

Goose Patrol With The 'Geese Police'

I imagine a radio call comes in from your staff. "Those pesky geese are on the 18th hole again." Knowing very well that chasing them with the cart won't scare them away for long, you call for your Border Collie "Ladd" to load up into your golf cart and you head out for the 18th hole. There are the geese, with chunks of the green and droppings at their feet! You send Ladd with the command "away to me" and



Ladd leaps off the cart hitting the ground running and sweeps to the right in a wide arc behind the geese. At your command Ladd charges and the geese are airborne. With the command "that will do" Ladd returns and hops into the cart to the applause of the watching golfers.

This may seem like a dream come true but golf courses around the United States are realizing that the trained Border Collie is the answer to geese control. Unlike the use of loud noises, hunting or the application of chemicals, Border Collies are seen as an environmentally safe and humane method for controlling the geese population. The dogs herd the geese off the greens into the water, separating them from their food supply so the geese look elsewhere to dine. The geese view the dog as a predator so they go elsewhere to raise their family.

Jennifer Maginnis, owner of Geese-Away Academy, has trained Border Collies for the past ten years. Mrs. Maginnis states that one of the most important aspects of her job

is matching the dog's temperament to the handler's personality at the golf course. Only a small percentage of Border Collies makes the grade to become Geese-Away Academy graduates; the temperament of the dog and its ability to get along with the staff and golfing patrons is very important. Mrs. Maginnis has placed Border Collies at premier golf courses throughout the United States, at county recrea-

tional facilities and even on United States Air Force bases to control geese.

Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, Maryland purchased "Molly" a Geese-Away graduate, and Sam Green the assistant superintendent, says "We tried bird bangers, grape-scented spray, swans and air horns but nothing worked except for Molly." Sam says, "Molly has been good public relations, everybody loves her."

Todd Cochran the manager of Darlington Park and Golf Course, a 200-acre facility in Bergen County, New Jersey, obtained a Border Collie named "Jack" from Geese-Away Academy and says, "In the short month that we have had Jack, the flock has been reduced by over 50% from 125 birds down to 50 and so far a success. We applaud Geese-Away Academy for her excellent training." Jack has been well received by the community and has become a celebrity of sorts since he was featured on NBC Channel 4 New York nightly news chasing geese off the golf course.