



GREAT DANE CLUB OF AMERICA MIDWEST DIVISION NATIONAL SPECIALTY SHOW 2012

Critiques by Robert J. Edison, Bill Stebbins and Judy Harrington

Regular classes
by Robert J. Edison

Allow me to begin by saying what a terrific event the 2012 GDCA National Specialty was for all who attended. Once

again, the Mid-west division, chaired by Lourdes Carvajal, did an exemplary job. Everything from the show facilities and grounds to the closing banquet was done with thoughtfulness and an eye for detail. This was my fourth National Specialty assignment and I must say as a judge each is as exciting and meaningful as those in prior years.

My entry was large and of very good quality. In most cases there was depth in each class and the top placement could have been given to the second place dog. This bodes well for our breed at this time. Looking upon my finalists in the winners ring it became apparent that I had a number of individuals worthy of the WD and RWD awards.



I chose the winner of the Open Fawn Class Tue-J's Pacific Category Five as Winner's Dog. He is a beautiful, correct young dog in impeccable condition, and shown to his very best. Three of his many attributes I would like to mention are his smooth withers that flow into his level topline, his rich yellow gold color, and the ease in which he carried himself around the ring...demonstrating strength and power with a long, easy stride and open side-gait...all the time holding his topline and shape. It was his day.

Reserve Winner's Dog was awarded to the handsome 6-9 brindle puppy Stargazn's Man In Black-S. As we say..."this one could have come home with me". Again, this is a correct young dog with amazing potential for the future. This puppy possesses the type and outline we all strive for in our breed. His color is outstanding with a clear yellow-gold base and strong, evenly placed black stripes. He too was presented beautifully on this day and looks to be a real showman. I could look at his expression and never tire. This youngster went on to Best Puppy in Show later in the week.

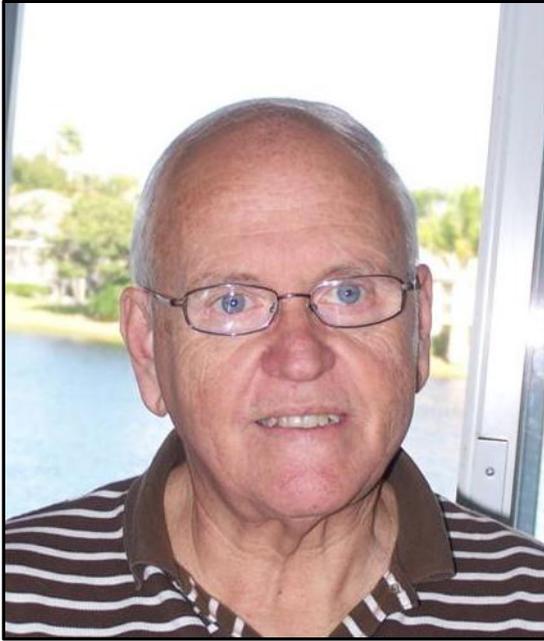
As I mentioned earlier in this critique the quality and presentation of my entry were both notable. I would add a word of caution however on toplines, as our breed standard calls for a level back.

In closing I would like to thank the breeder's and exhibitor's attending this show for the privilege of judging your dogs. You are the heart and soul of the sport and we are all grateful to you for your

dedication and commitment to the Great Dane. It was an honor to officiate at the Mid-west National dedicated to the memory of my dear friend Don Carmody. I am forever grateful.

My best to you all,

Bob



Critique by Bill Stebbins

Although I have seldom been accused of being at a loss for words, the excitement and honor of my recent assignment at the National Specialty is still difficult to articulate. So many deserving individuals have never had an opportunity such as this and I wish to thank all of the GDCA members that thought of me when they voted for this year's panel of judges. I will cherish this forever.

Junior Showmanship...

It was nice to see that we had an entry of 11 young people in the JS competition. This is a very important aspect for the continuation of our sport and all of us should do what we can to support it. One of my proudest moments in dog shows is when I suggested to the AKC that they develop an Intermediate Class for JS. This was received with great interest and was implemented in very short order. Just

recently the Master Class was introduced. My Best Junior this year was Ms. Kylie Soafer who, along with the other two young ladies in the Master Class, showed why they were all deserving of being in this category of competition. She did a wonderful job and I congratulate her and the rest of the JS competitors for their hard work and dedication.

Brace Competition...

Always a crowd pleaser, we had six Braces entered in this year's competition. It takes more than a little work to try to get a giant breed to appear in unison. Well done to all of you!!! This year's winner was a Harlequin Brace consisting of two males... Croydebayone Ye Wright Stuff and Sasdania-Vitag's Deal No Deal Alto Gavea. Congratulations!

Best of Breed...

This year I was honored to have a total Specials entry of 142. I hope you can imagine what a thrill it is to think that that 142 of the top dogs in the breed will be in your ring that day. The downside to such an entry is that you know you will be excusing many dogs from the ring that, under normal circumstances, you would seriously consider for the top awards. You realize that in advance but there were times when I was asking myself..."Bill, you're really going to excuse that dog? Really?" Although, on the day, I did what I felt was right, there were many difficult decisions.

The dust finally settled around 3:00 PM and my top awards were as follows:

Best of Breed - CH. Elan's Command Decision - There are few things that one would want to change on a specimen such as this. Proportions, angles, breed type, temperament... a total package. I remember a terminology used by Pop Gilbert (Sorry, I'm dating myself.) When you find such a dog, you judge by the "tingle method". An apt description. After judging I was told that he had just turned 8 years old. What a wonderful accomplishment for one of our senior citizens.

Best of Winners - Alpine's Lunar Haze (WB) - This was a lovely, young fawn bitch who shows great promise for a successful future. She showed and was presented beautifully.

Best of Opposite - CH. Tauson Koenigin Amelia From Auburn - This Harlequin bitch was simply a very honest and solid specimen. During the various cuts she never let down for a second in the ring.

Select Dog - GCH. Shoreline East-West Play It Again Sam - A truly lovely Fawn dog with a well-balanced body and mind. This dog is an eye-catcher and is deserving of whatever recognition he may receive.

Select Bitch - GCH. Rosendane's So This Is Heaven - This young fawn bitch showed like a ring veteran and exhibits great potential as she continues to mature.

Awards of Merit - This year we had 13 entrants that were awarded AOM's. When you consider that only about one Special in eight received any form of award, an AOM is, in my mind, quite an accomplishment. Congratulations to you all.

Year in and year out one fact remains consistent in our breed. Whether the exhibitor is a professional handler, owner, breeder or friend, this is one of the most beautifully presented breeds within the ranks of the AKC. When judging the Great Dane one seldom has to add any poetic license to determine what exactly is in the ring. All of my Specials were impressively shown. Thanks to all of you for making a memorable day so thoroughly enjoyable.

In closing I have one more thought. Each year the host division has a theme for the National. I could not think of a more appropriate theme than that selected by the Midwest Division for the 2012 National - "For the Love of the Breed". For all of us that have had the good fortune to become involved with the Great Dane, those few words speak volumes.

Bill Stebbins

Critique by Judy Harrington

What a fabulous entry for The Great Dane Club of America National Specialty 2012! The only disappointment for me, regarding the judging panel, was that I wasn't still handling Great Danes. There was no question in my mind that every judge from Futurity through Specialty was there to judge the Danes and everyone had a chance if they were walking in the ring with quality. It would not be missed.

My Winners Bitch and Reserve Winners Bitch represented the breed beautifully. Both had wonderful breed head type, beautiful breed soundness of conformation and temperament and balance



standing and moving. They were both young but old enough to be certain that this wasn't going to change and only be enhanced by maturity. I would expect that nearly all class winners will advance to finished champions, as it should be at a national specialty.

In general the majority of the entry had good head type for the breed, mouths were correct bites with few missing teeth, and there were no color issues that were questionable. Bone, size and substance were very good in most of the entry. Good feet are important and should be considered, most were good but some flat. As in many breeds, fronts need attention and tend to straightness that produces hard movement and lacking forechest. Also, once again, as in many breeds, tails carried too high and gay detract from the outline and are incorrect seen more often than I would like in most assignments - large to small.

It is always an honor to be invited to judge at a National and this was my 4th assignment; 2 Futurities and Best of Breed previously. Although I live with Australian Shepherds now, Great Danes are always where I feel like I am "home"!! Thank you all so much for your entry. Judy H.

GDR would like to thank both Bob Edison, Bill Stebbins and Judy Harrington for taking the time to comment on the 2012 National Specialty entries and judging.