

# Tis the Season!

*Our roving trend spotter checks out the latest winter riding apparel—and what's new in saddles, safety gear and more.*

By Emily Esterson

**C**all it a no-brainer or just plain smart business, equestrian apparel makers have finally figured out what riders have known for years: Regular underwear just doesn't cut it in the saddle. (Men, you might want to avert your eyes for the next few paragraphs.)

Believe me; I've done the research myself. Regular underwear bunches in all the wrong places. It wears out ... um ... there (you know what I mean). The elastic separates from the fabric and the seams leave angry red marks. Worst of all, it's just not flattering under those light-colored breeches, especially for women of a certain age.

At last summer's American Equestrian Trade Association show in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, underwear was everywhere, from warm-but-not-itchy woolies and "compression" fabrics to seamless and soft materials. Trend spotters tell us that there's more to come, with even padded versions on the way from at least one manufacturer.

## Wild About Wool ... and More

Some people find wool next to the skin almost unbearable. But a new entry on the equestrian scene aims to keep you wooly-warm without the itch of less refined threads. Rambler's Way offers a premium quality, fine

18.5-micron fiber, chemical-free wool with strands that are so thin and finely woven that the fabric feels more like silk. Plus wool has all the high-tech qualities of, for example, polypro. It retains warmth when damp, it dries quickly and it wicks. These undergarments are great insulation for winter riders. The company offers long underwear, short underwear, t-shirts and long-sleeved shirts in two different weights.

If this underwear trend seems like it came out of the blue, consider the demographics of the industry. The largest population of horseback riders, especially in the English disciplines, consists of women over 40. And most women of that age have cellulite, which tends to be visible through white and tan breeches, no matter how thick the material. Fun In The Saddle (FITS) answers the demand for smoothing undies with its new Wunderbreecch, a shape-flattering blend of cotton, poly and Lycra® in a capri length that smooths and hides what you'd prefer not be seen. The Wunderbreecch also incorporates a seamless, gusseted crotch for maximum comfort.

Kerrits continues the trend it launched a couple of years ago with an under-layer top and new color choices for bottoms, including tan and lavender. Made with tight-weave compression fabric, they afford warmth with the added bonus of smoothing.

For the tops, sports bras with smooth seaming also look—and feel—great under the equestrian



**Kerrits' winter undershirt and matching capri pants are studies in both warmth and style.**