old, he was too

small to share a pen with Purdy just yet.

He loved sitting on my lap to be stroked and playing with old squeaky toys we'd bought for our puppies.

And now, as I took him out for some fresh air and exercise in the fields behind our house, he happily ran about with our

German Shepherd, Abbie, and Malinois, Maddie.

'Heel,' I instructed - and Louie was the first to come running.

'Someone's a right little Babe,' I laughed, thinking of the piglet that becomes an award-winning 'sheepdog'.

Gathering the dogs together, I decided to do some agility training with them.

Me and Derek, a former police dog handler, had set up and coached the Cheshire Dog Display Team, which many of our pets were part of.

And we took our 15-strong team of performing pooches - one of the top three in the country - to fairs and shows, where they did everything from obstacle races to leaping through

rings of fire!

Now, as I started showing one of the dogs, Bet, a Border collie, how to go

through a tunnel, Louie trotted through instead, oinking!

'Well done,' I beamed. He'd done better than the dog!

'I'm going to try training Louie with the dogs,' I told Derek when I got home.

And, for the next few days, I taught Louie how to jump over fences and weave between poles.

He was as happy as a pig in mud, picking up tricks quicker than any of the dogs!

I did feel a bit uncomfortable handing out the rewards, though. The dogs were always treated to a piece of hot sausage...

Instead, Louie got a chunk of banana, grapes and ginger nut biscuits. I tried not to let him see what his canine companions were munching on!

He made such good progress that, just four weeks later, in August 2010, he was ready for his debut at Edenbridge & Oxted Agricultural Show in Lingfield, Surrey.

Starting the demo with an agility race for the big dogs, I couldn't wait for Louie to take the stage.

'Good luck,' I whispered, as he got ready to go on.

Then Derek, who was the commentator, told the crowd, 'Smaller animals can do this, too.'

Suddenly, little Louie strode into the ring, giving a huge grunt into the mic - much to

everyone's amusement!

And when he made a faultless lap of the course, the cheer from the audience was deafening!

Afterwards, Louie was swamped by fans wanting a photo with the star of the show.

He lapped up the attention like a true diva.

Over the next few weeks, Louie appeared in more shows, learning increasingly impressive feats each time, like bowing for the crowd and tidying up toys.

But I was wary that he shouldn't forget he was a pig!

So, when he was big enough, he moved in to Purdy's pen with two of his sisters, Charlotte and Tinker, who we'd adopted, too.

Louie's almost a year old now and has grown to just over 3st.

He still loves training with our dog troupe - especially with his best pal, Mollie, a Spanish water dog - and will be appearing in our shows again this summer.

My ambition is to show off his skills with the team at Crufts one day.

Louie might be a pig but, as far as I'm concerned, he's top dog!

Sue Williams, 41, Porthmadog, Gwynedd



Louie slept in the utility room



Me and Louie with Maddie

■ As told to Alex Lloyd (features@realpeoplemagazine.co.uk)

Photos: Barcroft