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Information courtesy of Dr. Wolfram Schott

Asbjørn Hørgård A/S

Asbjørn Hørgård started rod making in 1934, with bamboo ski-poles as raw material. In 1938 he went to England, to study split cane making in its homeland. Back again in Norway he constructed a number of machines, for rough- and taper milling, gluing, and others, using bicycle-wheels amongst others. World War II and German occupation of Norway stopped all business. His premises were confiscated and he was imprisoned by the Gestapo. In prison he made drawings of things he intended to do and produce after the war, with a pencil and on toilet paper, which was the only available. These included the exact lay-out of the later workshop of the company, detailed construction plans of fishing reels, both fly and multiplier, reel holders, folding-net mechanisms, and others. In all he had 162 sheets of toilet paper hidden on his breast under his clothing, when he was freed May 8th, 1945.

After WW II Asbjørn Hørgård A/S soon became the major producer of fishing tackle in Norway. The company grew quickly from a one-man-operation to a large firm. 800 m² (8 610 sq. ft.) shop area in 1947 eventually became too small, and the company had to move to the outskirts of Trondheim in 1973, where a new building was erected, 3200 m² (34 445 sq. ft.) in size. Their total production was over 130 000 bamboo rods, mostly fly rods and a number of spinning/coarse fishing rods; in two and three sections, solid and hollow, single and double built and even triple built rods for tuna fishing. In 1985 bamboo rod production came to an end. Blanks and components were available for another year or two, from surplus stocks. Today the company does not exist any more. But thousands of these rods are still fished, and treasured, in Scandinavia and elsewhere. The machines Asbjørn Hørgård had constructed are displayed in museums today.

The majority of the trout rods are rather long, from 9' to 9' 6". True no-nonsense fishing tools, and suited for Scandinavian waters. Most rods were available with either one or two tips, and with different types of reel seats (screw-lock or sliding band), and some of the longer ones could be ordered with a detachable fighting butt. Spare tips for most rods could also be ordered from catalogues.

Possibly the best known rods are the Konkurransen (=competition) models. As the name suggests, they were designed for Tournament casting (skish, distance). But anglers soon found out that they were perfectly suited for grilse and sea trout fishing. Arguably more sea trout have been caught in Norway with these than with any other rod, although Hørgård, in a catalogue from 1956, remarks that "...the Konkurransen F is so powerful that it is not recommended as a fishing rod." The Konkurransen B and D, especially, were much used for sea trout dry fly fishing in the famous rivers "Lærdal" and "Aurland".

The "Lillemor" was another very popular model, and a "...most delicate rod for light trout fishing ... distinct tip action for perfect dry fly presentation." Economy rods with cheaper hardware included models like "Golden Fly", "Silver Fly" and "Veslemøy".

Some of Hørgård's rod models were marketed in the US by Norm Thompson.

Norway has a coastline of 25 000 km (≈ 15 500 miles), 455 000 lakes, and countless rivers. 1121 of these are officially registered (per 1995) as to have migratory fish (salmon, sea trout, sea char), and 629 of these have salmon runs. So, naturally, salmon rods have always played an important role in

the arsenal of a Norwegian angler, and many a salmon has been caught with Hørgård rods. Asbjørn, a keen angler himself, knew what the game required, and designed the rods accordingly.

The biggest and most powerful series, the "Namsen", was also suited for harling from a boat, and either fly, spoon or wobbler could be used with it. The 15' 6" rod weighs 1000 grams (35.3 oz) and a DT-line of 40 yards and 105 grams (3.7 oz) was recommended (= DT 12). A very powerful rod indeed. The "Orkla", of 14' 6", was another choice for many of the larger salmon rivers, where long casts are required and heavy fish expected. No spey rods, by the way, rather powerful overhead casters.

Hørgård rod models listed in catalogues from ca. 1950 to 1985:

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Note: Many of the rods are named after Norwegian rivers

Single Handed Trout Fly Rods	Double Handed Salmon Fly Rods	Spinning/Coarse Fishing Rods
<i>Lågen, 10' 6"</i>	<i>Namsen, 15' 6", 15' 0", 14' 6"</i>	<i>Driva, 12' 6"</i>
<i>Ena, 9' 0", 9' 6"</i>	<i>Orkla, 14' 6"</i>	<i>Gula, 11' 0"</i>
<i>Tya, 9' 6"</i>	<i>Alta, 14' 0"</i>	<i>Model 21, 10' 3"</i>
<i>Distanse, 9' 6"</i>	<i>Splittfly, 14' 0" (2 pc. !)</i>	<i>Warlock, 10' 3"</i>
<i>Special 9' 6"</i>	<i>Tana, 13' 6"</i>	<i>Surna, 10' 0"</i>
<i>Prince 9' 3"</i>	<i>Skauga, 13' 6"</i>	<i>Spinning, 9' 3"</i>
<i>Golden Fly, 9' 6", 9' 0", 8' 6"</i>	<i>Sona, 13' 6"</i>	<i>Spinn, 9' 3"</i>
<i>Silver Fly, 9' 0"</i>	<i>Fellow, 12' 6"</i>	<i>Lista, 9' 3"</i>
<i>Light Fly, 9' 0"</i>	<i>H. A., 12' 9"</i>	<i>Ferder, 9' 3"</i>
<i>Nidelv, 9' 0"</i>	<i>H. B., 12' 9"</i>	<i>Terna, 8' 0"</i>
<i>Aura, 9' 0"</i>	<i>H. C., 12' 0"</i>	<i>Threadline 1A, 6' 9"</i>
<i>Flua, 9' 0"</i>	<i>H. D., 11' 0"</i>	<i>Threadline 2A, 6' 9"</i>
<i>Nea, 9' 0"</i>	<i>Etna, 14' 0" (2 pc., butt cane, top glass)</i>	<i>Threadline 1B, 6' 9"</i>
<i>Bua, 9' 0"</i>		<i>Threadline 2B, 6' 9"</i>
<i>Type B, 8' 6"</i>		<i>Threadline 1/0, 7' 6"</i>
<i>Lillemor, 8' 6"</i>		<i>Threadline 2/0, 7' 0"</i>
<i>Veslemøy, 8' 6"</i>		<i>Threadline Junior, 5' 6" (1pc.)</i>
<i>Vesla, 6' 6", 7' 0", 7' 6", 8' 0"</i>		<i>Lillemor Flue-Spinn D'Luxe, 8' 6"</i>
<i>Turist, 8' 0" (4 pc.)</i>		<i>Glomma, 6' 6" (1 pc.)</i>
<i>Junior, 7' 6"</i>		<i>Skreppa, 6' 0"</i>
<i>Konkurranse B, 9' 3"</i>		<i>Sjoa, 5' 6"</i>
<i>Konkurranse D, 9' 0"</i>		<i>H 4, 5' 6"</i>
<i>Konkurranse E, 8' 6"</i>		<i>Splitcast, 5' 6"</i>
<i>Konkurranse F, 9' 6"</i>		<i>Caster, 5' 3"</i>
<i>Konkurranse ED, 8' 6"</i>		<i>Ula, 6' 0"</i>
		<i>Steel-Cane A, 5' 0" (1 pc.)</i>
		<i>Steel-Cane B, 5' 0" (1 pc.)</i>
		<i>Splittglass, 9' 3" (butt cane, top glass)</i>
<i>"Olympicane" -set, containing a 3 pc/2 top rod,</i>		<i>Spinn glass, 9' 6" (butt cane, top glass)</i>
<i>3 ½ " reel, 20 yd line, 2 pc. "Stone Fly" imitations,</i>		<i>Etna Surf, 12' 6" (butt cane, top glass)</i>
<i>illustrated instruction booklet about fly casting</i>		<i>Esox III, 7'</i>