

The story of ABU and me...

By

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(Part 3)

As mentioned in Part 2, most of my ABU reels were obtained in my own country at the time. My ABU mate, Gert Delpont, also assisted me with my obsession by selling some of his doubles. One important reel set included an ABU Jubilee package consisting of a replica Record Ambassadeur 5000 and Morrums SX 3600 IVCB model. What exquisite reels! If you don't have this particular set, you are missing out big time. Unfortunately for my bank manager, I wanted more... I decided to give eBay a try to see if I could speed up the process of collecting ABU reels and other items from this popular Swedish manufacturer.



I registered on eBay and opened up a Pay Pal account. Standard practise I presumed.

Wrong! Gert told me that when he was still active on eBay, some years back, a handful of sellers requested payment (cash) via post! You can just imagine how this dodgy practice ended, payment was received for some reels, and while others evaporated into thin air... but he was desperate for certain models. My ABU friend advised me accordingly and I learned from his past mistakes without paying the school of life!

My first reel in sight was an ABU Matic 120, mint in the box (there we go again with the ABU matics! Remember where it all started in the late 80's with an ABU Matic 290?). Interestingly, the reel was located in Sweden (where manufacturing ABU truly belongs!). Unfortunately, I did not have any ratings which was a prerequisite for this particular listing. After sending an email to the seller, explaining my position he "preapproved" me to bid on the item and I was on track again. After 5 days listing, I ended up as the winning bidder. Quickly paid the seller, to avoid negative feedback, and my reel was on its way... After waiting about two and a half weeks, I received a notification via the post office concerning my international package. After work I rushed to the post office to collect "my prize". I drove back home recklessly, by unpacking the reel at every stop sign or robot! Finally, my ABU Matic was free of the sturdy packaging and I could actually smell Sweden and feel true craftsmanship! Psychotic? Maybe... Most people, including myself, remember being in love for the first time. This experience was almost the same for me, a wonderful trip down memory lane...



Other ABU reels were soon to follow. I have acquired numerous models on eBay from 2009-2012, including an ABU 999. The latter reel was on my wish list for numerous years. In the latter part of 2012, it was finally listed in Germany with no reserve. In the past there were others, although not in a good condition. However, there was one listed as “mint in the box” starting at a staggering 700 USD! The winning bid on this particular reel was \$715, too fatty for my taste. (Yes, I kept record of reels won and lost- I needed help then and still do!). Getting back to the ABU 999 located in Germany, I was ready to place a huge bid on it and even increased the limit on my credit card, just in case... After a show down, with bids flying in from every corner of the world (which felt like the Wild West, everybody were taking a shot at me!), I was fortunate to become the new owner of this unique 3 speed reel. Mission accomplished!



Unfortunately, one incident on eBay spoiled the on line bidding experience for me to a certain extent. I bought an ABU Cardinal 60 which looked fine on the photographs and was described as “mint without the box”. After receiving the reel, something bothered me... The colour looked ‘too bright’, if compared to my other ABU Cardinal 40 that was brand new. After removing the side plate my suspicion was confirmed, a refurbished reel!

The latter Cardinal had blue paint on the inside instead of the original grey anodised finish.



Cardinal 60- refurbished.



Cardinal 40- original finish.

I was very disappointed and contacted the seller. Initially he played the ignorance card, but after a few angry emails he offered a refund only after returning the reel on my own expense. I declined the offer and just kept the reel. How can I trust him now? However, I gunned him on feedback given by exposing his dishonesty. He tried to counter my negative feedback by including the following description on every listing thereafter "in original condition and not refurbished in any way". Therefore, watch out for deceitful individuals who try to corrupt the noble art of reel collecting!

At the end of 2012 I started buying less and less ABU items on eBay, because me and my wife became home owners and any spare funds went into this project. I sporadically bought small things, including ABU Tight Lines etc., but no reels. In 2014, I completely stopped international online buying when South Africa's postal service collapsed due to poor management and continuous strikes by its workers. International parcels now took 3-9 months to arrive and some not at all! How was I going to feed my ABU obsession that was far from over?

This concludes Part 3 of *ABU and me*.