

TOP TWENTY RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. General

Purpose: To encourage the showing of Great Danes in conformation classes, and to provide an educational experience for judges, exhibitors, breeders, and fanciers. This event will provide special recognition to those Great Danes with the most outstanding records, as well as their breeders, owners and handlers. It will also provide incentive to strive for Great Danes excelling in structure, intelligence, type, and soundness.

The uniqueness of the event: The event offers all who attend a chance to view "The Cream of the Crop."

- Using the scale of points, each dog is evaluated according to how closely it conforms to the Breed Standard. This procedure is not available at any point show, and allows the spectator the opportunity to evaluate the dogs, scoring them at the same time they are being judged.
- The dogs are observed from a positive approach; they are not fault judged.
- The event is educational, promoting discussion of the Standard, and encouraging the exchange of ideas.

GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator: This position will be a standing position selected by the GDCA President. This position will enable smooth operations of all tasks that will be performed by this position. The GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator may not show in the Top Twenty. The GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator may choose a co-coordinator of their choice to assist with the event.

The Coordinator will be responsible for:

1. Receiving the listing from the Top Twenty Statistician.
2. Updating of all Top Twenty forms:
 - To identify the current division's Logo and Theme.
 - Names and addresses for return addresses as required
 - Identify the name and address of the CPA selected by the GDCA and update the Top Twenty Judges Nomination form
3. All forms must be returned to the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator, with the exception of the Judges Nomination Form which will be returned to the designated CPA.
4. Sending initial Top Twenty Notification packet to the primary owner(s) of entrant identified in the report submitted by the Top Twenty Statistician. An email will be sent to all owners notifying them of the Top Twenty Notification.

5. Working with each Division Top Twenty Chairman prior to and during the event
6. Making certain that the approved format used for Top Twenty is followed, so that each annual event is the same in each division.
7. The catalog will be produced professionally. The catalogs will be delivered to the Top Twenty Coordinator to ensure confidentiality.
8. Ensure that there is a short training session for judges/entrants the afternoon before judging.
9. Select the ribbons and the Top Twenty Winner ribbon.
10. Ensure that the judge's contract include a statement letting them know their comments/markings will be identified, "The judges will be identified as Judge #1 will be the AKC judge, Judge #2 will be the breeder judge and Judge #3 will be the handler. " If the judge is not comfortable, another judge will be selected.

Judges - A meeting will be held late in the afternoon after the entrants meeting in a discreet room within the host hotel with the Judges, Stewards, Announcer and the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator and Division Top Twenty Chairman. Dinner will be served at this meeting and those attending will have adequate time to return to their rooms and dress for the event. The hosting division will be responsible for this dinner.

During this meeting, instructions for the event and paperwork will be covered in depth to include:

- Viewing of the scoresheet
- Ensure no area is marked with a Zero
- Reminded that if they scratch one item, that the item is initialed by the judge at the time of the mark out
- Ring procedure will be discussed and the judges can determine which judge will go first, second and third in the evaluation.
- Asking the handler to examine the dog a second time if needed.
- Asking the handler to move the dog a second time if needed

Entrants – A meeting will be held in the ring at specified time during the afternoon of the Top Twenty competition. Entrants and Handlers will be required to attend this meeting. The announcer will also be required at this meeting in order to get pronunciation of owners, handlers and dog names correctly. During this meeting instructions for the event will be covered in detail. Armbands will be handed out at that time.

Division Top Twenty Chairperson will be a member of the Hosting Division and shall be appointed by the Hosting Division with the approval of the GDCA Board of Directors. The Division Top Twenty Chairperson will work closely with the GDCA Top Twenty

Coordinator to ensure that the approved format for the event is followed The Division Top Twenty Chairperson may not show in the Top Twenty.

The Top Twenty Statistician shall be appointed by the GDCA President to compile monthly tabulations and provide the final report to the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator no later than March 31st. Scores are based on Breed Points only.

Top Twenty Tabulation Committee: This committee shall be made up of the GDCA President, Treasurer, and Division Show Chairman. In the event any member of the Tabulations Committee has a dog in the Top Twenty the alternate will be the GDCA 1st or 2nd Vice President or any former GDCA Treasurer.

Top Twenty Winner's Posters: All available Top Twenty Winner posters will be on display at the expense of the GDCA. The posters will be displayed at the National as set up by the division holding the National. Posters will be displayed by order of year when possible. The most recent being closest to the event location.

2. Information and Guidelines

Statistics and eligibility: The eligibility requirements are that, in addition to being named among the final Top Twenty Great Danes for conformation, all owners of record are in good standing with the American Kennel Club.

Top Twenty standings:

All dogs, including any and all ties through the 20th position will be invited.

- Death of a Top Twenty candidate will not change the standings.
- Previous Top Twenty Winners are eligible to compete.
- In the instance that two Danes are tied for one Top Twenty position both will receive the ranking even if the total count goes to 21 or higher.

Initial Notification of Top Twenty Finalist: Upon receipt of the Top Twenty Statistician's list of Top Twenty contenders, and approximately six (6) months prior to the event, the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator will send a packet via the U.S. Postal Office, to the primary owner(s) of the Top Twenty Finalists, advising them of their qualification for this event. The packet will include the following forms:

- GDCA Top Twenty Entry Profile Sheet
- GDCA Top Twenty Entry Order Form – (Rosettes, Pins and Catalog)
- GDCA Top Twenty Judge Nomination Form – (Judges Selection ballot)
- Completed entrant forms will be mailed to the address that appears on the bottom of each form.

Top Twenty Entry Packet: The completed packet must be returned within **forty-five (45)** days of initial notification on a date set by the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator.

1. The portion of the Entry Packet to be returned to the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator via U.S. Postal Office consists of:
 - Entry fee (Check only – no PayPal payment)
 - Completed Entry Profile sheet
 - Completed Entry Order form
2. The following items may be emailed to the Top Twenty Coordinator:
 - Photo, If emailed the photo must be at a minimum of 300 DPI.
 - Pedigree
 - Top Twenty contender accolades
3. The entry fee entitles each participant to:
 - four (4) reserved ringside seats,
 - two (2) reserved breeders seats in the second row
 - one (1) Top Twenty rosette
 - one (1) Top Twenty sterling silver pin,
 - a two-page catalog spread
 - one Top Twenty Catalog
4. All Top Twenty completed forms will be destroyed within 60 days of this event.

Second Notification to Top Twenty Entrants: All entrants will be notified by email or other agreed upon method by the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator providing information regarding the schedule of events for the Top Twenty, including but not limited to:

- owners/handlers meeting to review judging procedures
- ring procedures
- listing of the Top Twenty in order of ranking for this event

Prizes: The first owner of record of the winner of the Top Twenty will receive the Top Twenty trophy and a gold Top Twenty Pin.

The Top Twenty participants and winner may order additional rosettes, sterling silver pins, gold pins (Top Twenty Winner only), and trophies up to the number of actual owners of record at the time of the event. The Order Form will be online and must be ordered **within 60 days of the event**. Requests for additional or replacement pins, trophies or rosettes must be made to the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator within 60 days of the event. The Top Twenty Coordinator will verify the accuracy of the owners at the time of the show and place the order.

Catalog: A catalog, professionally prepared exclusively for the Top Twenty Event, will be available for purchase just prior to the scheduled starting time of the event. The cost

of the catalog will be set by the GDCA Board of Directors. Contents of the catalog include a two-page spread highlighting each dog in the Top Twenty, score sheet and judging material, a profile on each judge, a profile of each steward and a gallery of previous Top Twenty winners. The catalog will be delivered to the host hotel in care of the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator to ensure confidentiality.

Top Twenty Budget: A Top Twenty Budget will be developed by the hosting Division Chair with the assistance of the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator. Every attempt will be made to reuse items from the previous year in order to contain cost of the event.

3. Judges

Judges Selection will be made by a vote of the owners of the Top Twenty Danes, who will choose from each of the following categories.

- **Handler.** A Handler, past or present, having at least ten years' experience.
- **Breeder.** An established Great Dane Breeder who has been breeding for at least 10 years and has bred 5 litters and had 4 Champions from those litters or an established Great Dane Breeder that is also an AKC-Approved Judge of Great Danes.
- **Multi-Breed AKC-Approved Judge.** An AKC-Licensed Judge approved to Judge Great Danes and at least ten other breeds in any group.

A CPA will count the Top Twenty judges ballots. Ties for Top Twenty judges will be resolved by instructing the CPA to draw between the tied names.

Judges Nomination Form: Owners and co-owners shall decide together which judges to nominate. Only one Ballot per entrant will be accepted and it must be signed and submitted by the **primary owner or owner's agent**. The Judges Nomination Form will be completed with one name in each of the three categories and mailed to the CPA as listed at the bottom of the Judges Nomination Form. This form must be received within forty-five (45) days of the receipt of the packet on a date set by the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator. The owners & co-owners are those of record as of December 31st in the year the dog qualified.

Judges Selection from Judges Nomination Form: The accountant will forward the name of the person with the highest number of votes (in each category) to the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator so they can determine eligibility of that person. If the person with the highest number of votes is ineligible or unavailable, the accountant will forward the name of the person with the second highest number of votes. This will continue until one judge is secured in each category. A tie will be resolved by instructing the CPA to draw between the tied names.

Additional Judging criteria: A member of a judge's household or immediate family may not show in the Top Twenty.

Judges: Judges will be contacted by the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator to determine if they accept the assignment. The GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator will then mail the judge a Top Twenty contract much like regular AKC shows to sign and return.

Judges will be compensated as listed below:

- Round trip economy airfare or mileage whichever is less
- If mileage is paid it will be paid according to the IRS rate
- Parking if required
- Accommodations:
 - Hotel room will be furnished from the night before judging thru the end of the national or thru the end judges stay whichever is less or
 - if the judge is traveling via RV, the RV parking from the night before judging thru the end of the national or the end of the judges stay whichever is less.
- Meals will include: 2 tickets for judges and their guest to the Auction banquet and Awards banquet

Stewards: The Division Top Twenty Chair will select the stewards. Whenever possible the stewards shall come from the hosting Division. Stewards will receive a catalog and dinner during the instructional meeting. The Division Top Twenty Chair will send a letter to the steward-acknowledging acceptance of the assignment.

Announcer: The Division Top Twenty Chair will select the announcer. Whenever possible they shall come from the hosting Division. The announcer will receive a catalog and dinner during the instructional meeting. The Division Top Twenty Chair will send a letter to the announcer-acknowledging acceptance of the assignment.

4. Procedures

Show Ring: The Top Twenty judging event will be held in the regular National show ring to provide consistency and comfort for the entrants.

Arm Band Numbers:

1. Three digit numbered armbands will be provided by the show superintendent with numbers ranging 300-330.
2. The Armband Number will be assigned by the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator as the entry is received from the U.S. Post Office.
3. Each participant will enter the ring in order of the assigned armband number.

Admittance and Seating for the Top Twenty: There will be an entry fee for spectators who have not purchased dinner tickets to be set by the GDCA Board of Directors.

- **Entrance Escorts and Ticket Takers:** The Division Top Twenty Chair will recruit volunteers for the following positions. Each volunteer will be given admittance to the Top Twenty.
 - 6 escorts assigned to take the Owners, Breeders and Corporate Sponsors to their seats.
 - 3 ticket takers at the door to monitor appropriate entrance by the different groups.
 - There will be 1 person selling catalogs to walk-ins.
 - There will be 1 person selling tickets to walk-ins.

Seating for the event will be as follows:

1. Owners/co-owners will be allowed to enter the event and proceed to their reserved seats (4). They will have been given tickets denoting them as Owners from the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator during the meeting before the event.
2. Breeders will enter second and proceed to their reserved seats (2). They will have been given tickets denoting them as Breeders from the GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator during the meeting before the event.
3. Corporate Sponsors will enter after owners and breeders. They will have been given tickets denoting them as Corporate Sponsors in their Corporate Sponsor packet.
4. Banquet attendees will enter after the Corporate Sponsors
5. Spectators will enter after the above have been seated.

Dress for the Top Twenty Event:

- **In the Ring:** Dress will be semi-formal to formal.
- **Spectator Dress:** Spectators will be asked to dress in an appropriate manner that shows respect for the Top Twenty dogs, owners, breeders and handlers. No shorts or tank tops allowed

Official Top Twenty Photos: Each Top Twenty entrant will be asked to move to the photographers set up at the completion of their individual judging session. This will ensure that each dog has their photo taken within a short time frame and will alleviate long lines after the event has ended. Judges will be photo-shopped into the photo. Photographer will be instructed to photograph in this manner.

Spectator Photos: Photographs WITHOUT flash will be permitted during the event. Spectators are reminded to not disturb the event or individuals seated in the front rows.

Conversation: Attendees will be asked to keep conversations at a normal level.

Clapping: Clapping will be allowed during the Best in Futurity showcase and all past Top Twenty Winners showcase. However, during the Top Twenty judging, clapping is **only** allowed when the dog is circling the ring during the initial entry of the dog and on the final “circle” the ring and exit. Announcer will address this to the spectators.

Music: The Division Top Twenty Chairman will be allowed to select **SOFT lyric-free** continuous, consistent and same tempo background music for the event. The hosting division will make selection of music.

Public Education: In order to educate public about the Top Twenty and how it works, the description of its procedure will be published in the Top Twenty catalog as well as discussed in the opening of the event.

Top Twenty Forms: A sample form of the invitation letter, entry profile sheet, judge nomination form, judges' score sheet, and judging procedure, are attached to these Rules and Regulations and will be posted on the GDCA website under Top Twenty Event.

Participants and required equipment: The listing below is a generic list of required items that will be needed the evening of the Top Twenty event and will be the responsibility of the Division Top Twenty Chair except as noted:

1. Announcer
2. 1 Chief Ring Steward
3. 1 Inside Ring Steward-Judges assistant
4. 1 Tabulation Runner - review and take the tally sheets to the tabulation committee
5. 1 judges table and 4 chairs for the judges and the Inside Ring Steward (close to the stacking position)
6. Public address system.
7. 3 Clipboards numbered (1, 2, 3)
8. Scoresheets (carbon copy) 500 at a time - sensitive pressure Carbon
9. Ink pens
10. Armbands – Superintendent or statistician
11. Rubber bands
12. Hand sanitizer
13. Kleenex
14. Candy/mints for Judges
15. Drinks for judges
16. Large Manilla Envelope
17. Large White Mailing Envelopes
18. Music
19. TOP TWENTY Winner's Ribbon
20. Stop Watch for Announcer

Scoring and evaluation: Each participating Great Dane is individually evaluated by each judge, using the scale of points outlined on the Top Twenty Score Sheet.

The Scoresheet Runner will be selected by the Division Chairman and will be responsible for ensuring:

- The judge has marked the armband number on the scoresheet
- ensure each point line has been marked
- ensure there are no ZERO scores or blanks
- If any areas have been scratched out by the judge, that the judge initials the markings
- Will tear the original copy from the duplicate sheet and take the original scoresheet directly to the tabulation committee
- Return the duplicate to the judge.

No dog shall be awarded a zero in any category, as these dogs are the top of the breed.

Score sheets will be tabulated by the Tabulation Committee.

The Tabulation Committee tabulates each dog's score in the following manner:

1. The scores for each dog from each of the three judges are tabulated and added together to determine the "Total Aggregate Final Score."
2. In the event of a tie, the Tabulation Committee determines the winner by consulting the "Overall Impression Score" given by the Judges notated as "1. Overall Impression" on the score sheet. The Overall Impression Score is the Judge's first impression of a dog prior to examination, and is based on a 1-10 scale, with 10 being the highest score. The Overall Impression Score will be used and will be tabulated by adding the three scores together giving the aggregate score.
3. The Great Dane with the highest "Total Aggregate Final Score," or in the event of a tie, the highest "Overall Impression Score," is the winner. If two dogs have the same 'Total Aggregate Final Score' AND the same 'Overall Impression Score', there will be two Top Twenty Winners.
4. The Tabulation Committee will be as secluded as possible (possibly back to the wall) while performing their duties so that they are away from the crowd to ensure privacy.

Tabulation of Scores and Score Sheets: The GDCA Top Twenty Coordinator will provide the Tabulation Committee an envelope for each entrant with their armband number and name of entrant written on the front. They will also provide an envelope marked "TOP TWENTY WINNER". In the event of a tie of aggregate Overall Impression then there will be two Top Twenty Winners.

a. The Tabulation Committee, upon compilation of the score sheets, initial their totals, and will document the Total Aggregate Final Score and the Total Aggregate Overall Impression Score on the outside of the envelope with the matching armband number and put the three score sheets inside the same envelope. After all tabulations have been completed for each entrant, there should be 20 packets. The packet marked with the highest Total Aggregate Final Score will be the Top Twenty Winner. In case of a tie, the tie will be broken by the Total Aggregate Overall Impression Score. In the event of a tie of aggregate Overall Impression then there will be two Top Twenty Winners. That entrant's packet will be placed in the envelope marked "TOP TWENTY WINNER" and attached to the outside of the manila envelope. The other 19 packets will be put inside the manila envelope.

b. The Division Top Twenty Chair will give each entrant's Owner or Agent their sealed envelopes at the conclusion of the event. Those envelopes not picked up by the owners at the close of the event will be destroyed along with all contents of each envelope.

c. Judges duplicate copy of scoresheet – A copy of the judge's scoresheet will be provided to the judges after the Scoresheet Runner has reviewed the scoresheet and before the scoresheet it turned over to the tabulation committee for transparency. An envelope to hold the copies of the judge's scoresheet will be provided on the table for each judge.

Posting of the Aggregate Scores:

The Division Top Twenty Chairperson will post the listing of the names of all of the Top Twenty participants along with their aggregate scores listed by the Top Twenty annual ranking order for public viewing near the main show room. The list will be posted the morning after the event and will include:

- The registered name of the Top Twenty participant,
- The owner(s) names
- The aggregate score of each dog

5. Judges Procedures:

Initial Check-in of Top Twenty Entrants: Top Twenty entrants will be asked to enter the ring one at a time by ascending armband number at the beginning of the Top Twenty event to be checked in by the inside ring steward. No judging will occur during this time.

As the dogs reach the center of the ring, the next dog should be called into the ring by armband number.

Judging begins. ----See the Script for judging steps

Introduction of Top Twenty dogs by Rank: After judging of the Top Twenty entrants:

- The announcer will call each dog back into the center of the ring one at a time in reverse ranked order. The announcer will state the dogs registered name, owners, breeders and handler and accomplishments.
- At the completion of each dog's introduction, the dogs/handler will move into reverse rank order on the side of the ring. Owners/breeders will return to their seats.

Announcement of the Top Twenty Winner: At the conclusion of the introduction of Top Twenty dogs, the Division Top Twenty Chairman will:

- Ask the judges to move to the center of the ring
- Once judges are in position, the Division Top Twenty Chair will announce:
 - the winning arm band number
 - the name of the dog,
 - the names of all owner(s), co-owner(s) and breeder(s)
 - the name of the handler.
- The inside steward will provide each judge one of the items to be presented to the owners so that each judge is part of the presentation. Judges will present the trophy, the gold Top Twenty pin and a 'Top Twenty Winner's ribbon to the Owner(s)

6. Event Script – Outline

1. Welcome
2. Purpose of the Top Twenty
3. Clapping
4. Non-Flash Photography
5. Introduction of judges/stewards
6. Futurity Winner
7. Past Top Twenty Winners (if any are present)
8. Top Twenty Judging
9. Introduction of Top Twenty Contenders/Owners/Breeders/Handler
10. Announcement of Top Twenty Winner

EVENT SCRIPT

Welcome to the _____ Annual Top Twenty Event.

The Top Twenty offers all who attend a chance to view "The Cream of the Crop." Using the scale of points, each dog is evaluated according to how closely it conforms to the Breed Standard. This procedure is not available at any point show, and allows the spectator the opportunity to evaluate the dogs, scoring them at the same time they are being judged. The dogs are observed from a positive approach; they are not fault judged. The event is educational, promoting discussion of the Standard, and encouraging the exchange of ideas.

The Top Twenty judging is based on a point system. Dogs are judged against the standard using a point scale from 1 to 10 and ARE NOT judged against each other.

Applause is allowed ONLY when the dog is circling the ring during the initial entry of the dog and upon final exit.

Flash photography is NOT allowed. Only NON-Flash Photos may be taken by spectators. Please do not interrupt judging or those seated watching the event.

Please turn off your cell phones or put them on mute.

We are pleased to introduce our Top Twenty Judges for the evening

Tonight's AKC Judge is, <enter judges name here>

Tonight's Breeder Judge is, <enter breeder judges name>

Tonight's Handler Judge is, <enter handler judge name here>

Our Inside Ring Steward for the evening is: <enter name here> will work with our judges throughout the evening.

Our Outside Ring Steward for the evening is: <enter name here> She/He will work with handlers and dogs to make get them to the ring in a timely manner.

Our Scoresheet Runner for the evening is: <enter name here> She/He will work directly with the inside ring steward, the judge and the tabulation committee to ensure the scoresheet is marked and initialed if needed. She/he will then provide the scoresheet directly to the tabulation committee as directed.-

At this time we will present this year's Best in Futurity winner, <State dogs registered name, Owner, Breeder and Handler>.

We are pleased to announce we have _____ past Top Twenty Winner(s) with us tonight.

Winner of this year's Top Twenty - <State dog's registered name, Owner, Breeder and Handler>.

(Delete if none are present)

At this time the Top Twenty Event will begin:

Handler with Great Dane #____, please circle the ring 1 time, go to the designated stacking area and showcase your dog. (30 seconds or less)

Judges, please write the armband number and overall impression score on the score sheet.

The judges table will need to be placed near the designated stacking area left of the videographer.

Judges if you choose to approach the dog again, after your initial exam, please ask the handler.

Handler please stack your dog at the designated stacking area.

Judges please begin your individual hands on evaluation.

As you are finished, Step back allowing the next judge to begin their hands-on examination and begin marking your score sheet. As you finish your exam, take your scoresheet and move to the diagonal for movement judging.

If you feel the need for a second down and back, please ask handler to go again.

Handler, when ready, please move your dog down and back and show your dog upon your return.

Judges, Please move to the center of the ring for side gait judging.

Handler, please move your dog around the ring one time then exit.

~Repeat for each entrant~

While the tabulators finish scoring tasks, all dogs will stand for a Top Twenty photo in national ranking order.

Upon completion of photo, Announcer will begin with:

At this time we would like to present the Top Twenty Danes their owners, breeders and handler in reverse order of their Top Twenty ranking.

#20 – Dogs name, owners, breeders and handler

#19 – Dogs name, owners, breeders and handler

(Repeat for each entrant)

At the completion of each dog's introduction, the dogs/handler will move into reverse rank order on the side of the ring. Owners/breeders will return to their seats.

Division Top Twenty Chair will announce winner.