

Judge Ellen Migliore

How long have you been judging the breed? How many times a year do you judge German Shepherds?

I can't remember, maybe 10 + years....I took a 4-year sabbatical, now I'm back, maybe 2- 4 shows per year

Are you an active breeder of German Shepherd Dogs? Do you have a kennel name?

From 1980 - 2003, I was married to Fred and bred under Eko-Lan Kennels, now I'm "EJM."

How long have you been in the breed? When and how did you get started?

I started in GSDs when I met Fred in the early 1980's. Prior to that, I was involved in breeding and showing Shetland Sheepdogs beginning in 1973.

Do you judge both all-breeds and specialties. If so, which do you prefer?

Yes, but only GSD's. I prefer specialties, for obvious reasons.

Do you have a color preference?

No preference

Do you find it harder to judge solid blacks ? If so, why?

Not really

When judging the dog, do you also judge the handler? Please elaborate if possible.

The handler comes into play by the way the dog looks. If the dog is pacing, galloping, misbehaving, etc, then I pull the handler aside as many times as I feel necessary and tell them what I'm looking for and how I think they may accomplish it.

What importance do you place on missing teeth?

I'm not a tooth fanatic, however all things being equal, a dog with full dentition would win over one without.

Please discuss temperament in the ring today. Has it improved? Declined? Please explain.

I believe the recent temperament I have seen has been an improvement over the past years. There maybe many reasons for this, breeders and/or handlers realizing the GSDs mental potential and breeding with that in mind, stud dogs with sound minds, some or none of these may play a part in this, just some thoughts of mine, along with others not mentioned.

Do you prefer a dog to be shown on a loose lead?

I realize it's very hard to get a dog to perform (for the most part) on a loose lead at all times, but I like to see it done at some point and also along with that to be shown at a slower speed.

How would you rate the following in sequence of importance? (On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the best).

Coming/Going: 5(redundant 5-6)

Sidegait: 8

Temperament: 10

Teeth: 2

Coat: 3

Pasterns, hocks, feet: 6

Pigment: 1

Structure: 9

Shoulder/Reach: 7 (redundant 7-8-9)

Attitude: 4

In your opinion should double handling be allowed? Please explain.

Sure, it can be done without "traffic accidents."

Do you feel more emphasis should be put on the total package, and less on movement?

I believe that's the way I judge. I look for the total package, Nice to look at. Appears to have brains and is a very good mover, maybe not the best under me that day or maybe it is, but it has other qualities besides a sidegait if the entry shown under me is deep on that day.

Do you have a pet peeve about anything owners or handlers do concerning the showing of dogs? (Do you have any suggestions for owners or handlers regarding anything they should NEVER do when showing under you ?)

Not really, if you have questions ask me, I'm pretty easy to get along with. I only ask that you respect the other handlers, dogs and myself while in my ring. I enjoy judging and I think that those who show under me , win, loose or not place enjoy themselves also.

Do you have any suggestions for owners or handlers regarding anything they should ALWAYS do when showing under you ? No, just enjoy yourself, enjoy your dog and listen to what the judge asks of you and if you don't understand, ask!

Do you have any advice for people who are relatively new to showing and/or breeding?

Do your homework. Read. Go to shows, specialty shows in particular. Notice particular handlers, bloodlines that pop up again and again. Approach and ask these people any questions you may have. Wait until the show is over, as the handler or breeder/owner maybe busy showing their dogs, however after the show, they would be more than happy to answer your questions or make an appointment for you to visit them and their dogs. Be honest in your evaluations to yourself. If something doesn't seem right, inquire and if it still doesn't seem right to you, it probably isn't. Don't ask them to discuss another breeder's bloodline. Basically use common sense. There are many good, no, great breeders and handlers out there for the asking.....so ask!

Any final comments?

I always go back to the beginning and ask myself why I got into this hobby. It was (for me) because of my love of a dog when I was growing up and how much time I enjoyed with this animal and following animals through my life before participating in this sport. I keep this in perspective: When I'm breeding, judging or selecting my house pet, I breed for the total dog, for a dog that goes to a pet home and I don't have to worry about the people returning the dog because he's afraid of people or objects, the vet says he has "ricketts" because he's always so lame with pano. The dog is a good representative of the breed, looks like a GSD, has a good mind. Hey, they're not all 100%, far from it, but if at first you don't succeed . . .