



# Judge's Critique

## Three Specialties

By Arnecia Eckenrode

I recently had the pleasure and honor of judging three Specialties in January. The Great Dane Club of Mid-Florida January 8, 2014, the Great Dane Club of Arizona January 11, 2014 and the Great Dane Club of Oxford Incorporated in Connecticut on January 25, 2014.

My first hurdle was getting to the airport in the middle of a severe snowstorm. I thank my husband and son for getting me to the airport safe and sound. I evidently brought the cold to Florida with me as the temperatures were in the high 30s low 40s while we were there. With judging held outdoors we needed hand-warmers in our pockets to keep our fingers from freezing. Judging was started late to wait until the day warmed up. It worked a little but not much. Hospitality was wonderful and I thank each and every one of the club members for their thoughtfulness.

In Florida all of my dog classes were very nice. There was good breed type overall in each class. I could've gone several ways for Winners but this day I chose my Winners Dog from the 12 to 18 Month Class, a nice fawn dog, PRF Echolane Watch Your Toes owned by Rebecca Price. The win finished him. My Reserve Winners Dog was a beautiful harlequin from the Open Harlequin Class, North Park Michael Danes Ga's VIP. Owned by Sharon Westfall and Emily Warren. Again in my bitch class I had lovely specimens to choose from and could have awarded at least a half-dozen bitches the major. But that day I chose the Open Black bitch, Colra's Eb Black Obsession, owned by Elena Bustillo, Elyades Betancourt and Colette Hayes, which also finished her. My Reserve Winner's bitch was a big, beautiful fawn bitch from the American-Bred Class, Moon Rivers Keep'er in Mind, owned by Lynn Adams and Paula Heller.

My Best of Breed class in Florida was outstanding. It was not easy narrowing down the winners. I chose a beautiful brindle bitch for my Best in Specialty, GCH. Raintree Erinwood Dixie for Heaven Sake owned by Renée Gumbs, P Deloria, L Cornelius, C Demott and L Landrum. Best of Winners was my Open Black bitch. Best of Opposite Sex was a beautiful mantle dog, GCH. Windy City-Orion's Guitar Hero, owned by Kim Wood, Chris Wood, and Betsy Phelan. Select Dog was the beautiful fawn dog GCH. Alpine Bohemian Rhapsody, owned by Norma Smallwood and Tricia Smallwood. My Select Bitch was a fawn bitch, GCH. Rosendane's So This Is Heaven @ Spot- On owned by Suzanne E Widner.

I left Florida to fly to Tucson, Arizona. It was a little warmer in Tucson but not much. The sun shined every day we were there and it warmed up nicely, so judging was nice and cool for the dogs and pleasant for the spectators. Hospitality again was spectacular and I thank the club members for their generosity and the welcoming feelings they gave me. When I first got into Danes there was a difference in look and type, (three different styles) from the East Coast, the Midwest, and the West Coast. Today

there is no difference. They are all consistently beautiful headed, beautiful backs, nice size, and good bone. So needless to say it again, I am very proud of being part of this breed.

In Tucson my Winners Dog came from the 12 to 18 Month Class, beautiful mantle puppy dog Chroma Let's Get this Show on the Road CGC. Owners are Olga Maderych, Irina Maderych, and JPYousha. My Reserve Winners Dog was a lovely puppy from the 9 to 12 Puppy Class, Highesteem What Neet Luck, owned by John and Cynthia Neet, May-Britt Karlsen and Thomas Sopp. In bitches I awarded Winners Bitch to the very nice Open Brindle bitch, Zona's Foxy Cleopatra, owner Barbie Barrett. My Reserve Winners Bitch went to a lovely Open Black bitch, La Stonehenge The Beach Is Back, owners Arana Greenberg and Cathy De La Garza. My Veteran Class was a lineup of three beautiful bitches, all of them in great condition and full of joy and ready to run around the ring.

My Best of Breed class in Tucson was spectacular. With so many to choose from, I had a great time making my decision. My Best in Specialty went to a beautiful fawn dog, CH. Tue-J's Pacific Category Five, owned by Tuesday and Hadley James, J Chiaravalle and J Apouna. Best of Winners was my Winners Dog. Best of Opposite Sex was a beautiful fawn bitch, CH. JV Mary Mac's West Side Story V, owners Cris and Mary McSparen, Nancy Bailey and Vicky Kimbell. Select Dog was a beautiful mantle dog, CH, Michael Danes JB Mega Bucks, owner George Schneider. My Select Bitch was a black, GCH. Naples Sanroque Dana Honolulu Lulu, owners Maren Cornish, Jeanette Copeland and Dawn Dana. My Awards of Merit, first of two, came from my Veterans Class, GCH. Bayside's Just Wicked DMD, RN, owners Pamela Koerper, L Kettring, J Martin and K Burkhart. The next Award of Merit went to CH. Southern Stars Norco of Troon, owners Lynne and Roger Rahaeuser. Best Puppy came from the 6-9 Puppy Bitch Class, a very pretty harlequin, LN'M Mother Of All Dragons, owners Jennifer and Clarence Schram. Best Bred-By Exhibitor was the bitch, Sunquest Bayside Your Still The One, owners Pam Koerper, Karen Burkhart, Leslie and Gary Kettring.

My next judging assignment was the Great Dane Club of Oxford, Inc. in Connecticut. I'd have to say that the weather this year was not my friend driving to Connecticut was a challenge to say the least but we did it safely. Again, thank you very much for the hospitality that you showed me and my daughter. I could get spoiled with this type of treatment but I'm trying not to.

The overall quality of the dogs that I had and at the show was very pleasing. I was proud of each and every placement that I gave and wish I could've given more First Places and Winners. I chose a brindle dog from the Open Brindle Class as my Winners Dog, Von Charms Big Bang Badda Boom, owners Chris McMartin and Catherine Urner. The win finished him. Reserve Winners Dog went to the Open Black dog, Katcrew's Midnight Run, owners Chad and Kayla Bauder. My Winners Bitch came from the 12 to 18 Month Class, a mantle bitch, Chroma Go Your Own Way, owned by Judy and Al Arsenault and JP Yousha. Reserve Winners Bitch was also from the 12 to 18 Month Class, Chinar's Smooth Ride, owner Dr. Rakesh Vali DVM.

My Best of Breed class in Connecticut was impressive. So many different ways to go with so many nice dogs. Best in Specialty went to a fawn male, CH. Sasdania-Vitag's Sultan, owned by Dr. Rakesh Vali DVM.

Best of Winners was mantle bitch. Best of Opposite Sex was a fawn bitch, GCH. MJM'S Hi-Air All Eyes On Me, owned by Arthur and Leslie Solnick and Laurie and Michael Maulucci. Select Dog was GCH. AnjaDane's Regene v Malvern, owner Cathy Mundt. Select Bitch was also my Veteran Bitch, CH. Saul-Sandale the Divine Ms. O. She is owned Dale Tarbox and Serge Guillet.

Overall, my feeling about the dogs I judged at these specialties is that I saw lots of beautiful heads, nice top-lines and good movement. Some of the things I would love to see improved in our breed are better croups and better shoulders. The bitches have always been nice throughout the years but the males have improved tremendously over the last few years. We're getting a nice gene pool to choose from. I thank each and every one of the clubs that chose me to judge their specialties and I hope I did their clubs proud.

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