

Meet . . .

Owner Handler

## Michelle Marie Neubert (Mikki)

MirabileVisu Danes

---

**1) Number of years showing dogs.**

Approximately nine years.

**2) Your kennel name and how you got it.**

MirabileVisu Danes. It means Beautiful Vision in Latin. I just liked it.

**3) Where you live.**

Southern Minnesota.

**4) Where do you travel to show?**

Mostly MN and IA, but sometimes WI, SD, NE, and occasionally KS.

**5) How many shows do you attend in a year?**

I try for once a month.

**6) Have you ever hired and/or used professional handlers and for what purpose?**

My first show girl's breeder hired a pro handler for me for her to try to get her majors.

**7) What made you decide to owner-handle your Great Danes?**

I've wanted to show dogs for most of my life. I think it's something fun and brings me a lot of joy. It gives me time with my dogs that I probably wouldn't have otherwise.

**8) What are the greatest advantages of owner-handling your dogs?**

I 'Know' my dogs.

**9) What are the biggest challenges of owner-handling your dogs?**

Getting over the jitters and not sending it down the lead to my dogs!

**10) What do owner-handlers need to consider if they want to be competitive in the ring?**

Act professional. Know that You have THE best dog that day (and everyday!).

**11) 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.**

I don't know if it was because I was an owner-handler, but there was one judge that seriously looked at the bitch ahead of us and the one behind and acted as though my girl and I weren't even there! She did it on more than one occasion and I still am not sure why.

**12) Do you feel there is any stigma against owner-handlers in Great Danes and if yes please explain.**

I do feel there can be, but I choose to ignore it and keep showing my own dogs. I hear a LOT of people that say 'It's political' and it definitely can be. But hey, even pros started out as newbies, so it can be done.

**13) What tips would you give a new owner-handler to help them step up their game?**

Remember that EVERYONE is beatable. At least that's what I tell myself when I step in the ring. We're all just people.

**14) What is the most valuable advice you ever received about handling your own dogs from a professional handler?**

Act like I know what I'm doing! Ha!



**15) What is the most helpful technique you ever learned just by watching professional handlers?**

I think just over all 'selling' my dogs and not just standing there.

**16) What are some common mistakes you see owner-handlers committing in the ring?**

Being too nervous, not watching the judge, not having any fun at all!!! It needs to be fun or the dogs won't like it, either.

**17) What have been some of your show ring successes as an owner-handler?**

Well, I got all the singles on my foundation girl, and if she'd have gotten the cross-over two different occasions, she would've finished, but she did get one major with a pro handler. I finished both her daughter and son. The daughter from the Bred-By Class and the son from Bred-By all but his first show where he took Best of Breed over a Special at 6 months old. I think even class wins are successes for me! I have made a lot of friends also and I count those as successes!

**18) What are some of the most rewarding things about owner-handling for you?**

Spending time with my dogs. Having judges realize my dogs' worth. Most of the puppies I've produced that have been shown have been shown and FINISHED by owner-handlers, so I think that's very rewarding for me! I've helped a few new people start their own owner-handler dream! I think being in the ring with my dog and having them seeming to enjoy the whole thing is also really rewarding.

**19) Most professional handlers began as owner-handlers. What keeps you from taking that same route?**

Maybe someday. I enjoy the time with MY dogs, though.

**21) Who is your favorite judge and why?**

I have too many to list even some I've never even won under. If a judge is pleasant to me AND my dog, I definitely show to them again, even if I don't win.

**22) Bonus Question! (Please answer!) If the mockumentary movie "Best in Show" made a sequel with you as one of the characters, what famous actor/actress would play YOU?**

I'm sorry, I've never seen it so I don't know.