



# Congratulations on your purchase of THV (The Horse's Voice) products.



## Some explanations about your delivery, saddle & pads...

### Unpacking your box...

Please unpack your box carefully and make sure that you have everything that you ordered in good condition.



Please DO NOT throw the box and packing away until you have checked the contents.

If you think anything is missing or damaged, you must report this to the THV office by email within 24 hrs of receiving the package. We cannot accept claims of missing/damaged products after this time.

If the box/package has been damaged in transit, please keep the packing in case an insurance claim needs to be made to the couriers.

### Knee Blocks...

These have been temporarily removed from the saddle to make it easier to pack. You can choose whether to use them or not, but we would advise that you start off with them on the saddle. They can be adjusted to suit knee/leg position in order to provide additional support, or removed completely if you find they are unnecessary. (If you take them off, be sure to keep them somewhere safe, where you can find them again!)

The blocks attach to the saddle using the harder hook side of the Velcro to the softer loop Velcro that is built into the front of the saddle. Lift up the top saddle flap and attach firmly so that the slight curve in the knee block corresponds with the curve of the front of the saddle. The narrowest end goes towards the bottom.



If you want to remove them, pull either the top or the bottom of each block away from the saddle and ease the rest of the block away. As with any Velcro product, if you allow it to get clogged with hair, it will not work as well. If you have any difficulties with this, please let us know and we will help you.

## *Girth Straps on Backwards?...*

You will not be the only person to wonder why the THV girth billets have been put on upside down...

It's not a mistake!

We deliberately ask the saddle makers to put the straps on like this.

The two sides of leather are:-

1. The **Rough Side**, which is the inside or flesh side of the hide.
2. The **Shiny Side**, which is the outside or skin side of the hide.

The repetitive wear of the girth buckles sliding up and down on the girth straps/billets can cause the Shiny skin-side of the leather to crack or even separate from the rest of the leather underneath before the leather itself is worn out and therefore, the girth straps/billets may need replacing more often. By reversing them, they should last longer!



In the past it was normal to reverse the girth straps/billets as we have done, however, more recently, there has been a greater emphasis on the way things look rather than the way they function, so the shiny skin side of the strap is now usually showing (complete with numbers) on the top.

Saddle makers tend to buy the straps ready made, rather than make them themselves, and the current fashion is to have the holes numbered on the shiny side. Our manufacturers try to find un-numbered billet to avoid confusing people, but they are becoming increasingly difficult to find.

The problem with having numbers on the billet straps is that people tend to try to get the numbers to match up, rather than focussing on the correct tension of the girth. When the straps are spaced out and angled as they are on all THV and BALANCE saddles, it is not always possible to get an even tension using the matching numbers on the straps.

## *Slits in my saddle?...*



If your saddle has wool flocked panels, you will find slits like this in the leather on the upper side of the panel under the flap.

Don't panic! 😊

These slits are called flocking slits and are essential to the flocking process. Sometimes you will see one on each side of the saddle, sometimes two, but they are perfect normal (and necessary) so nothing at all to worry about 😊

## Saddle Preparation

In order to ensure that your new THV saddle gives you many years of use, there are several things to do to prepare the saddle and pads before you ride in them for the first time. Firstly, it is important that you condition your saddle to protect the surface of the new leather from marks, sweat and/or rain. This, in effect, seals it.

It is important that whichever conditioner you use, it is made from Natural fats, oils and waxes with no Petro-Chemical products\*.

Examples Include:



Sedgewicks Leathercare & Leather Dressing



R M Williams Saddle Leather Conditioner



Fiebing's Aussie



Effax Lederbalsam

In our experience, all of these pictured above are very good.

Work the Leather care generously into both sides of all of the leather surfaces with a soft cloth. It should have a very slightly sticky feel once it is finished. Leave the saddle overnight to absorb all the goodness you have treated it to.

*(\*Petro-Chemical based ingredients in cleaning products break down the structure of the hide, separating the fibres. This allows it to dry out more quickly and also allows the dye to escape).*

## Pad Preparation

We would recommend that you wash any Wool fleece lined saddle pads before you actually use them! This may sound strange, but we find that they are easier to use and less slippery when they have been washed. Hand wash or machine wash on a wool cycle using a mild non-biological (or dermatological) washing powder/liquid. Do not fold the pads so that the wool is on the outside as it may overstress the centre seam. DO NOT USE FABRIC SOFTENER. Allow the pad to air dry naturally by laying it out flat, wool side up. Dry away from strong direct sunlight to protect colour in black pads. DO NOT TUMBLE DRY. (More pad washing tips below...)

**\*Important Note:** Please do not hang your pad over a rail or washing line with the fleece facing the outside, especially when wet. The central seam can be put under considerable stress if hung in this way, which could lead to a separation of the two fleece panels along the seam. This stress does not occur when the pad is in proper use on the horse, so pads that separate along this seam may not be accepted by the manufacturer as a fault.

## 'Running-In' your New Saddle

This is particularly important if your THV saddle has wool flocked panels. The panels will tend to settle (compress) a little during the first few weeks of use. We recommend that you spend the first two hours of saddle use (not all in one session) predominantly in walk where you will have your seat in the saddle all the time. This will help to provide the even weight distribution needed to settle/compress the flocking evenly, both front to back and side to side.

## Care of your THV Pro-Complete Saddle Pad

The THV Pro-Complete Saddle Pads were designed by BALANCE and are made in the UK.



If used and cared for correctly, this pad will give you many years of reliable use. The internal foam/gel is very resilient and will retain its qualities of being soft enough to provide cushioned comfort to the horse, whilst recovering its shape fast enough to keep up with the rapid muscle movements that go on in the horse's back under the saddle.

The only conditions we have seen a change in this, is in countries where the temperature drops well below freezing for extended periods of time. In this environment we have seen the gel/foam become rather stiff. Therefore, if you plan to ride your horse when the temperature is this low, we advise that you keep this pad in a heated environment. If this is not possible, you should saddle your horse up in the usual way, but then once the saddle and pads are in place, we would suggest that you place a rug over the horse and the saddle. Wait for a few minutes until the warmth of the horse/s body softens the pad back to its correct feel before you start riding the horse.



The Pro-Complete pad should always be used between a well-shaped and absorbent saddle pad (numnah) and the saddle. As it will not be directly on the horse, it will not get as dirty as a normal saddle pad, but it should still be washed from time to time.

We recommend that you always hand wash your Pro-Complete pad because washing machines can damage the bond between Pro-Complete layers. Avoid the use of harsh detergents that could cause allergic reactions in the horse's skin.

Always allow to line/air dry (no tumble dryers) and avoid leaving the dark coloured pads in strong/direct sunlight, to avoid fading. If you need more information please contact us through the website at:

[www.THVSaddling.com](http://www.THVSaddling.com)

## Care of your THV Wool-Fleece-lined Saddle Pad



These pads are designed to provide a comfortable interface between the saddle, the Pro-Complete pads and the horse. In order to do this, they need to be kept clean.

**Make sure you do not allow horse hair to build up in the fleece.** When the pad is dry, please use a suitable brush and/or vacuum cleaner to remove excessive hair before washing and make sure your horse is groomed well in the saddle area before tacking up.



In mild weather conditions where the horse does not sweat very much, they should be washed, following the directions below, after every 3 or 4 rides.

However, in high temperatures where the horse sweats a lot, either:

- ❖ Hose the sweat off the pad after each ride and leave it to air dry, then wash it properly after 3 or 4 rides, or:
- ❖ Wash it after every ride (using the instructions shown below)



#### WASHING INSTRUCTIONS

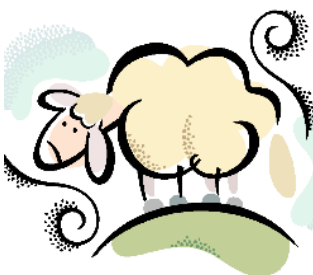
Machine or hand wash, wool cycle (30°C) or cold wash and rinse. Do not use detergents with biological or bleaching agents. Do not use fabric softener. If you want to condition the wool, you can add ½ cup white vinegar to final rinse water to remove detergent traces and to condition fleece. Shake the pad well before air drying away from direct heat or sunlight. Do not tumble dry.

### *Care of your THV Wool Fleece Base Pad*



The THV Wool Fleece Base Pads, designed by BALANCE, are intended to be used as part of the BALANCE/THV Saddling System and only under saddles that are wide enough to accommodate these extra layers, without unbalancing the saddle (tipping it back).

We have observed that some horses prefer the feel of this wool-fleece version of the THV/BALANCE Base Pad to the foam in the Original Pro-Complete Base Pads. This is why we offer this as an option. The pad is made from the same materials as our Wool Fleece Saddle Pads, but with the addition of an internal 'shim' that is located in the front to create lift for the saddle and cushioning/protection for the horse. There are short fixing straps on the front of this type of Base Pad that can be attached to the fall-down rings at the front of all THV/BALANCE saddles.



This pad seems to work particularly well with the THV/BALANCE saddles that have foam panels, partly because the foam panels in the saddle nestle into the materials of this Wool Fleece in a way that they do not on the Base Pads made with the gel-foam material. Also, because combining a foam panel with a foam Base Pad can create a little too much 'bounce' for some horses, so the Wool of this Base Pad can help provide sufficient cushioning, whilst minimising 'bounce'. This Base Pad should always be used on top of a well-designed saddle pad, e.g. the THV/BALANCE saddle pads.

**The Wool Fleece does compress with use. If this happens,  
wash it and shake well to 'fluff' up the fleece again!**



#### **WASHING INSTRUCTIONS**

Machine\* or hand wash, wool cycle (30°C) or cold wash and rinse. Do not use detergents with biological or bleaching agents. Do not use fabric softener. Instead, add ½ cup white vinegar to the final rinse water to remove detergent traces and to condition the fleece. Shake well before air drying away from direct heat or sunlight. Do not tumble dry.

*\* Please note that some people choose to wash their pads in a front-loading washing machine and have had no problems, but on rare occasions we have found that machine washing has caused the layers in two-layer pads to separate. For this reason, we recommend that you always hand-wash your Base Pad.*

*Many thanks for your purchase.  
We hope that you and your horse(s) thoroughly enjoy your new  
saddle and pads!*

*If you have questions or need help, please contact your THV  
registered Saddling Consultant/Coach or email THV HQ:*

*[hq@thvsaddling.com](mailto:hq@thvsaddling.com)*