



NUTWELL SADDLERY

Newsletter: May 2010

Nutwell Saddlery Ltd

Society of Master Saddlers approved retailer

Nutwell Estate, Lympstone, Exmouth EX8 5AN

Tel: **01392 877896**

Email: info@nutwellsaddlery.co.uk

www.nutwellsaddlery.co.uk

Why a correctly fitting saddle is so important

Many people take a risk by fitting a saddle themselves, using an unqualified saddle fitter or allowing years to pass without a saddle check. In doing so early warning signs of an ill-fitting saddle are often missed, and no preventative or remedial action is taken until the horse's personality or performance becomes affected.

All too often too many horses and ponies are spoiled by ill-fitting saddles. The damage caused and bad habits picked up are often irreparable. To prevent this happening you must provide your horse with a saddle which fits, and ensure it continues to fit for the years that come.

Symptoms of an ill-fitting saddle

A horse can mask an ill-fitting saddle in wide range of symptoms. Most importantly, if you notice a change in character, he could be trying to tell you something. Common symptoms of an ill-fitting saddle when tacking up include: trembling, tail swishing, pawing, biting and an unwillingness to stand. When you're riding he may refuse to do things he would normally have no objection to, and in serious cases, he may start to buck or rear. Some horses may suffer in silence but you may notice white hairs growing around the saddle area, caused by friction and uneven pressure.

How an ill-fitting saddle can affect your horse's performance

An ill-fitting saddle can have a profound effect on your horse's performance.

In particular, he may become reluctant to work. If you do dressage, he may become unwilling or unable to engage his hindquarters as well as he used to. If you do cross country, he may begin to refuse or run-out at fences. This again can lead to bad habits being picked up that can continue to haunt you, even when the saddle is corrected.

Use a Society of Master Saddlers qualified saddle fitter

A Society of Master Saddlers qualified saddle fitter will have been fitting saddles for a minimum of three years and hold the Society of Master Saddlers Qualified Saddle Fitter's certificate. In the UK, this is the best reassurance you can get that the person who is fitting the saddle has the experience and knowledge required to ensure a correct fit.

Regular saddle checks should not be missed

Everyone knows prevention is better than cure – especially when it comes to horses. In the same way that regular dental checks are important, a 6-12 month saddle check should not be overlooked. Your horse's

shape can change substantially, especially if he is young, has had a change in exercise, gained or lost weight or undergone a period of rest.

Avoiding a saddle check can lead to your horse picking up bad habits, create further work the next time, or even worse, expensive vet, physio or reschooling bills which by far exceed the cost of the check up.

Weekend appointments now available!



From big to small, Nutwell Saddlery has a saddle to fit all

Get your saddle checked

To get your saddle checked please call

01392 877896 or email

info@nutwellsaddlery.co.uk

Kate passes gruelling exams to become qualified by the Society of Master Saddlers

We are pleased to announce Kate has passed her gruelling exams to become a Society of Master Saddlers qualified saddle fitter.

Since joining us in 2007, Kate has worked extremely hard to gain the required experience and knowledge. Following an introduction to saddle fitting course and a three year apprenticeship with a Master Saddler and qualified saddle fitter, only then can you apply for the Qualified Saddle Fitters course.

The course is a tough week of theory and practical sessions, led by some of the most respected saddle fitters and manufacturers in the country. The culmination of this being a full day of written, oral and practical examinations. The high standard required to pass this exam is reflected in the low pass rate. This year only three people in the UK passed.

“Kate is a talented saddle fitter with great judgement and a keen eye. As the third addition to our qualified team we will be able to offer even more day, evening, weekend and school holiday appointments. Well done Kate!”

Janet, our Master Saddler



Keep your saddle looking younger for longer

Keeping your saddle looking younger for longer is easier than you think. Janet, our Master Saddler, shares her great tips.

Find a good work surface, such as your kitchen table, and cover with a blanket. Place the saddle upside down onto it and remove the numnah and stirrups. Now get a warm bowl of water with one tiny drop of washing up liquid (not enough to make any bubbles).

Rinse a sponge or cloth in the water, wring and wipe thoroughly all over the

saddle. If you start with the saddle upside down, you should see surfaces that you may miss when using a saddle rack. Carefully scratch off greasy lumps of dirt with your nail and then wipe over with the cloth. Greasy lumps are usually found on the outside flap where your lower leg rubs, and also on the under flap near the girth straps.

Check all stitching around the main flaps and skirts, and check the girth leathers for loose or worn stitching, and wear to the holes themselves. We can repair any wear or damage before it gets dangerous or causes an accident.

After thoroughly cleaning your saddle you can either apply a cream or oil, as per

your saddle manufacturer's recommendation. If your saddle is particularly dry, a good soaking with some neatsfoot oil, applied with a paint brush several times if required, should soon have it looking revitalised and feeling supple all over.

Finally, feel the panel of the saddle for any noticeable lumps or bumps. These will relate directly onto the horse's back and may cause bruising or rubs.

If you have any concerns you can call us on **01392 877896** to arrange a saddle check. And don't forget, you should have the fit of your saddle checked by a Society of Master Saddlers qualified saddle fitter every 6-12 months.

Nutwell Saddlery Ltd

Telephone for all appointments **01392 877896**
www.nutwellsaddlery.co.uk





Get a free bridle check

Our talented Master Saddler, Janet, recently went on a Bridle Fitting Course run by the Society of Master Saddlers.

This means when you have a saddle fitted by Janet, she will also check the fit and functioning of your bridle for free. Now that's value for money!

Left: Janet (with clipboard) at the Bridle Fitting Course. Right: Janet checking a bridle

Nutwell Saddlery online

Nutwell Saddlery gets blogging

New for March 2010, we have launched an exciting blog where we will post interesting articles, new product reviews and comments about the latest saddlery news. To access go to <http://blog.nutwellsaddlery.co.uk>

Nutwell Saddlery on Facebook

In addition to our website, our Facebook page will feature our latest news, special offers and events. You will also be able to post your questions, share tips and lots more. Search for Nutwell Saddlery and become a fan!

facebook

Did you know we have more than 150 new saddles in stock? To arrange a fitting call 01392 877896.



Gillian Higgins Demonstration

Understand how your horse moves from the inside out

Nutwell Saddlery and St. David's Equine Practice invite you to a Horses Inside Out evening with Gillian Higgins and King Solomon III (Mary King's former Olympic eventer).

- Understand the anatomy of your horse
- Learn how to keep your horse soft and supple
- Improve your horse's performance
- Ask Gillian questions

Tuesday 29th June 2010 - 7pm, at Nutwell Estate, Lymptone, Exmouth, EX8 5AN.

Gillian Higgins is an internationally demanded equine therapist specialising in mobilising muscles and improving performance. She has worked alongside top equine experts, has been featured on Sky TV and BBC, and is a regular contributor to British Dressage, Horse and Rider and Your Horse.

Tickets are £25, including light refreshments and £5 off your next saddle check. Limited seats available! Seats will be allocated on a first come first served basis and reserved upon payment.

To book please call Claire on **01392 876622** ext 2 or send a cheque, made payable to Nutwell Saddlery, to: Claire Hawkins, St David's Equine Practice, Nutwell Estate, Lymptone, Exmouth, EX8 5AN.

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Introduce a friend and get £10 off

Do you know someone who also understands the importance of a correctly fitting saddle?

Introduce them to Nutwell Saddlery and we will give you £10 off your next saddle check or saddle fitting. For more information see the leaflet enclosed.



Extended summer opening hours

Thanks to the glorious light nights and our growing team, you can now book an appointment seven days a week and any time from 7am until 8.30pm.

Weekend appointments are proving very popular so please ensure you book with plenty of notice.

Does your saddle need a check?

Here's five quick tips to help you determine if your saddle needs a check:

1. My horse's behavior has changed when being ridden and is more grumpy when being tacked up
2. I feel either tipped back or forward in the saddle
3. The flocking has gone uneven or lumpy
4. My saddle is hitting me up the bottom when I ride
5. It is more than a year since I've had it checked



Although this list is not exhaustive, the above are good indications your saddle needs a check. Regular saddle checking will ensure you and your horse are achieving your maximum performance.

Janet (Nutwell Saddlery's Master Saddler) reflocking a saddle

Get your saddle checked

To get your saddle checked please call **01392 877896** or email **info@nutwellsaddlery.co.uk**.

NUTWELL SADDLERY

We are an appointment only service and no saddles will be sold without being fitted by a Qualified Registered Saddle Fitter. To book an appointment or for any advice please call **01392 877896**.

Although the phone is manned during office hours there may be times when you reach the answer machine. Please do leave a message and we will return your a call as soon as we can.



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