

My Rainbow Latigo

By Allison Griest

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This July I celebrated my purchase of a used Crates Lady Reiner. I am still so excited that I stumbled upon such a gem. For the purposes of this story, know that my saddle conveniently came with a leather latigo, so I didn't think about putting on the nylon one from my old saddle.

Well, a good friend of mine recently took a spill from her mare because her leather latigo snapped. Thankfully she and the horse weren't seriously injured, but it was definitely a wake-up call for me. Why was I trusting my life with a used latigo? Who knows how old it is or what it's gone though.

I resolved that I needed to buy a new one. A couple weekends ago I visited Texas to help celebrate a good friend's birthday and to say hi to my old trainer. As we sat in his shop, I told him all about my cool saddle and how I needed a new latigo. He looked at me and said, "Want me to make you one?" Who says no to a free latigo? Not me.

He proceeded to walk over to a bucket and pull out a spool of rainbow nylon—the kind you might make a lawn chair with. I've never met anyone with a rainbow latigo. Maybe I'm the proud owner of the first-ever rainbow saddle accessory.

Regardless of where I stand in the history of unorthodox and possibly tacky horse gear, I was excited to give my new rainbow latigo a try. My friend's Appy was a great sport about the whole thing last Friday night. He's on his way to becoming a super star dressage mount, but when I visit him he gets to return to his western heritage.

Sadly, last Friday night will probably be the only time my rainbow latigo ever sees a saddle. It's a bit too wide for my mohair cinch and front rigging dee. I spent a good deal of time making sure it wasn't pinching the horse in any way. Even though it's not perfectly practical, I love my rainbow latigo. I made it with a good friend and it's downright hilarious, to me at least.

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