

Maybe it's a "guy thing"

At my book signing at the USDF convention, a Dover Saddlery exec asked me, "Are you interested in new products?"

I (owner of a rotary cell phone and a pair of dress shoes I bought 38 years ago) responded in the negative.

"We're always looking for professionals who have their finger on the pulse of what their clients would be interested in," she explained.

I stared at her blankly.

She tried again: "What brand of saddle do you recommend?"

"I usually tell people to ask my wife," I countered. I then went on to recount trying once years ago to order a new girth over the phone. I knew the catalog page, the model, the item number, the description, and the size. I was stumped when the salesperson asked, "What color?"

"Color?" That hadn't occurred to me.

"Yes," she said helpfully, "What color is your saddle?"

I thought a bit. "What do you mean?"

"Is it black or brown?" she prompted.

Imagining it in my mind as "saddle colored," I had to respond, "Well, I'm not really sure. . . I never looked."

At that point the woman at the convention began to see me in a different light and she slowly backed away both physically and from the idea that I could be of any use to her.

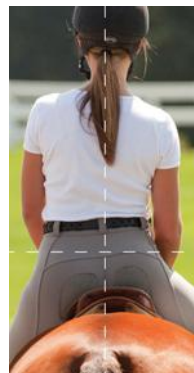
Why clutter up my mind with stuff like this? I have to save space in it for Warren Spahn's won-lost record, old Bee Gees' lyrics, and the names of all the state capitals. Besides, how can I be seriously interested in new products when some of the ideas being peddled are, well, so pathetic?

Have you noticed how often *Life Imitates Farce*. That's probably why this new product, whose description was just sent to me, can be marketed with a straight face.

Yes, it's . . .

"Thinline Seat Shim Inserts [which] offer comfort, protection, and balance. Just where you need it! The engineering of ThinLine® meets the genius of FITS for a simple, low cost solution to comfort and equitation issues."

Excuse me, "balance and equitation issues?" You mean like sitting off-center and collapsing a hip? Wow, with my Thinline Seat Shim Inserts™ I don't have to worry about my posture ever again! I can construct little butt wedges to make the world a reverse image of my sorry, pretzeled body, and no one will know the difference.



So, now I'm a convert, and I'm camping by the mail box, waiting for the next dressage catalog to arrive. I hear it's going to be featuring smoke and mirrors.