

be nice...either that, or he never managed to place before and the judge is way out in left field..." But the name of Nine Across is now before them and he's on his way.

More shows see more wins for Nine Across, and with each outing he gradually collects championships, a good reputation, and some healthy respect from the competition. Tori Tanbark is thrilled with her horse, and not only is proud of him, but can also be proud knowing that Nine Across did it the "old-fashioned way"—he earned it!

(Of course, both the hype and *au natural* examples of a photo-show career could easily have had another ending. Nine Across could have bombed his first time out, continued to lose, and finally settle in his niche in relative obscurity, leaving his only friend Tori to pat his nose once a day and sigh, "That's okay, Nine Across—I still love you!")

And the Answer Is...

Does hype help a model's placings in the photo showing? The answer to that rests solely with the judges that shape each horse's career. The recognition factor certainly has an effect, but depending on the person, that effect can be either negligible, for the better, or for the worse. So really, it's not a matter of whether hype helps a model...it's actually a matter of how each judge is affected by that hype.

To Hype or Not To Hype?

Of course, there is no iron-clad answer as to which route a shower should take. It all comes down to what you feel most comfortable doing for and with your horse. But a few factors to consider before showing off your horse in an advertisement are:

Are you sure that this horse can live up to its hype? Do you truly believe that your horse is a superior model? Is it conformationally correct? Or could someone look at the photo you've paid to have displayed in all its glory, and snort, "Why

would they advertise *that*? That thing has a bent cannon bone, no chest, and dropped stifles!" Shelling out money to show the world your model's faults is not a wise idea.

Are you willing to risk your horse being "cloned"? Yes, there are some remakers out there who would not hesitate to create a near-duplicate of your horse, if it struck their fancy or if they could cash in on it as a show or sale prospect. "There are only so many poses you can put a model into!" is their rallying cry. That may be true, but there are apt to be a few more models similar to yours that turn up if you advertise, than if you don't.

On the other hand, some remakers—as well as some showers who commission custom models—sometimes supplement their "creative processes" by judging photo shows. Some judges will re-photograph or photocopy your photos for their own future reference, and will neither ask nor tell you...so anytime you let your horse out of the house, you run this risk.

Would your horse look good on a "wanted" poster? Then by all means, advertise! It's downright fun to have a "notorious" model, and there are few things to match the glee of hearing someone say, "Oh, I know you—you're the person who owns Nine Across!"

And advertising is a nice way to ensure a "time capsule" of old model showing memories as time goes by. Years down the line, when you pick up an old model publication, you'll see your horse in print once more, and remember his show career. Were you right? Were you wrong? Is your horse still on the shelf, or away carrying on for someone else now?

Whether you hype your model or not, though, the hopes and pride you had in your horse—and in other models since—will stay with you. And for many showers, that's what the hobby is all about.

That's one of the nice things about model horse showing—there are countless model "success stories" just waiting to happen. And, with hype or without, they can happen to your horse and you.

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