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## **Saddle Maintenance and Cleaning Instructions: Please read all instructions before beginning.**

1. To maintain the light color as long as possible, the saddle should be kept covered and out of the light when not in use. Any light, especially sunlight, will darken your new saddle gradually.
2. The saddle should not be left in your trailer for extended periods of time. The heat inside the trailer can be damaging to the leather and will also cause the silver to tarnish very quickly.
3. If compressed air is available, your dusty saddle should be blown off to remove dust and dirt. A vacuum cleaner with the brush attachment also works well for this task. Do this after each dusty horse show.
4. Once the saddle is dirty enough to need a thorough cleaning it can be washed or wiped down with a damp cloth. Each part must be cleaned separately: fenders, seat jockey, skirts, etc.
5. If washing is necessary, use a mild soap solution such as Harris Blue Foam Finish<sup>®</sup>. Do not use saddle soaps since it will darken the leather. Wash each piece with a soft cloth using the Blue Foam Finish<sup>®</sup>. A soft brush is also recommended for washing if the carving is very dirty. After cleaning each part separately, it must be dried with a towel before washing another part of the saddle. Do not allow the cleaner to dry on the parts. Also, do not rinse the saddle or wash the suede seat.
6. To condition your saddle after cleaning, I recommend "Lexol NF<sup>®</sup>". Please remember that the conditioning process is not necessary to maintain the light color and may alter the color somewhat. Leather conditioning is the option of each individual.
7. If your saddle has silver trim, it must be cleaned before you add the protective finish to the leather. Clean the silver with a liquid silver cleaner. I recommend "Goddard Silver Dip<sup>®</sup>". Using a toothbrush, wash each piece of silver and wipe dry. At this point an aerosol glass cleaner must be used to remove the residue left by the silver dip. Do not use liquid glass cleaners such as Windex<sup>®</sup>. The Goddard's Silver Dip<sup>®</sup> will not harm your leather in small amounts, but getting the liquid all over the leather may darken your saddle. The toothbrush and silver dip allow you to clean down in the engraving of your silver. Hagerty's Silversmith's<sup>®</sup> products are also great for initial cleaning of the silver. We offer the aerosol, pump and cream Hagerty's<sup>®</sup> cleaners. If you use the aerosol Hagerty's<sup>®</sup>, extreme care must be taken to keep it off of the leather. When using this polish, VERY carefully spray the polish on the silver, allow it to glaze up like a car wax, then polish off with a soft cloth. This spray, however, is very messy when the overspray is allowed to get on the leather so be careful about where you spray the polish. For tougher silver cleaning jobs, a wadding such as "Nevr Dull<sup>®</sup>" or a paste like "Wenol<sup>®</sup>" is best. These products work well in removing lacquer coating that is on some silver trim. Should you use a paste or wadding cleaner, avoid getting the black residue on the leather bordering the silver. Should this happen, the black residue can be removed by lightly wiping the area with Isopropyl alcohol. Once the silver is clean, shine with a "Goddards Silver Cloth<sup>®</sup>" or Connoisseurs<sup>®</sup> silver wipes. This step will restore the luster and look of a new piece. Be careful, however, when using any kind of polish cloth or polish spray to avoid contact with the leather because it will turn it black and darken it.
8. A protective finish on the leather is the next step. I recommend "Harris Acrylic Finish<sup>®</sup>". This will add a shine and give your saddle a new look. This should be applied only after the saddle has dried completely. To apply the finish, pour a small amount in a cup or bowl. A soft terry cloth or foam brush is best to apply the finish to the leather parts. Soak the cloth or brush heavily on one end and apply to all areas that need to shine. Use the dry end of the cloth to soak off heavy applications or runs if necessary. Apply evenly to all visible parts of the saddle, except the suede seat. Do not get this on the suede or the silver. The finish will dry to a shine in about 30 minutes. The acrylic finish only needs to be applied about once every year or so depending on how much the saddle has been used.
9. The last step in cleaning your saddle is to brush the suede seat. A brass bristle brush for suede is best for just brushing dust and dirt out of your suede seat.
10. If your saddle has any ostrich striping, paneling or an ostrich seat you should be very careful when cleaning. All of the cleaning supplies mentioned above and even water will sometimes leave waterlines or spots on the lighter colored ostrich. Do not apply the acrylic finish to the ostrich panels and parts.