

difference is with regard to original finish models. You will very rarely find shows divided into OF and reworked classes, because at the back of most Brits' minds is the lurking conviction that an OF model (especially an OF Breyer, be it never so rare...) is simply one that nobody has got around to reworking yet! This is probably because, as I said earlier, "proper" models have hair manes and tails!

Given this bias, it's probably not surprising that the favorite model for the last ten years has been the reworked Breyer. British reworks use different techniques and terminology to their American counterparts, partly because all our techniques are "home grown", and not learned from the US, and partly because we like a rather different finished product. In Britain, the most sought-after (and so influential) models were the Rydal models created by Pamela du Boulay at the start of her sculpting career. Although made of latex, Rydals are as different from Julips as a show Arab from a feral mule! Rydals were elegant, detailed and realistic, with silky mohair manes and tails and subtly shaded airbrushed bodies, and so, when British reworkers started to hack Breyers about, their aim was to create models as much like Rydals as possible. Virtually all British reworks are airbrushed, and the majority have their plastic m/ts removed and replaced by ones of mohair or llama hair. These models are known as "customs"—the term "rep/hair" is only applied to a model that still has its original m/t under the hair. So typically you'll find British models described as "PASC" (Proud Arab Stallion custom), or "CBBc/r/r" (Classic Black Beauty customized, repositioned, and resculpted).

Custom Breyers may be among the most successful models

over here, but we have plenty of other different makes on our shelves! Some collectors are very much Hagen-Renaker fans, but after Breyers, the most popular models are Beswicks. More widely available than Breyers, they used to be much more expensive, but now a Trad Breyer costs roughly the same as the average Beswick over here. Then there are a number of companies selling resin casts, starting with North Lights, and working up to the expensive limited editions of Border Fine Arts. At the other end of the market there are Dream Ponies—polystyrene models with nylon m/ts, slightly larger than LBs—and Britains Ltd's model farm horses. And the granddaddy of them all, Julip, is still going strong, forty years on! More realistic models ousted them from the show ring some years ago, but most Brits still have a sneaking fondness for them!

The model horse scene in Britain may be smaller than in the US—probably 100-200 hobbyists—but it must be remembered that Britain is a *much* smaller country, so that probably the proportion of collectors is the same. However, even if we don't have the *quantity*, we certainly have the *quality*, as I think the photos accompanying this article will prove!

Well, I could fill pages more telling all about the ins and outs of the hobby over here (well, when you've been in it as long as I have, you're bound to have a head filled with model trivia!), but I'll give you a respite—for now! Paula has very kindly allowed me a regular column to keep you informed on the European side of the hobby. I'm hoping to bring you a varied series of reports, not just on events and happenings, but also on the models and the people over here. Next time, though, I'm going to concentrate on Beswicks, and bring you a condensed history of the firm and its horses.