



## INFORMATION SHEET

**SKITO** makes these items:

- \* Equalizer 101 Saddle Pads
- \* Dryback Equalizer Saddle Pads
- \* Bridging Pads
- \* Interpads (half pads)
- \* Shims for ALL pads

**EQUALIZER ® 101** Saddle Pad is a complete pad (that needs no additional pads, fabric felt or fillers between the horse and saddle) and consists of open-celled urethane foam, profiled to the weight bearing area of a saddle, and encased in a variety of covers secured with a patented Velcro closure. The foam accommodates mismatch between saddle and horse while absorbing up to 90% of impact shock. The open-cell structure of the foam encourages moisture and heat absorption from the horse's back. The pad design approximates the curve of the horse's back which reduces the stress of forcing a square pad to a shape. The Velcro envelope on either side of the spine enables the addition of shims to compensate for low spots, for lift, or for a bridging condition.

The pad design is dictated by the saddle profile and tree/bar design. Many generic patterns are available, while custom designs and variations are the norm, not the exception. All pads accommodate the natural curvature of the horse's spine.

The unique Equalizer® foam is captured in a shaped envelope on either side of the spine with a patented Velcro closure for easy access.

The Insert pad is constructed with a combination of fabrics such as exclusive **SKITO** Wool/Poly, 100% Wool, Cotton/Poly Duck, Hemp/Cotton, Cotton/Poly quilt, Jersey, Nylon Cordura and Upholstery materials. In addition, wear leathers (Nylon Cordura) and rigging straps are standard.

**DRYBACK Equalizer®** Saddle Pads by **SKITO** are constructed to release heat and moisture from the large back muscle to the atmosphere. Air flows between the saddle and saddle pad thanks to the addition of the matting to the top of the saddle pad. Simply put, the exclusive **SKITO** wool/poly fleece efficiently wicks the heat-laden perspiration to the open cell foam insert, which acts as a dense sponge pulling moisture and heat away from the animal to the surface of the pad.

In the past the heat and moisture stopped in the top layer of the saddle pad because the saddle became an obstacle to transpiration. The addition of the matting enables air to flow under the saddle to evaporate the moisture and dissipate the heat normally trapped against the saddle.

The thickness of the matting and looseness of loop provides maximum airflow to facilitate evaporation. Added benefits of the **Dryback** are shock absorption and reduced slippage between the saddle and saddle pad.

### **FITTING SADDLES**

The dynamics of horse, saddle and rider plead for an optimal saddle fit that is elusive at best.

The horse's back changes seasonally if not substantially during an extended ride. Saddles age as well as the rider, changing seat, balance and fit. There is no final solution to fit problems, including custom saddles, because of the variables.

**SKITO** have developed saddle fit accessories to enhance fit during the off-days. Please use these accessories in conjunction with the best fitting saddle for your animal.

**BRIDGING PADS** are available in black or white spandex. Shoulder Bridges and English Centre Bridges are in Black Spandex only. Foam inserts are available in ½", ¾", 1" and 1½" thickness. The bottom edges of foam inserts are tapered when their thickness exceeds ¾", or upon request.

**Long Shoulder Bridge pad:**

The shoulder bridge shim is six inches longer than the standard Shoulder Bridge and useful for the older horse with a significantly dropped back.

Encased in black spandex, the foam inserts vary from ½" to 1½" with the bottom and trailing edges tapered to reduce pressure lines.

The most effective placement of the Shoulder Bridge is on top of a thin pad or directly against the horse with the tapered edges facing the animal.

**Shoulder Bridge Pad:**

Foremost of the bridge pads is the Shoulder Bridge used to fill the pocket at the base of the withers and behind the scapula to mid back for horses with a pronounced shoulder pocket and prominent withers.

Encased in spandex, the foam inserts vary from ½" to 1½" with the bottom and trailing edges tapered to reduce pressure lines.

The most effective placement of the Shoulder Bridge is on top of a thin pad or directly against the horse with the tapered edges facing the animal.

**English Bridge Pad:**

Intended to fill the hollow at mid back, thus equalizing pressure the full length of the tree.

Encased in black spandex, the foam inserts vary from ½" to 1½" thick. Front, back and bottom edges are tapered to provide a transition without pressure lines.

The most effective placement of the English Bridge is on top of a thin pad or directly against the horse with the tapered edges facing the animal.

**Western Bridge pad:**

The Western Bridge Pad is cut larger than its English cousin to accommodate the larger western tree. The Western Bridge pad is intended to fill the hollow at mid back, thus equalizing pressure the full length of the tree.

Encased in black spandex, the foam inserts vary from ½" to 1½" thick. Front, back and bottom edges are tapered to provide a transition without pressure lines. The most effective placement of the Western Bridge is on top of a thin pad or directly against the horse with the tapered edges facing the animal.

**Full Front Lift Pad:**

Not intended as a bridge pad but rather as a lift for the front of the saddle without creating a bridging condition. This pad is useful for the horse that is built a little downhill or has a deep scapula pocket that extends past mid-back to the hip.

Encased in black spandex, the foam inserts vary from ½" to 1" thick. The bottom and back edges are tapered to provide a transition without pressure lines.

**Shim Usage:**

Shoulder pads and front shims are used to fill voids under the tree caused by atrophied muscle, asymmetry and mutton withers. Centre Shims and Bridge pads are for low spots or dipped backs. Rear Shims are for hollows under the rear of the saddle. A full front lift shim is used to raise or pivot the saddle in front. A full rear lift shim is used to raise or pivot the saddle in the rear. Shims are sold in pairs.

## **USE AND CARE OF ALL SKITO PADS**

Always be certain the back of the horse and the surfaces of the pad are free of dirt and debris. Tack up. Allow the Equalizer® pad to warm up for 3 to 5 minutes or longer in cold weather, before snugging the girth. Check the girth after warming up the horse prior to starting any activity. The saddle and horse will settle into the Equalizer® foam as it initially warms. Store the Equalizer® pad over a ventilated rack or separate from the saddle to enhance drying.

**CLEANING THE PADS** is a matter of removing the foams and machine laundering the cover in warm water with a mild detergent, NO BLEACH and double rinse. Lay foams flat to dry. The foam insert should be rinsed in a cup of vinegar to 3 gallons of water solution to remove body salts absorbed from the horses sweat.

**SQUEEZE - DO NOT WRING** the moisture from the foam inserts. Place the foams on a flat surface to air dry.

### **CARE FOR SHIMS - BRIDGING PADS – FULL FRONT OR FULL REAR LIFTS**

Rinse the pads with clean water. Squeeze or roll but DO NOT WRING to remove excess water. Remove embedded hair with a lint roller or the sticky side of packaging tape. Avoid soaps, bleach, washing machines and dryers.

To order your Skito Pad:

**Phone 09 4375304**



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Saddlery & Gallery

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