

Evaluation of Honor – mixed breed, adult female dog

Evaluation conducted in Leland, NC on March 18, 2019

Conducted by Jeff Coltenback – CV/Resume can be viewed at:

<http://www.jeffcoltenback.com/about-jeff-coltenback.html>

Handlers of Honor: Jeff Coltenback; Sharon (Honor's Owner)

The following evaluation was conducted in Leland, NC at a neutral location that the above dog has never visited. This is the first and only time I have evaluated this dog. The tests performed during this evaluation determine this particular dog's behavior, temperament and ability to cope with stressors and stimuli on this particular day and in the environment in which the test was conducted. The individual tests I perform are a combination of behavioral/temperament tests used by the ASPCA and the American Temperament Testing Society along with additional tests I may add to ensure the most well rounded and comprehensive evaluation possible for an individual dog.

I utilize a pass/fail grading system for evaluations. As far as the results I will offer; please keep in mind that a pass or fail mark for an individual test is not an indication of a pass or fail for the overall test. For instance, a "fail" on an individual test merely indicates that improvement is needed and I may offer suggestions on how the dog/handler can improve in a particular situation. Conversely, a "pass" generally suggests the dog reacted or behaved in a normal or expected manner for the average domestic pet. Although a dog may "pass" a test, I still may still offer suggestions for improved behavior. A failed individual test, or even an overall fail, does not mean a dog is incapable of being a household pet. Many average pet dogs often fail evaluations. Some of the test summaries below will contain descriptions of why the test is performed.

Initial Observation: Unbeknownst to Sharon, I recorded her exiting from her vehicle. She opened the side door and Honor waited in the vehicle until she was leashed and led out of the car by Sharon. Sharon and Honor exited the car and approached the evaluation area at my direction. Honor exhibited stable body language and normal curiosity in the new environment. Honor appeared relaxed and comfortable. **PASS**

Handler assessment: I directed Sharon to offer Honor some obedience commands to assess her handling of Honor and to record Honor's level of obedience in a new environment with her owner in control. This sets a baseline for me so I can assess the dog's amenability to training when I handle her. Honor did not perform reliably during obedience cues from Sharon. This is not uncommon as dogs often are preoccupied with new surroundings and may not perform as they would in a familiar environment with limited distractions. Consequently, I advised Sharon that she needs to work Honor more in a variety of environments. Sharon offered that Honor had knee surgery not too long ago and that Honor is "rusty". I explained to Sharon that a few weeks of inactivity is no excuse for lacking obedience reliability. More training in distractions is recommended at this time. **FAIL**

Interacting with a friendly stranger: *[Merely an observation of how a dog reacts to a friendly stranger]*. I approached Honor in a friendly manner and engaged in petting and friendly vocalizations with her. She exhibited normal behavior consistent with a friendly, well socialized dog. I took the leash, walked her out and back in frame of video and gave her obedience commands, which she responded to well. **PASS**

Stare Test: [I hold my hands on both sides of mouth (a hand on each lower jaw) firmly and make direct, sustained eye contact with the dog. The intention of this test is to determine what, if any, reaction the dog will have to force and/or provocation]. Honor accepted my grip of her face/jowls and did not attempt to pull away or react adversely to this invasive handling. Additionally, her ears were back and relaxed and her tail was wagging low and slow. **PASS**.

Mouth Inspection: *[This is to identify any issues a dog may have to a hand being placed in his mouth. Dogs will often need their mouth inspected for periodontal reasons or for objects to be removed]*. Honor allowed her mouth to be inspected without incident. She remained relaxed and allowed me to inspect her teeth and gums. **PASS**

Ear pull test: *[This test is done to see if the dog allows his ears to be pulled and probed. Dog owners often will need to clean ears, etc. And, children will often pull a dog's ears. Tolerance is being tested here]*. Honor showed no signs of stress or duress as her ears were pulled; she did not pull away or react adversely. **PASS**

Tail tug: *[to determine what, if any, triggers a dog may have to real life interactions – children are notorious for pulling on a dog's tail]*. I pulled Honor's tail and moved her body via the tail pull. She showed absolutely no signs of stress or reactivity to this. Even the most balanced dogs will sometimes whip around due to such invasive interactions. Honor displayed excellent tolerance here. **PASS**

Paw Pinch test: *[To determine any adverse trigger from paws being pinched].* Honor exhibited tolerance and allowed her paws to be pinched without any negative reaction. I pinched all four paws without incident. [PASS](#)

Note: Honor recently had knee surgery on one leg and needs knee surgery on the other and still did not react adversely to manipulation of her legs during the pinch test.

Physical Manipulation: *[This is where I lift the dog's front and hind quarters off the ground by wrapping my hands around the chest and belly and lift body up. This is yet another test to determine if any triggers exists that could provoke a negative or aggressive reaction].* Once again, Honor did not exhibit any adverse or aggressive tendencies toward me during this very invasive exercise. Thus far, I could do just about anything to this dog. [PASS](#)

Massage/Spinal Pressure Test: *[This is basically a firm massage test. Many dogs will often react negatively to firm pressure. I firmly massage spinal muscles to determine if there are any physical issues that could trigger an adverse reaction].* Honor responded extremely well to this interaction. [PASS](#)

Vulnerability Test: [I placed dog on side to determine if a dog reacts adversely to being placed in a vulnerable position – i.e. lying down on side]. Honor allowed me to roll her on her side and she remained there calmly without incident. She averted her eyes. I also massaged her and presented firm touch while she was in this position. [PASS](#)

Genital Inspection: [I literally touch genital area to see if there is any adverse response. Many dogs are not accepting of this invasive test]. Honor did not exhibit any response to this. [PASS](#)

Neck Scruff: *[This test is somewhat primitive as it relates to present day dog training methods. But, I still use it nonetheless to ensure a well-rounded and thorough evaluation. I grab the dog by back of neck and gently, but firmly, scruff neck and push and pull with force. I do not classify this as a dominance test but merely a test to see how the dog reacts to highly invasive interactions].* Honor was resistant to the downward pressure of the neck scruff, but she did not retaliate or react in an adverse manner. I pushed and pulled with force. No reaction from her. [PASS](#)

Obedience (with treats): [This is the first time I introduced food to Honor during the assessment. I do not introduce food until individual tests are done as food can sometimes alter the tests and cause favorable results]. Honor performed fairly well. Again, she needs some refresher work with her obedience. The most important note during this exercise what that Honor took treats very gently and displayed great bite inhibition. [PASS](#)

Thrown Object Test: *[This test is conducted to identify any triggers that could be present from objects being dropped (in this case thrown) near the dog. I used a foam roller, a large book and a rake].* Honor was unfazed by this is and did not overreact to the objects. She inspected each object immediately after object landed near her. I also raked near her and threw the rake at her. She did not react aversely. These were normal responses expected from the every day, balanced dog. **PASS**

Agitation: I used a broom handle to present a stressful situation to Honor. I swung the stick and slammed it to the ground near her. I also whacked some nearby branches as well. She backed away and did not react in a threatening or protective manner. She opted for flight and did not advance or fight. **PASS**

Dog on Dog Test Part 1: *[To evaluate a dog's behavior in the presence of other dogs of varying social levels]. Honor has never met any of the dogs used during this test.*

Dog 1: Adult, dog-friendly male – Honor was excited and happy to see a new dog. She displayed normal, friendly body language throughout this engagement. Her body language remained curious and friendly the entire time and she engaged with this dog in a manner consistent with that of a balanced dog. **PASS**

Dog 2: Adult, dog-selective male - Honor was excited and happy to see a new dog. She displayed normal, friendly body language throughout this engagement. Her body language remained curious and friendly the entire time. The test dog even growled at her and she did not retaliate. Even after she got growled at, I conducted a forced butt sniff to ensure she remained at a good behavioral level. **PASS**

Dog 3: Adult, dog-selective female – The test dog used here is a very vocal and assertive female. Additionally, I agitated the test dog to engage in more vocalization and lunging to try and initiate a retaliatory response from Honor. Despite the barking and lunging from the test dog, Honor remained calm and relaxed throughout this encounter and did not retaliate or shift her body language to an assertive or negative posture. **PASS**

Conclusion

Overall Grade: PASS. Honor is an exceptionally friendly dog with a stable and balanced temperament. Her tolerance for invasive and provoking interactions by a human is evident and clearly above average in comparison to many household pet dogs. She displayed normal responses to all tests performed on her. At no time did she overreact or exhibit any aggressive or retaliatory behaviors. I saw no signs of stress or duress from Honor. Her ability to cope with various stressors and stimuli without incident was illustrated and is available in unedited video footage which can be viewed at <http://www.jeffcoltenback.com/honor.html>. This is a good dog. The most compelling aspect of the assessment was the balance and calmness she displayed during the last dog on dog test when the test dog was barking and lunging at her. After a multitude of invasive poking and prodding; and then being exposed to an assertive, vocal female test dog without incident showed remarkable balance on Honor's part. If I could sum up Honor in one, simple description it would be this: She is an above average, friendly and trusting pet dog and exhibits a stable and friendly temperament in a variety of circumstances.

Jeff Coltenback; Author, Dog Trainer & Behavior Expert
Leland, NC
(201)951-5079
www.JeffColtenback.com

Signature:



Date: _March 18, 2019

Below are some pictures of the evaluation. Full video is available upon request and can be sent via email or posted on my private server for ease of access.





