

Ex-delinquent joins the force

HE'S P.D. (FOR DOG) JASON

JASON, a year-old Alsatian condemned to death a few months ago, yesterday became the first police dog to help in Derby's fight against crime—and combat vandalism in Derby parks.

He arrived at the weekend with his handler, Police-constable Hugh Tydeman, of 2 Elenheim Drive, Allestree, who has spent 14 weeks at the Staffordshire Police Dog Training Centre at Weeping Cross. He and Jason teamed up on the first day of the course and have become inseparable pals.

ROAMED STREETS

Six months ago Jason belonged to a couple in Staffordshire who went out to work all day, leaving their dog largely to his own devices. Playfully he began to roam the streets chasing children, and although he never hurt anyone neighbours began to complain that he was dangerous.

He was taken to be put down, but the vet, impressed by his magnificent health and intelligence, recommended that he be given to the police.

Profiting by this reprieve, the former "juvenile delinquent" became one of the training centre's star pupils and he and his handler got "excellent" ratings throughout their course.

PLAYFUL NIP

P.C. Tydeman, who has spent an average of 20 hours each day with Jason, said yesterday: "He has bitten only one person—me. Every time during training that I send him to tackle a suspect—by grabbing his right arm—he gives me a playful nip on the behind in his excitement."

Mrs. Tydeman told the "Telegraph" that at first she was not

too keen on the idea of having a large dog about the place but now she loves Jason and so does her 15-month-old baby Jill.

"He's a really lovely animal and very friendly—except when he's ordered not to be, of course. He isn't a pet, but we get on very well," she said.

Jason and Jill are firm pals, and by taking her reins in his teeth the dog gently guides the Tydeman toddler along the living room carpet.

Jason lives in a kennel-and-run in the Tydemans' back garden, and he eats 11lb. of meat a day, not to mention biscuits.

"KEEP CLEAR" WARNING

The Chief Constable of Derby, Mr. R. A. Noble, hopes within six months to have a section of three dogs and three handlers in the Borough Police Force.

Mr. Noble told the "Telegraph" that people would be mistaken to think that Jason was a pet. "He is trained to do a special job and do it well. He will be particularly useful in curbing hooliganism in local parks, and I think those persons responsible for recent damage would be well advised to keep clear of such places in future."

"FLYING VISITS"

When £500 damage in Derby Parks and recreation grounds between April and September was reported at Derby Town Council meeting on Wednesday, flying visits by the police at night, were among suggestions for catching the vandals.



P.C. Tydeman and P.d. Jason.

Jason's first assignment
Tracing a missing person from
his house in Nottingham Road.

BOTH ARE TOP DOGS READY?

DERBY Borough Police can say they have two of the best police dogs in the country. After a gruelling five-day test of dogs and handlers at Cardington Air Base, Bedford, last week, Jason and Ranger returned with an "excellent" rating.

These were the national police dog trials, intended to test the brains and strength of dog and handler, and 70 dogs from all over Britain competed.

Two searches

There are no winners in the accepted sense, but the dogs either failed, or qualified as good, very good, or excellent. To be "top dogs" is not an easy honour to win.

The tests included taking an armed criminal attaining difficult objectives, such as a six-foot fence and a nine-foot long jump, crowd control

Jason and Ranger rated as 'excellent'

(driving away about 12 rowdy people), and a mile of tracking.

In addition, they had to go to the scene of a "crime" and were tested on the way they dealt with the situation. There was a search for stolen property, and a search of buildings to arrest and hold a criminal until help arrived.

The Derby dogs were two of the youngest in the competition. Ranger, a gift from Mr. Griff Williams, of Belper, the Alsatian breeder, is two years five months old, and Jason, who came from the Police Training College, Stafford, is 2½. Ranger has been with the police for 15 months and Jason for 18 months.

Normally, it takes a dog of

four or five years old to qualify for these tests.

Police-constable W. Scottford and Police-constable H. Tydeman, the Derby handlers, each received commendations from the judges.



RANGER (left) and JASON—with their handlers and award certificates.