

Remaking the Shire Horse

By Michelle Belisle

When I received my sample issue of THHN and found that the draft horse issue was next, I wanted to write an article to give other draft remakers a few helpful hints! And because I like Shires the most, I'll concentrate on them, but these ideas can be used for other draft breeds as well.

I think the best choice model for a Shire is the Clydesdale Mare. This model needs its head remade around the mouth. To do this I use a soldering iron to melt the plastic and roughly shape it while looking at a photo of a real horse. I also use the soldering iron to remake noses, carve out ears and hooves, and melt scrap tails into places that I've cut and there's a large gap. It makes the model resistant to breaks and cracks as well as saves on putty. When doing this I always wear a bandana around my nose and mouth (the fumes are TOXIC) and do the melting in a place that is well-ventilated. I do my work in the garage.

For the Shire stallion on the Clydesdale mare I add muscling on the chest and shoulders, and a little on the hindquarters. The feathers are the hardest to remake on this model. I usually cut off one front leg and one back leg and then grind off most of the plastic with our table grinder, then I use the soldering iron, finishing up with files. After the feathers are sanded off, I re-attach the legs to the model. Photo #1 is a dapple grey stallion done on a Clydesdale Mare. The head shot is a bay mare, a good example of a remade head.

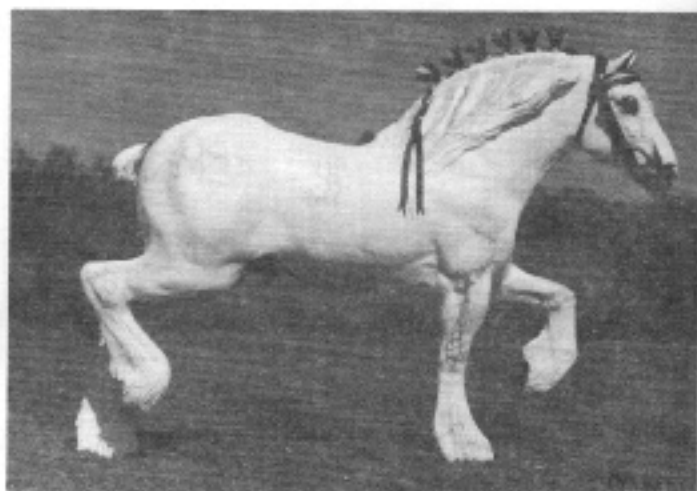


#1—Rohirrim Twilight: Dapple Grey Shire stallion by Michelle Belisle, owned by Nancy Olson.

The Yellow Mount (or Adios) mold also makes a fine Shire. Photo #2 is Durham Impressive, a Yellow Mount RRH by Laura Behning. This model needs muscling added all over and the head remade.

Photo #3 is a young stallion that I did using the Classic Quarter Horse Stallion. This model, like Yellow Mount, needs muscling all over.

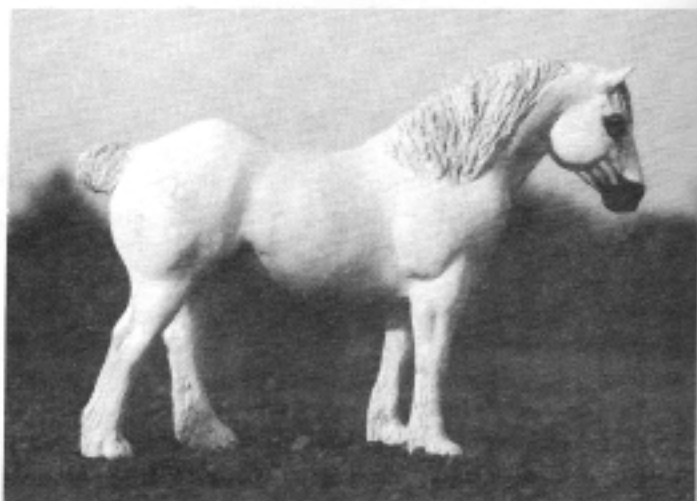
The Clydesdale Stallion can also make a nice Shire Stallion, but his head is way too ugly and needs to be remade. To cure this I make a hole on top of the forehead, then *carefully* heat the areas around the eyes. Then, putting a tool like the end of a file inside the hole, push outwards to make the area wider. You will have to resculpt the eyes a bit, and the mouth and nose also needs treatment as described for the Clydesdale Mare.



#2—Durham Impressive: Dapple Grey Shire RRH by Laura Behning, owned by Michelle Belisle.

My theory is that you can make a draft horse out of just about any model! I've used the Hanoverian, 5-Gaiter, FAS, and a few others. My strangest 'Frankenstein' model I have done as a draft was a Yellow Mount Head, Clydesdale Stallion Body, and lower legs from the 5-Gaiter! I try to be creative and use all the old 'junk' models I have. Some work, some don't. All in all, I just try to have fun.

(Ed—See photos throughout this issue to get ideas on other molds to use as drafters)



#3—RHR Lord Theodan: RRH by Michelle Belisle