

Meet . . .

Owner-Handler

**Mimi Kim**

*Saravilla Danes*



**1) Tell us your whole name.** Mimi Tanehill Kim

**2) Number of years showing dogs.** 22 years

**3) Your kennel name & how you got it.** Saravilla. It was the name of my mother's home in County Cork, Ireland

**4) Where you live.** Boardman, Ohio

**5) Where do you travel to show?** All over the Ohio, Michigan Great Lake region, eastern seaboard, southern states

**6) How many shows do you attend in a year?** I show 2-3 weekends a month

**7) Have you ever hired and/or used professional handlers and for what purpose?** I enjoy owner handling, but if I feel that my dog will show better with a handler, then I have used them. Also, I have used handlers to travel with my dogs, when I have not been able to travel.

**8) What made you decide to owner-handle your Great Danes?** My advent into the show world was in novice obedience and since that time, I thought that if I could owner handle my dogs in obedience, then I could handle in conformation.

**9) What are the greatest advantages of owner-handling your dogs?** It is very fulfilling to show and win as an owner handler. Judges also see you in the ring and you start to make a name for yourself.

**10) What are the biggest challenges of owner-handling your dogs?** I used to think that owner handlers had to fight the politics. I do not feel that way anymore. I truly believe that most judges will award your dog points, if they feel the dog is worthy, regardless of whether you are a pro or an owner handler.

**11) What do owner-handlers need to consider if they want to be competitive in the ring?** TRAIN your dog. Be professional and dress in a professional manner. Win or lose, be a good sport!

**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, I used to think that at times that has happened, but as I have spent time in the breed, I feel that maybe I did not show my dog to the best advantage, when they have been overlooked.

Recently, at the Maryland shows, I needed one major to finish my bitch. Majors have been very hard to find. I got nervous and knew the judge liked my harl girl. I literally blew it! I tried too hard, and kept stacking and restacking. I was awarded the reserve. When I came out of the ring, one handler said that I would have had it if I hadn't gotten so nervous. I told the handler to take my girl in the ring the next day and see what she could do, and the next day she finished. Those are the times when I really appreciate what a handler can do for my dogs!

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

Not any more I don't. I feel that with a good, honest dog, and presented in a decent way, that owner handlers can win a great deal of the time.

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

Go to conformation classes. Learn how to show your dog to its best. Practice! Practice in front of a mirror. Proof your pup. Socialization is key! Take your pup everywhere and get them used to everything!!

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

Relax! Set the dog up within 20 seconds. Remember that each judge is on strict time constraints of 2 minutes per dog.

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

Presenting the best qualities of the dogs to the judge and moving each dog at the best pace for that particular dog.

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

Trying too hard. Over correcting the stack (I do this quite often!!) Not paying attention to the ring pattern and judges' instructions

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

I have breeder owner handled many harls and mantles to their finishing or being major pointed. I have put Gr Champion majors on my dogs and have gone best of breed from the classes and breed classes many times. This was a real thrill!!

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

Learning that no matter how long I handle, that it is a continuous learning process. I am always learning how to be better, and staying more on top of my game.

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

I really only like showing my own dogs and co owned dogs. I do not feel qualified to handle other dogs, but I am always willing to help cover dogs for other people in winners or breed.

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

I have many judges that I love to show to. I will always give an entry to a judge that loves what they do! They are pleasant and give your dog a good look and fair consideration. Win or lose, I will always give those judges an entry.

**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 have to laugh over this! Probably Catherine Ohara as Cookie Fleck, the terrier breeder! I can relate with her, totally!