

# Performance Meets Polish

## The New Look Of Show, By Ariat



In the world of competitive equestrian sport, performance does not begin when the rider enters the ring. It starts long before, in the barn aisle at dawn, during schooling sessions under the sun, and through the countless hours spent preparing horse and rider for competition. Today's riders demand apparel that performs at the same level as their athletic partners. For decades, Ariat® has been at the forefront of that evolution, designing apparel that blends technical innovation with the polished aesthetic required in the show ring.

With new collections including Allure, Compel, and SolVeil™, Ariat continues to push the boundaries of equestrian apparel, delivering pieces designed to support riders through the full rhythm of the sport. From training rides in the sun to championship rounds beneath the judge's eye, these collections reflect a deep understanding of the modern rider's lifestyle.

We recently spoke with the Ariat design team on innovation, rider performance, and the evolution of equestrian apparel.

**HORSE & STYLE:** *Ariat has long been known for blending performance technology with classic equestrian style. When designing*

*collections like Allure, Compel, and SolVeil, where does the process begin?*

**ARIAT DESIGN TEAM:** The design process is deeply collaborative at its core. It begins with our athletes - the people who live and breathe equestrian sport every day. We invest significant time in in-depth interviews and ongoing conversations with them, really digging into their experiences in the saddle and beyond. We want to understand what's working for them, what's falling short, and what's on their wish lists. What the features and innovations they've always wanted are, but haven't yet found in the market.

From there, those insights become the foundation of everything. Athletes aren't just consulted at the start and then set aside; they're woven into the process throughout, helping us refine fits, fabrics, and functionality as the collection takes shape. With something like Allure, Compel, or SolVeil, that means balancing highly specific performance needs with the aesthetic sensibility that equestrian riders expect, because looking the part matters just as much as performing at your best.

It's that combination of real-world athlete feedback and our design team's vision that





ultimately drives each collection forward.

**H&S:** *The Allure collection brings a very polished, tailored look to the show ring while still maintaining athletic performance. How did you approach that balance?*

**ARIAT:** With Allure, we knew from the outset that performance couldn't be an afterthought, it had to be the starting point. So we began by grounding ourselves in the fundamental technical needs of the rider: the stretch and recovery required for movement in the saddle and the athletic fit that allows a rider to perform without restriction. Getting that foundation right was non-negotiable.

Once that performance architecture was in place, we turned our attention to the details that elevate a collection from functional to truly special. That's where the craft really comes in. The meticulous selection of trims, the refined finishing touches, the subtle design elements that give Allure its polished, tailored aesthetic. Things like back pleating, carefully chosen hardware,

and thoughtful silhouette lines that read as sophisticated in the show ring without compromising a single degree of mobility or comfort.

The philosophy is really about sequencing that you build from the inside out. If you lead with aesthetics and try to retrofit performance, something always gets sacrificed. But when you start with an athlete-first foundation and layer beauty on top of that, you end up with a product that doesn't ask the rider to choose between looking their best and performing their best. With Allure, the goal was always both.

At the center of the collection is the Allure Show Coat, a tailored competition jacket designed specifically for the demands of equestrian sport. The coat combines a feminine, streamlined silhouette with stretch performance fabric that allows riders to move freely in the saddle.

There are many technical features, including ClimateTEK™ technology, which helps regulate body temperature and keep

riders cool under pressure. FreshTEK™ odor control is designed for long days at the showgrounds, and Sun Protection Fabric™ gives additional outdoor coverage. Lastly, we apply stain-resistant finishes that help garments maintain their polished appearance throughout competition.

**H&S:** *What makes the Compel Collection particularly suited to equestrian sport?*

**ARIAT:** At the heart of the Compel collection is fabric and the pursuit of finding exactly the right one. That search took us beyond the equestrian world entirely. We partnered with renowned mills that specialize in high-performance fabrics developed for sports that demand extreme stretch and recovery, like cycling. Those athletes face the physical demands of constant movement, sustained exertion, and the need for a second-skin fit that never fights back. So, the textile innovation happening in those spaces became a real source of inspiration for us.

Selecting a fabric with the right stretch

and recovery is only part of the equation. Weight is equally critical, and honestly, it's one of the more nuanced challenges in equestrian apparel. Go too heavy, and you're creating a garment that traps heat and fatigues the rider in warm conditions. Go too light, and you lose the structure and substance needed for those cooler, unpredictable mid-weather days that riders so often compete in. With Compel, we spent considerable time finding that precise middle ground - a fabric weight that performs across a range of conditions without the rider ever having to think about it.

The result is a collection that moves with the rider rather than against them, offering the kind of uninhibited freedom of motion that equestrian sport demands, wrapped in a fabric that's been engineered and rigorously tested to keep up.

The Compel show coats and breeches are engineered to support the rider's body through dynamic movement in the saddle. Compressive & high stretch fabrics provide muscle support while maintaining flexibility, as well as adapting to a rider's position and movement. The strategic, breathable panels help maintain airflow and performance waistbands and ergonomic construction are designed for shirts to stay secure during competition.

**H&S:** *What inspired the development of the SolVeil collection?*

**ARIAT:** SolVeil was born out of a very real and practical challenge that riders face every single day - sun exposure. Equestrians spend an extraordinary amount of time outdoors, often during peak sunlight hours, in open arenas and fields where there's little to no shade. A visor or a hat can only do so much; the arms, neck, and body remain largely unprotected, and over hours in the saddle, that exposure adds up in a significant way.

We wanted to address that gap with a solution that didn't ask riders to compromise on comfort, especially in high heat. That meant the fabric had to do a lot of heavy lifting. We developed SolVeil around a silky, lightweight textile that feels cool and comfortable against the skin even in intense temperatures. Nothing stiff, nothing suffocating. At the same time, it needed the stretch and recovery to move freely with the rider through every shift and transition in the saddle.

But the defining feature, of course, is the

sun protection built directly into the fabric itself. Rather than relying on external accessories or topical sunscreens that wear off, SolVeil offers a high level of inherent UV protection in every garment so riders can focus entirely on their performance and their horse, without worrying about what the sun is doing to their skin over the course of a long day outdoors.

It's a collection that really speaks to the lifestyle of the serious equestrian. It's practical, protective, and refined enough to wear from the barn to the ring without missing a beat.

**H&S:** *What role do fabric technologies like ClimateTEK and FreshTEK play in Ariat's*

*design philosophy?*

**ARIAT:** Everything we develop in equestrian apparel starts and ends with the athlete and their performance. That guiding principle is what led us to invest in proprietary technologies like ClimateTEK and FreshTEK because we recognized that true comfort goes beyond fit and fabric weight. It's also about what's happening to the rider's body throughout a long, demanding day.

ClimateTEK was developed to address one of the most fundamental challenges in performance apparel: temperature regulation. Riders move between intense physical exertion and periods of stillness,





compete in varying weather conditions, and spend hours under the sun, all of which creates real fluctuations in body temperature. ClimateTEK works to manage and regulate that core temperature, helping the body stay in its optimal zone so the rider can stay focused and comfortable regardless of what the environment is throwing at them.

FreshTEK tackles a different but equally important dimension of athlete comfort: odor control. Rigorous riding is a workout, and we never want an athlete distracted or self-conscious about how they feel after hours of hard work in the saddle. FreshTEK addresses that quietly and effectively, so it simply becomes one less thing on a rider's mind.

And that, really, is the whole point. When we layer these technologies into our garments, the goal is to make the apparel disappear — to create a wearing experience so seamless and supportive that the rider never once has to think about what they have on. The only thing occupying their mind should be their ride, their horse, and their performance. Everything else is our job.

**H&S:** *How do you see equestrian apparel evolving in the future?*

**ARIAT:** When Ariat first entered the equestrian apparel space, the category was deeply rooted in tradition — and not always in ways that served the modern athlete. Fabrics were heavy, structured, and offered very little stretch or technical functionality. There was a reverence for the way things had always been done that, in many ways, had held the category back from evolving the way other performance sports had.

We challenged that. From early on, our belief was that equestrian athletes deserved the same level of technical innovation that athletes in other demanding sports had come to expect from their gear. One of our earliest and most pivotal decisions was to look outside the equestrian world entirely for inspiration.

Our first performance breech fabric, for example, was adapted from the world of rock climbing, which is a sport that places extraordinary demands on apparel in terms of stretch, durability, and freedom of movement. Climbers need gear that won't restrict them on a vertical face, and those



same properties translated beautifully to the saddle.

That cross-sport approach has defined our innovation philosophy ever since, and it's one we intend to deepen going forward. We will continue exploring neighboring athletic disciplines, whether that's cycling, rock climbing, or beyond, to identify fabric technologies and construction techniques that can be translated and refined for the equestrian athlete. We'll keep building and strengthening our relationships with the world's leading high-tech fabric mills, staying close to the cutting edge of what's possible in textile innovation.

The future of equestrian apparel, as we see it, is one where performance and tradition don't have to be in tension. Riders shouldn't have to choose between honoring the heritage of the sport and having access to the most advanced, functional apparel available. That balance of pushing boundaries while respecting the aesthetic

and culture of equestrian sport is what will continue to drive everything we create.

**ATHLETE PERSPECTIVE**

For today's competitive rider, performance apparel is not simply about appearance; it is about function, confidence, and the ability to stay fully present in the ride. Ariat's collections are designed with this reality in mind, supporting athletes through every phase of training and competition.

Top riders rely on apparel that moves seamlessly with them, adapting to the demands of the saddle without distraction. From the precision required in technical courses to the endurance needed for long days at the showgrounds, each detail matters.

As an athlete, Callie Schott represents this modern approach to riding, where performance and presentation are equally essential. Her experience in the ring reflects the evolving expectations of equestrian

sport, where riders seek gear that enhances their ability to perform at their highest level.

*"In the ring, you want to feel completely focused on your horse and your ride, not your clothing. Having pieces that move with you, regulate temperature, and maintain that polished look throughout the day makes a real difference in how you perform."*

From sun protection during extended training sessions to tailored show pieces that maintain structure under pressure, Ariat's design philosophy comes to life through riders like Schott. The integration of technical fabrics and thoughtful construction allows athletes to ride with confidence, knowing their apparel is working with them, not against them. This connection between rider and design is what ultimately defines modern equestrian apparel, where innovation is not just seen, but felt in every stride. **H&S**

