

Meet . . .

Owner-Handler

Colleen Assell-Carra

Temira Great Danes



- 1) **Tell us your whole name.** Colleen Assell-Carra
- 2) **Number of years showing dogs.** 43
- 3) **Your kennel name & how you got it.** Temira Great Danes. It his Hebrew for tall. I'm not Hebrew, but liked the name and how it fit to me and my dogs!
- 4) **Where you live.** North Carolina
- 5) **Where do you travel to show?** NC, SC, TN, GA, FL, VA, MD, DE, NJ, PA, WV and Nationals.
- 6) **How many shows do you attend in a year?** 20-30 estimate.
- 7) **Have you ever hired and/or used professional handlers and for what purpose?** Yes, once. My dog was too relaxed with me.
- 8) **What made you decide to owner-handle your Great Danes?** I started as a Junior Handler. I like showing my dogs and the closeness between us.
- 9) **What are the greatest advantages of owner-handling your dogs?** Cost savings and the bond with the dogs.
- 10) **What are the biggest challenges of owner-handling your dogs?** Political judges that only look at the end of the leash!
- 11) **What do owner-handlers need to consider if they want to be competitive in the ring?** Can they handle the dog to the best of its ability? And they must be confidence and competitive.
- 12) **Do you feel your dog has ever been over-looked in the ring by the judge because you are an owner-handler and if yes please describe.** Yes, mostly when the judge is political and looks only for handlers.
- 13) **Do you feel there is any stigma against owner-handlers in Great Danes and if yes please explain.** No.
- 14) **What tips would you give a new owner-handler to help them step up their game?** Find a mentor, practice, watch handlers at dog shows for handling tips.
- 15) **What is the most valuable advice you ever received about handling your own dogs from a professional handler?** Believe in you and your dog.
- 16) **What is the most helpful technique you ever learned just by watching professional handlers?** The ones that have most of their dogs give the most and have fun in the ring with the dog.
- 17) **What are some common mistakes you see owner-handlers committing in the ring?** Not knowing how to hide the dog's faults.
- 18) **What have been some of your show ring successes as an owner-handler?** Numerous dogs completed their Championships, Awards of Merits, and Best in Specialty Shows.
- 19) **What are some of the most rewarding things about owner-handling for you?** The very close bond with my dogs. Making friends with other exhibitors and having something in common.
- 20) **Most professional handlers began as owner-handlers. What keeps you from taking that same route?** My age, life style and responsibilities at home.
- 21) **Who is your favorite judge and why?** I don't have just one. But the ones I like are mostly breeder judges that have the experience as past owner-handlers themselves.