

Playful, Whimsical and Spontaneous —Kids!

Kids want fun and individuality in their English riding clothes.

By Sarah Haslerud, Fashion Editor

Children tend to bring out the soft side in most people, evoking the playful, inner child we all hope to have inside of us. They are often seen as the fun in an adult world, the area of life that's full of innocence, whimsy and spontaneous energy.

Designers in the equine industry are taking the fun they can have with kid's clothes and doing just that, having fun. They are looking at children and giving them the uniqueness and attention they want, the functionality and quality the parents want and the cost that will be affordable and applicable to this market sector and the economic climate.

Apparel manufacturers in the English disciplines are finding an increase in younger riders, ages 3-12 years old. To appeal to children with an equine lifestyle, designers of English clothing are sticking with what works: bright colors, fun patterns and ways to give kids some individuality.

Carla Perri of Perri's Leather says her company is taking colors from mainstream trends and incorporating them in patterns, such as the plaid ribbons on Perri's children's half chaps. These interchangeable ribbons, like the sparkle in the lining of some jackets, are just some of the ways that clothing makers are maintaining the rules of the English riding disciplines, while giving kids the cool style elements that they crave. Complimentary accessories, such as the crops that Perri's makes to match its outfits in the Pony Palooza line, give the finishing touches to both schooling and competition apparel.

While boys who ride English aren't in the majority, they aren't being ignored by apparel makers either, and are becoming more of a consideration as their numbers on the riding scene increase. Some manufacturers, like Thornhill's



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