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How Saddle Fit Affects the Rider – Interview with Jochen Schleese

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By [Callie](#) On May 16, 2015

Bring your legs back, get your toes forward, sit up straight! These are common words from riding instructors trying to help their students find a more balanced and correct position. But what if the rider's position was not a fault of their lack of riding ability or skills but rather a result of the fit of their saddle?

Also, what about rider's experiencing pain, especially in their hips and knees? Do they need to just toughen up and ride through it, or again could this be a result of a poorly fitting saddle? Saddle fit is very important for our horses, and a number of both physical and behavior problems can result from a saddle that does not fit the horse. However, it is not only important that the saddle fits the horse, it is equally important that it fits the rider as well.

Last November, I watched Jochen Schleese, saddle fitter and owner of Schleese Saddlery, give a presentation on saddle fit for riders, particularly women, at an event called Equine Affair. I was immediately interested when Jochen showed how simply changing the saddle could greatly improve a rider's balance and comfort. Of course, by bringing a rider into better balance, the horse is more comfortable and able to move more freely as well.

Jochen Schleese is a prominent equine professional and resides in Canada, so I feel very lucky to have had the chance to meet him for an interview and share some of his knowledge and expertise with you.....