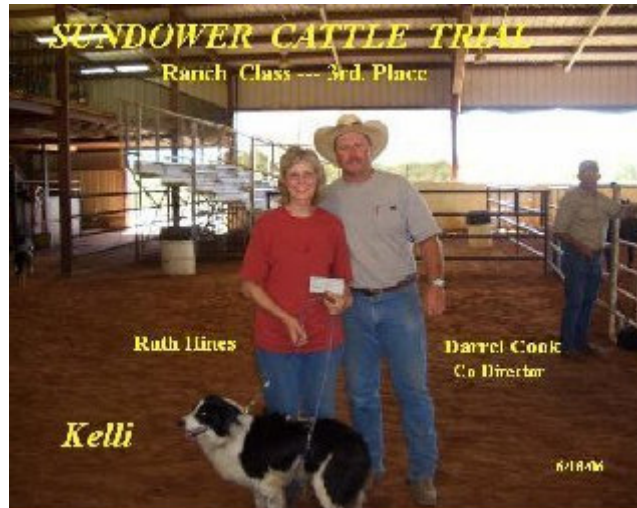


# Handler of the Month

March 2009



## RUTH HINES

Ruth Hines, a revenue accountant with Conoco/Phillips, from Bartlesville, Ok is this month's featured Handler. Ruth likes to work dogs and lie on the couch and watch TV. She and her husband, Tom, of 35 years, are Oaktree Border Collies. Tom suffered a stroke when he and Ruth had only been married 3 years, but despite this unexpected event, Ruth says God has been good to them and blessed them with working border collies.

A "town girl" her entire life up until about 9 years ago, she never had a pet and did not like dogs at all. Then in order to help Tom's outlook on life, she agreed to move to the country. They had lived in their new home about two weeks when her brother-in-law gave Tom a Border collie puppy. It took about three hours of that eight week old puppy giving Ruth that "puppy look" and she was hooked. She now claims to be an official dog lover!

Ruth got started working dogs with the help of her brother-in-law, Jerry Carte, who trained and trialed the Hines first dog, Reba. Weekend visits to Jerry's place, first as a spectator and camera person, then later has an interested handler, Ruth began to learn the skill of working Reba. Ruth said a lot of people have helped her along the way, Jack King, Danny Shilling, Dwayne Thompson, Keith Gilleon, Helen Alewine, to name a few, but she credits her husband Tom with helping her the most. "He is always on the spot and he has a good eye to see what needs to be adjusted or worked on the most", says Ruth. After starting with Reba, Ruth didn't begin to compete until three years later, and then only working sheep and goats. When Ruth acquired her dog Kelli, she gained the confidence to work cattle and now that is her favorite type of trials.

The one common thing she loves about dog folks is that they are always willing to help you improve and do better. It doesn't seem to matter that they are competing against

you, they will still help you. Ruth would advise Beginners to relax and have fun, and not expect to win every time you go out or you will be very unhappy. Strive for one thing that you want to go right in your run and when it goes right, count that as a successful run, whether you are in the money or not. Most of all, if you are pushing stock out of a stall with two openings, don't be standing in the middle of the one you want them to go out.

When asked what her greatest accomplishments have been with the dogs, she told about Ronnie Rogers cattle invitational several years back. It was a field trial, points and time, with a big outrun in a pasture and trailer load as the final obstacle. Ruth and dog Cap won. She was very proud of their win. When talking about life in general Ruth says to be able to "stick it out with Tom for all these years" is her greatest accomplishment. Ruth goes on to say, "All of you that know Tom know what I'm talking about". Ruth and Tom Hines are the epitome of, *When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.*