



So You Think He's Such At "Stud"?

How do you know if your boy is worthy of being bred? This is not an easy question to answer, but here are some

guidelines:

First, you must start with a quality Great Dane: You must research the breed, the breed standard and learn about its problems as well as its qualities. Just having a Great Dane that is registered with a recognized kennel club (AKC, CKC, etc.) is not enough. Most puppy mill puppies are AKC registered. AKC registration alone does not mean anything. Just because you have a prestigious pedigree does not mean that your dog is worthy to breed.

I am sure you have heard the terms "backyard breeder" and "puppy mill"--these refer to people who breed unproved Great Danes with a goal of making a fast buck. Breed two mediocre Great Danes, and what do you get? Problems -- or at the very best more mediocre dogs. Remember we strive to improve.

Your Dane's second birthday is also important -- that is how old your dog should be so that he can be OFA'd (Orthopedic Foundation of America certification) on its hips and possibly elbows. Breeding without OFA Certified hips has resulted in an alarmingly high number of breeds being ruined by hip and elbow dysplasia. In the

meantime, what has your vet had to say about your Great Dane -- any allergies? eye trouble, how about a CERF exam? skin problems? thyroid conditions? Has your Great Dane developed any health conditions that can be attributed to its genetic makeup? If so, don't breed this dog. Be completely honest with yourself and potential breedings about your dog's health.

How is your Great Dane's temperament? There are specific temperament characteristics for each breed that must be clearly demonstrated before breeding is considered. Your boy should exhibit solid signs of good temperament for this breed. It is recommended that you wait until the dog is at least two years old before considering breeding. If your pup exhibits early signs of unsuitable temperament, get it neutered right away. Whatever characteristics your Great Dane has, physically and/or mentally, you will be adding these things to the gene pool of our breed. We all have a responsibility to the Great Dane and to potential purchasers and breeders of defective puppies to only breed the best of the best.

Are you convinced you have a truly "breedable Great Dane," and you are sure you are not "kennel blind". What is this bitch being bred for? Companionship? Obedience? Conformation? If you do not have specific breeding goals worked out, and discussed puppy placement philosophy with the bitch owner, abandon the idea of breeding. Wait until your own breeding goals are more clearly defined and you have selected a breeding that exceeds those goals.

Whom are you going to breed your Great Dane to? You need to find someone who has gone through as much, if not more, than you have. You must study genetics and the breeding history of both the bitch and the sire for several proceeding generations. This will help you develop a fairly reasonable idea of what your dog and the bitch are going to produce. There are always surprises, but you must attempt to plan. Never underestimate the potential for breeding failures, even with the best of breeding programs. It's not unusual to see only one pup out of an entire litter that represents attainment of all your breeding goals.

If they get one pup out of the litter that is everything they dreamed of, they will be doing well.

Do you have a stud contract and does it address breeder responsibility? Have you made provisions for the possible eventuality of one of your stud's puppies ending up in a shelter or rescue? Do you have a penalty in your contract if that happens? Do you recognize that you have half the responsibility for pups brought into the world -- and almost none of the power -- IF YOU DO NOT ADDRESS THESE ISSUES IN YOUR STUD CONTRACT? Please do not shrug your shoulders and say "What can I do?"

when you have power when they first come and ask for your stud dog. The world of responsible breeders, rescues and shelters will see you as responsible, so address this in your contracts!



And if you do not go through all this? What are you going to

Puppies are the responsibility of BOTH the stud owner and bitch owner.

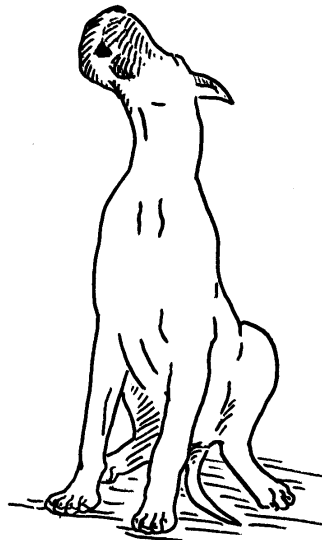
Doing It Right

do with that pup who has a bad bite, hip dysplasia, thyroid problems and in rescue? Breeding "mistakes" are placed by Great Dane Rescue all the time, and some are doomed to early euthanasia. Half of all shelter dogs are purebreds. Are your pups going to end up there?

Have you looked at the bitch owner's puppy contract? We all have responsibilities for any pup we bring into the world.

Breeding Great Danes should be a rewarding experience.

If you are not going to do this right - get your pet neutered and love it a lot. Altered Great Danes make outstanding companions.



Be forewarned; breeding your male could change his outlook on life-negatively!

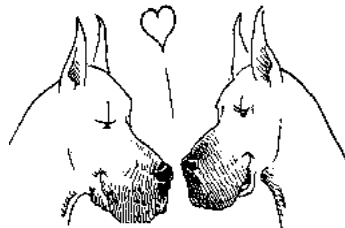
Our Great Dane breed is a wonderful one, with many unique and loving characteristics. But sadly, the breed is plagued with many health and temperament issues. Whether breeding for show or pet stock, concerned breeders feel the following items are critically important to the welfare of the breed. Those choosing to do any less are doing a severe disservice to the breed they claim to love and should carefully examine their motives for breeding.

Health Testing

- Hip X-Rays are very, very important. Hip dysplasia is a hereditary disease. A dog can be severely afflicted, yet visually appear fine. Only x-rays will determine a problem. X-rays should be sent off to the OFA for certification. **No Great Dane should ever be bred without hip x-rays.**
- Your dog's eyes should be CERF'd. CERF stands for Canine Eye Registry Foundation. A canine ophthalmologist will examine your dog's eyes and determine if it has any hereditary eye disease. Eye problems in Danes were once considered rare; however, cataracts, glaucoma and other eye problems are being seen with much more frequency.
- Your dog should be thyroid checked. Thyroid problems are quite common in Danes and are considered a hereditary problem.
- There are other pre-breeding health exams that are important but the above is a start.

Stud Owner Responsibility

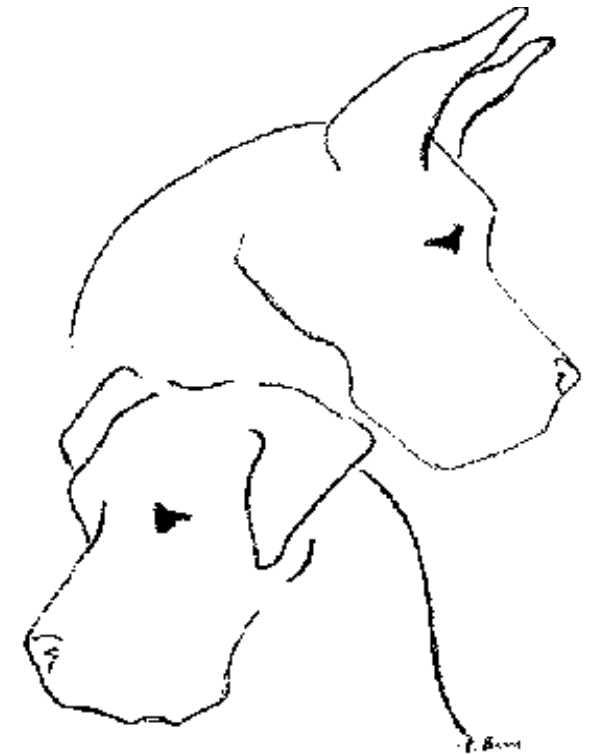
- As a stud owner, you should require that any bitch has the same health testing as your dog.
- As a stud owner, you are partially responsible for the litter. If the breeder cannot or will not take responsibility, it's up to you!



A joint educational effort by
V. Louise Feddemand Dane Outreach

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Points to consider before you breed your male Great



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