

## PACKING INSIGHT

# Pack-Cinch Savvy

WHEN IT COMES TO SELECTING A PACK CINCH, materials and construction make all the difference. Veteran packer Russ Barnett of Columbia Falls, Montana, offers his insight on the most popular pack-cinch materials and styles.

### Cinch materials

- **Polyester:** The only attractive feature of polyester is its economical price.
- **Neoprene:** Neoprene pack cinches are popular for the same reasons neoprene saddle cinches are. They grip well, don't pick up seeds and burrs, and are easy to clean. But, they can be hot, and they don't breathe.
- **Mohair or wool string:** These breathe and wick sweat well, don't pick up burrs and seeds easily, and, when used properly, rarely cause sores.
- **Mohair or wool-blend string:** Also very popular and slightly more economical than 100-percent mohair or wool. The blend is usually 60 percent mohair or wool. These, too, will breathe and wick well, resist burrs and seeds to a degree, and, when used properly, won't sore your stock.

### Cinch styles

Pack cinches are available in two styles, the Decker, or single, and Sawbuck, or double. Decker cinches are offered in even sizes, generally from 26 to 34 inches in length. Sawbuck pack cinches can be the same length front and back, or the front can be one size (two inches) shorter than the back. I think this type fits the animal better. The shorter side of the Sawbuck pack cinch should go in the front and the longer side in the back, where it lays over a wider portion of the body.

### Cinch length

I keep my pack cinches relatively short. A short pack cinch holds better and your horse will rarely develop a sore from the latigo. For an 800- to 900-pound animal, use a 26-inch Decker or 26/28-inch Sawbuck; a 900- to 1,000-pound animal needs a 28-inch Decker or 28/30-inch Sawbuck; and for an 1,100- to 1,300-pound animal, go with a 30-inch Decker or 30/32-inch Sawbuck.

### Soring

If your pack animal has sores with your pack cinch, first try adjusting the cinch length and the cinch placement. Some adjustments can be made to your pack-saddle rigging to change where your cinch lands. Also, take a look at your cinching method. Are you cinching too tightly or pinching the skin? If none of these solve the sores, try a pack cinch made from a different material and see if that makes a difference.

For more information, call Barnett at (888) 467-2256, or visit [outfittersupply.com](http://outfittersupply.com).



This mohair Sawbuck, or double, pack cinch is designed with a shorter girth in front and longer one in back.

A Decker pack cinch is also referred to as a single-cinch.