

## Flynn's racing around after pelvic fracture

By Annie Wright - The Wright one

Sue Murray from Kati Kati says she recently had one of those horror moments when she accidentally drove over and seriously injured one of the family's four dogs.

"We live out in the country so the dogs have a large area to run around in and they usually stay well clear of our vehicle. They are quite used to us coming and going but on this day Flynn, our beautiful gold and white Border Collie, got too close and I drove over him. When I heard his scream I knew something awful had happened."

Sue says while there was no blood Flynn was obviously hurt so there was no time to muck about. After a couple of frantic calls for help she managed to lift him into the car, organise her two young children and set off to her vet Tony Austwick at Tauranga - Kati Kati Veterinary Services.



"At this stage we didn't know exactly what Flynn's injuries were as he had no open wounds but, after Tony had administered morphine and x-rayed him, the news was bad. Flynn had a pelvic fracture and it would be a big job to get him well again. Tony said while he could perform the operation he wanted to refer Flynn to the Veterinary Specialist Group (VSG) at Unitec in Auckland who have the latest state of the art equipment and expertise on

site."

Tony Austwick says Flynn presented with multiple fractures to his pelvis and, while he could have operated on him, he felt Flynn's injuries were outside the capabilities of the clinic.

"Flynn is such an athletic dog and Sue had said right from the start that she wanted to ensure any operation would mean a complete recovery for him. As a vet you always have to know where your limits are and while we can do some surgical repairs here; in this case the injuries were too complex.

"Tony says he had no qualms about referring Flynn to the Veterinary Specialist Group (VSG) as if they could not help him then nobody could.

After discussing their options Sue decided that Flynn needed the very best in care if he was going to recover well and lead a normal life. He had already shown promise in obedience competitions after being placed fourth in the beginners section at the National Dog Show so nothing short of a full recovery would suit him.

"We wanted Flynn to be able to lead a full life and not be limping around always struggling to keep up with our other dogs - he is that sort of bouncy, full of life dog. If we couldn't get him back pretty much back to full health then we would have to make a decision as to his future."

She says taking Flynn to VSG for a consultation was an emotional time as she didn't know what the outcome would be but from the moment she stepped through the door the team there were amazingly supportive to both owner and dog.

"They looked after us both and veterinarian Richard Jerram was phenomenal. He x-rayed Flynn and told us what the repair procedure would be - he covered the operation as well as the post operative care required, the possible costs and the expected outcomes for Flynn long term. He was confident we could expect a 95% recovery at the very least.

"With this information Sue decided to go ahead with the operation and, while Flynn came through well, the tricky matter of postoperative care had to be carefully managed. He had to be restrained from moving around too much so his pelvic bones could heal and knit together again - Sue says this was easier said than done.

"We had to support his hind quarters in a sling arrangement and keep him contained in a 3m x 3m space to keep him off his hind legs. Poor Flynn got quite depressed at this stage but daily calls from the VSG team really helped us and their support and advice continued right up to the time he was declared fit and healthy again.

"She says Flynn is once again back to full health with no noticeable indicators he has been through the trauma of a pelvic fracture. Sue puts his full recovery down to the exceptional care and expertise of the VSG team.

"I can't speak highly enough of both Richard Jerram and the VSG team and in fact if I had an orthopaedic injury I'd consider consulting Richard Jerram myself - I'd trust him to sort my health out as well. Flynn is now back to his old self and is racing around with the other dogs and getting up to all his old tricks."

