THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL APPEARANCE IN EQUESTRIAN SPORTS:
An analysis of collegiate riders’ attitudes towards expectations of rider costume and physique

THESIS

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Science in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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2012

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Competitive equestrian sport consists of both objectively and subjectively judged events. In subjectively judged events, there exists the possibility that rider appearance may influence the judge’s evaluation and final placement or ranking of participants. This exploratory study examines the importance of rider appearance, which includes both rider costume and physique, in competitive equestrian sport as it is perceived by the riders.

Nine female equestrians riding on their IHSA (Intercollegiate Horse Show Association) collegiate equestrian teams were interviewed for this study. The participants, a mix of both western and hunt seat riders, described aspects of their appearance for horse shows, which included show clothing, facial cosmetics and hairstyles. Elements of the social physique anxiety scale were incorporated into the interview instrument to identify whether the riders experienced social physique anxiety as a result of judges’ and coaches’ expectations of their appearance. Although social physique anxiety has been examined in athletes in a variety of sports, it has not to date been studied in the equestrian population.

The riders uniformly identified their perceptions of the preferred body type for equitation classes (tall and thin), but not all of the riders experienced social
physique anxiety as a result of comparing their bodies with this standard. The riders also discussed whether they perceived a double standard toward male and female riders with respect to their show ring appearance. The western riders did perceive a difference between male and female riders, but the hunt seat riders did not. Riders also identified other non-body image related aspects of collegiate riding that they liked and disliked. Positive aspects mentioned by the riders included the camaraderie and support system provided by teammates and the coaches, the challenge of riding unfamiliar horses in competition and how riding served as a break (i.e., stress reliever) from their daily academic life. Negative aspects mentioned by the riders included the challenge of riding unfamiliar horses in competition, the expense and the amount of time it required in their busy schedules.

The results of this exploratory study indicate that additional research related to body image is needed for equestrians. Areas of additional focus may include more quantitative measures of body image in equestrians, and the expansion of the scope to include male and female equestrians in additional collegiate riding formats.
Acknowledgments

I want to thank everyone who assisted and guided me through this lengthy process, which included more than its share of stops, starts and detours. I can’t thank my advisor, Dr. Rudd, enough for her gentle guidance and persistence. I also thank Ashley and Meghan for their reviews of the preliminary interview questionnaire and their valuable input, Anne for her detailed reading and analysis of the rider transcripts, Drs. Cunningham and Seiling for their critical readings of this thesis and their comments, and most importantly, the nine riders who graciously found time in their busy schedules to share their collegiate riding experiences with me. I also owe a special thank you to my husband and daughter. Thank you all!
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Fields of Study

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Equestrian sports appeal to a wide variety of people. Horseback riding can truly be a lifelong pursuit, with riders’ ages running the gamut from preschoolers to senior citizens. Indeed, many people learn to ride as children, quit when they become teenagers or young adults and then return to riding as mature adults (as time and money allow!!). Fortunately, there are a variety of styles and disciplines to please a wide range of riders.

Some riders enjoy the competitive aspect of equestrian sports by participating in horse shows and similar competitions. Because certain standards of rider turnout, or manner of dress, are expected at horse shows, the appearance of the rider and horse combination sometimes influences the judge’s rankings or placement in classes or events that are not judged on purely objective criteria.

**Purpose of this research**

Because there is a subjective aspect to horse show judging in certain classes or events, there exists the possibility that rider appearance influences the
judge’s placement. The purpose of this research is to examine whether riders believe that judges have a bias or preference for certain physical appearances of the rider in those classes or events that are not judged purely on an objective basis. In addition, this research will examine whether riders experience a higher level of social physique anxiety because of this perceived judge bias.

The following research questions guide the study:

RQ1 Do riders perceive any unwritten bias towards certain rider attire and rider physique?

RQ2 Do riders perceive that coaches believe there is unwritten bias towards certain rider attire and rider physique?

RQ3 Is there a difference in how riders feel when wearing show clothes and street clothes?

RQ4 Do riders experience social physique anxiety as a result of this perceived bias?

RQ5 Are there other things (not related to body image) about competition that riders are dissatisfied or satisfied with?

RQ6 Do riders perceive a double standard towards female and male riders?

**Researcher Perspective**

The researcher, interested in all things horsey since childhood, became interested in the role of appearance in equestrians while taking riding lessons at a training barn as an adult. Several of the teenaged riders at the barn participated on an Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) equestrian team. IEA is the middle school and high school equivalent of the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA), which is the focus of this research. It was very interesting to see how the coaches worked with these young riders in selecting
and/or approving show clothes and generally supervising their appearances for the IEA horse shows. After becoming aware of the existence of equestrian teams through the barn’s participation in IEA, the researcher subsequently learned about the existence of IHSA and NCEA equestrian teams at the collegiate level.

The researcher has never personally participated in a horse show, and during the time she was taking riding lessons, she would have classified herself as a beginner rider at best. As a result, the researcher does not have extensive experience with horse shows, and as a result, does not have any pre-conceived ideas or bias that an insider might have on this topic.
Most equestrian sports practiced in the United States fall into two broad riding styles or seats: English and western. Within the English category, there are multiple disciplines: dressage, show jumping, cross country, three day eventing (which consists of the three previously mentioned disciplines combined into a single competition), hunter, and saddle seat. Within the western category, there is an entirely different set of disciplines: reining, barrel racing, cutting and western pleasure. There are pronounced differences between English and western styles in both horse apparel (i.e., the tack that the horse wears) and rider apparel. Brief summaries and representative images of each discipline are presented in the following sections.

**English disciplines**

**Dressage**

In dressage, the horse and rider perform individual maneuvers set in pre-defined patterns. As the horse and rider progress through the testing structure,
the elements and patterns become more difficult. In a well-ridden test (i.e., the execution of the specified pattern), the judge and observers should not see any visible communication or cues from the rider, and the horse should be working willingly and obediently in a relaxed manner. Dressage is an ancient riding form, and it is sometimes referred to as “ballet on horseback” or “horse dancing” (author’s emphasis). The visual image of dancing horses is even more pronounced when high level “freestyle” tests are choreographed and ridden to musical accompaniment.

At higher levels of dressage, the rider’s costume is very traditional and formal. The shadbelly is a double-breasted tailcoat with notched lapels and is constructed of either black wool or wool-synthetic blend. The coat’s tail is constructed in two pieces to allow it to fall on either side of the horse’s back. A separate piece with vest points in a contrast fabric is attached to the lower edge of the coat front. A white shirt, stock tie and stock pin are worn beneath the shadbelly. Breeches (close fitting riding pants with leather patches at the inner knee and sometimes a leather seat) are traditionally white. White gloves, black satin top hat and tall black leather dress boots (boots without laces in the arch/ankle area) are also worn. The horse’s tack is traditionally black leather. Examples are presented in Tables 1 and 2.
Horse and rider in dressage discipline

Source: http://www.virginmedia.com/images/dressage-400.jpg;

Illustration from Suitability equestrian pattern


Dressage shadbelly

Source: http://www.shoclothes.com/images/pikeur_dressurfrack_shadbelly_lg.jpg;

Dressage top hat

Source: http://www.shoclothes.com/images/dressage_top_hat_lg.jpg;

Table 1. Dressage
**Show jumping**

In show jumping, horse and rider strive to jump a defined course of jump obstacles in a stadium setting without knocking any part of the obstacles down. If multiple horse and rider combinations complete the course cleanly (i.e. with no faults or errors), a timed jump off is then held. Time becomes an additional factor in the jump off rounds. Quality of movement for either horse or rider is not a factor in show jumping – it is purely an objective event. The event winner completes the course with the fewest errors.

The rider’s costume consists of a single-breasted hunt coat with double vents in the back, notched lapels and flap pockets. The coat is traditionally made of wool or wool-synthetic blends in dark or neutral colors. Only riders riding on a national team (i.e., representing their country in international competition) are
permitted to wear other colors such as red or orange. For example, the rider wearing the red coat in Table 3 represents the United States at the 2008 Olympic Games. The rider wearing the navy coat in Table 3 is more typical of a rider not on a national equestrian team. A shirt with a band collar and a separate ratcatcher choker that covers the band collar are worn beneath the hunt coat. A newer option to the traditional shirt and separate ratcatcher choker combination is a shirt with an attached, convertible collar that folds across the front and snaps in place. Breeches (close fitting riding pants with leather patches at the inner knee and sometimes a leather seat) are traditionally tan, khaki or white. An ASTM/SEI (American Society for Testing and Materials/Safety Equipment Institute) certified safety helmet with harness and tall black leather dress boots (boots without laces in the arch/ankle area) are also worn. The horse’s tack is traditionally brown leather. Examples are presented in Tables 3 and 4.
Olympic show jumping event


Show jumping event


Hunt coat


Illustration from Suitability equestrian pattern


Table 3. Show jumping
Show shirt with detachable ratcatcher choker
Source: http://www.tackroominc.com/images/EssexThinStripeshirtsSm.jpg;

Show shirt with stand collar (ratcatcher choker not shown)

Separate ratcatcher choker
Source: http://www.bigdweb.com/images/100220.jpg;

Wrap collar show shirt

Dress boots
Source: http://s9.thisnext.com/media/largest_dimension/361E6905.jpg;

Table 4. Show jumping
Cross country

In cross country, horse and rider strive to jump a defined course of jump obstacles within a set time limit. The course is several miles long over rolling terrain, and horses are expected to jump into and out of large bodies of water and also jump creative obstacles that they may have never seen before. Conditioning and endurance are the most important aspects of cross country. Quality of movement for horse or rider is not important.

The rider’s costume for cross country is much less formal than for dressage or show jumping as it is expected the rider may get wet (and perhaps muddy) while completing the course. The rider’s costume typically consists of a brightly colored short or long sleeve jersey worn under or over a safety chest protector. A helmet cover that matches the jersey is also used. Breeches (close fitting riding pants with leather patches at the inner knee and sometimes a leather seat) are traditionally tan, khaki or white. An ASTM/SEI certified safety helmet with harness, gloves and tall black leather boots are also worn. The horse’s tack is traditionally brown leather. Examples are presented in Table 5.
Cross country jersey, safety vest (under shirt) and helmet cover

Source: http://images.sportinglife.com/08/08/800x600/William-FoxPitt-Beijing-2008-cross-country_1103368.jpg;


Safety vest


Source: http://www.wholehorse.co.uk/acatalog/SES.jpg;

Table 5: Cross country
**Three day eventing**

Three day eventing is a multi-phase competition that includes dressage, cross country and show jumping phases. Rider attire and horse tack are different for each phase, as are the skills required to compete successfully in each phase. Day one consists of dressage. This is followed by the cross country phase on day two and show jumping on day three (if the horse passes a veterinary check after the cross country phase). Traditional dressage attire is expected for day one, cross country attire is expected for day two, and traditional show jumping attire is expected for day three.

**Hunter**

In hunter events, horse and rider strive to jump a defined course of natural looking jump obstacles (similar to those encountered while fox hunting in open fields) in an enclosed ring without knocking any part of the obstacles down. A calm and controlled way of going is most important for the horse.

The rider’s costume consists of a single breasted hunt coat with double vents in the back, notched lapels and flap pockets. The coat is traditionally made of wool or wool-synthetic blends in dark colors. Breeches (close fitting riding pants with leather patches at the inner knee and sometimes a leather seat) are traditionally tan or khaki. An ASTM/SEI certified safety helmet with harness and tall black leather boots are also worn. The rider attire for hunter events is quite similar to that worn for show jumping events except that hunter event clothing is
more traditional (i.e., dark coat colors). The horse’s tack is traditionally brown leather. Examples are presented in Table 6.

Horse and rider in hunter event


Illustration from Suitability equestrian pattern


Table 6. Hunter

**Saddle seat**

In saddle seat, horses and riders demonstrate different gaits or paces under saddle. This style of riding is most often seen with gaited horses that have additional gaits beyond the standard walk, trot, canter, and gallop natural to most horses. These additional gaits (slow gait and rack) tend to be very flashy and are
exhibited by a few horse breeds that were originally developed for comfortable long distance riding. The definitions of several gaits are shown in Table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gait</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
<td>Slow 4-beat cadence, where each hoof strikes the ground separately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trot/jog</td>
<td>Faster 2-beat cadence, where diagonal hooves strike the ground in pairs (for example, left front and right rear hooves move together)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canter/lope</td>
<td>Faster 3-beat cadence, where one front hoof and one back hoof strike the ground together and the other two hooves strike the ground separately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gallop</td>
<td>Faster version of the canter/lope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow gait</td>
<td>Faster version of the 4-beat cadence found in a walk; smoother than the 2-beat trot because one foot is on the ground at all times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rack</td>
<td>Faster version of the slow gait</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Gait definitions

The rider’s costume for saddle seat is very formal and traditional. The rider’s costume typically consists of a long single breasted jacket with notched lapels and flap pockets in suit fabric. Sometimes a vest in a contrast fabric is also worn. A collared shirt and knotted menswear tie are worn beneath the coat. Kentucky jodhpurs (tailored pants with a pronounced flare at the hem) complete the suit. The jodhpurs are very long and extend beyond the heel of the foot when mounted. A fedora (for men) or derby (for women) hat, black gloves and short jodhpur boots (ankle height) are also worn.

The formality of saddle seat suits varies with the time of day an event is held. If an event is held in the evening after 6pm, the attire is very formal. For events held in the morning and afternoon, the attire is less formal and is often
referred to as a day suit. The horse’s tack is traditionally brown leather. Examples are presented in Tables 8 and 9.

Horse and rider in saddle seat discipline

Illustration from Suitability pattern

**Table 8. Saddle seat**


Table 9. Saddle seat
Western disciplines

Reining

In reining events, horse and rider perform individual maneuvers set in pre-defined patterns. In a well-ridden test (i.e., the specified pattern), the judge and observers should not see any visible communication or cues from the rider, and the horse should be working willingly and obediently. The speed and quality of the movements is primary. Pivots (quick spins to the right or left with one hind leg staying in place as a pivot point) and sliding stops (stops in which the horse essentially sits on its hindquarters while bracing its front legs – an example is shown in the photo in Table 11) are flashy and exciting. In many ways, reining is the western version of its English counterpart, dressage. As in dressage, there is also a “freestyle” reining event, which is ridden with musical accompaniment and creative costuming. Examples of some freestyle reining costumes are shown in Table 10.
“Zebra” and “gorilla” in freestyle reining event

Source: http://www.slidetowin.com/p7hg_img_2/fullsize/FergusonArabians005_fs.jpg;

Mask themed horse and rider in freestyle reining event

Source: http://www.tthompsoninc.com/images/frosty_article/clown.jpg,

Horse racing themed horse and rider in freestyle reining event

Source: http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_8RtLQqON6ic/TLUhTpDikDI/AAAAAAAAJfw/k0HuiG_gKbo/s400/smartystops.JPG;

Princess themed horse and rider in freestyle reining event


Table 10. Freestyle reining costumes
The rider’s costume for regular (i.e. non-freestyle) reining events typically consists of a long sleeve shirt with a collar, jeans or pants, full-length chaps and western style riding boots. A brimmed western hat in either wool felt or straw is also required. An interesting aspect of the western costume is the presence of a large flashy belt buckle. Ornate belt buckles are frequently awarded as part of a winner’s prize package, and if a rider has previously won a belt buckle, he or she proudly wears it as part of his or her show attire. Examples are presented in Table 11.
Table 11. Reining
Barrel racing

In barrel racing, horse and rider run a cloverleaf pattern around three barrels. Speed and accuracy (not knocking the barrel over) are important in this event.

The rider’s costume for barrel racing events is similar to that worn for reining events: a long sleeve shirt with a collar, jeans or pants, full-length chaps and western style riding boots. A brimmed western hat in either wool felt or straw is also required. Examples are presented in Table 12.
**Cutting**

In cutting, the horse and rider “cut” or separate a cow from the herd. The horse’s catlike agility and “cow sense” (i.e., anticipating how the cow will react) are most important.

The rider’s costume for cutting events is similar to that worn for reining and barrel events: a long sleeve shirt with a collar, jeans or pants, full-length chaps and western style riding boots. A brimmed western hat in either wool felt or straw is also required. Examples are presented in Table 13.

![Horse and rider in cutting discipline](http://equilix.com/testimonials/Karla-Ashabranner/Karla-Ashabranner-Judge-A-Doc2.jpg);

![Horse and rider in cutting discipline](http://www.americascutter.com/TXCUT2008/images/FantasticCat_1423.jpg);

Table 13. Cutting
**Western pleasure**

The goal of western pleasure events is to demonstrate the smoothness and rideability of the horse in different gaits or paces. The horse’s way of going, or quality of movement, is very important.

The rider’s costume is similar to that worn for other western events: a long sleeve shirt with a collar, jeans or pants, full-length chaps and western style riding boots. A brimmed western hat in either wool felt or straw is also required. However, in western pleasure classes there is frequently a distinct difference between the shirts worn by female and male riders. Male riders tend to wear more basic, functional clothing, whereas female riders opt for flashy crystal and stud embellished show shirts. Examples are presented in Table 14.
Typical men’s show outfit for western pleasure discipline


Typical women’s show outfit for western pleasure discipline

Source: http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_WMLJW9X6BqU/TD3tltaYLkJI/AAAAAAAALlo/uXQvNZrL2Ps/s1600/lope_grey_trope1.jpg;

Western show shirt and hat


Western show shirt and hat

Source: http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_Dov5laF2Zg/S5azyE_eQcI/AAAAAAAABiQ/V8Nn9jTTalg/s400/western_show_fashion.jpg;

Table 14. Western pleasure
Summary

In general, the English disciplines are marked by a very traditional approach to rider apparel that is influenced by hundreds of years of historical costume. The overall impression is of subdued elegance and “upper class restraint” (author’s emphasis). In contrast, rider apparel for the western disciplines is much less dictated by “tradition” (author’s emphasis) and is more open to individual interpretation. The roots of western show apparel lie in the everyday clothes of the working cowboy, but modern interpretation does not prevent personal expression through the addition of substantial decorative elements.

Equitation classes versus performance classes at horse shows

Individual events or classes at horse shows, regardless of the show rating (higher rated shows, such as A or AA shows, are more prestigious than lower rated shows, such as B or unrated shows) or size of the show, similarly fall into two broad categories: 1) classes in which the rider’s performance is judged (equitation classes) and 2) classes in which the horse’s performance is judged (referred to as performance classes in this paper). In equitation classes, the rider’s skill in controlling the horse and the rider’s physical appearance on the horse are judged, and to some extent, the judging can be subjective. The rider’s physical appearance is a combination of proper riding technique, body position and appropriate rider attire. In performance classes, the rider’s form or
presentation is not considered. There are equitation and performance classes in both English and western disciplines.

**Governing bodies for horse shows**

There are multiple governing bodies in the United States that promulgate rules for horse shows. Two of the most prominent governing bodies are the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) and the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA). The USEF is the dominant authority in the English disciplines, and the AQHA is the dominant authority in the western disciplines. There are also many breed associations that govern horse shows restricted to individual breeds of horse (i.e., Quarter Horses, Arabians, American Saddlebreds, Morgans, etc.). The AQHA is actually a breed association, and its sheer size makes it the most prominent breed association. Because the Quarter Horse is the predominant breed used in the western disciplines, the AQHA has become the driving force behind western disciplines. There is also the National Reining Horse Association (NRHA), which governs reining events (one of the specialized western disciplines). The governing bodies address required rider and horse apparel for horse shows in the individual association rulebooks.

**Collegiate riding**

Collegiate riding is a relatively new development in equestrian sport. Riders participate in a team format and represent their college or university.
Riders accumulate seasonal points on both an individual and team basis. Individual riders and teams qualify for regional and national finals.

There are two main organizational bodies for collegiate riding. The older of the two, the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA), was established in 1967. As of January 9, 2012, there were 385 collegiate teams and 8,413 riders registered in the IHSA. (“Statistics”, 2012)

The newer association, National Collegiate Equestrian Association (NCEA), formerly known as NCAA Varsity Equestrian, was established in 1998 when the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) identified equestrian sport as an emerging sport. As of January 9, 2012, there were 23 collegiate teams and 861 riders registered with NCEA. (“Universities”, 2012) Rider findings from a review of the two organization’s websites are presented in Appendix A.

Both organizations sanction collegiate horse shows in both English and western disciplines. English shows feature hunter seat equitation on the flat classes (no jumping) and hunter seat equitation over fences classes (jumping). Western shows feature horsemanship events (horsemanship is the accepted term for equitation in the western disciplines) and reining events.

One of the most unique aspects of collegiate riding (both IHSA and NCEA) is that the team hosting the show provides the horses and tack for all riders. Riders draw their horses’ names before each class and ride their class with no or minimal warm-up. This format results in riders riding unfamiliar horses in the shows. The practical effect is a “leveling of the playing field” (author’s emphasis).
Riders are on relatively equal footing because they are all working with unfamiliar horses, and any advantage gained from having extensive riding experience on better trained (and therefore more expensive) “push button” (author’s emphasis) horses is eliminated. In industry jargon, “push button” horses are those horses that are so well trained that even relatively ineffective riders can look accomplished on them. The random draw of mounts is another unique aspect of collegiate riding, and sometimes riders find themselves showing on horses that do not allow them to demonstrate their riding skills as effectively as they would like.

There are significant differences between the IHSA and NCEA formats. The most obvious differences are team composition in terms of gender and inclusiveness. The level of financial support from the college or university is also another major difference.

NCEA teams are composed exclusively of female riders. The classification of equestrian sport as an “emerging sport” means that equestrian sport is “a women’s sport recognized by the NCAA that is intended to help schools provide more athletics opportunities for women, more sport sponsorship options for institutions and help that sport achieve NCAA championship status” (“NCAA Equestrian for Women”, 2010) Adding equestrian sport as a varsity sport increases the opportunity for female varsity sports participation under Title IX and makes progress towards gender equity in NCAA sports, a priority of the NCAA (“NCAA Gender Equity”, 2010).
IHSA teams, in contrast, are not limited to female riders. IHSA teams are composed of both male and female riders and are not subject to the NCAA’s strict rules and regulations for collegiate sports. The IHSA format is more inclusive and includes nine event levels for English riders (beginning to advanced) and seven event levels for western riders (beginning to advanced). (2011-2012 IHSA rulebook, 2011) In contrast, the NCEA format has two events for English riders and two events for western riders. (2011-2012 varsity equestrian, 2011) Events offered by each organization are summarized in Table 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English events</th>
<th>Western events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>IHSA</strong></td>
<td><strong>IHSA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk-trot hunter seat equitation</td>
<td>Beginner western horsemanship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk-trot-canter hunter seat equitation</td>
<td>Intermediate western horsemanship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: Beginning walk-trot-canter</td>
<td>A: Inter. western horsemanship I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: Walk-trot-canter</td>
<td>B: Inter. western horsemanship II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice hunter seat equitation on the flat</td>
<td>Novice western horsemanship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice hunter seat equitation over fences</td>
<td>Advanced western horsemanship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate hunter seat equitation on the flat</td>
<td>Open western horsemanship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate hunter seat equitation over fences</td>
<td>Open reining pattern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open hunter seat equitation on the flat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open hunter seat equitation over fences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NCEA</strong></td>
<td><strong>NCEA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equitation on the flat</td>
<td>Horsemanship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equitation over fences</td>
<td>Reining</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15. Events offered by IHSA and NCEA.

It appears that IHSA is still the dominant collegiate format, with IHSA riders outnumbering NCEA riders by almost a 10:1 ratio (8,413 versus 861). Many of the IHSA teams receive little or no funding from their universities and
operate largely as self-supported club teams rather than school supported varsity teams. Therefore, it would be reasonable to assume that the riders in each format represent different populations having different expectations of collegiate riding.

**Required apparel for horse shows**

The 2011-2012 IHSA rulebook contains specific language addressing appropriate attire for IHSA horseshows. Rule 4704, Dress and Headgear (2011-2012 IHSA rulebook, 2011), reads as follows:

A. It is the tradition of the show ring that riders are correctly attired for the class in question and horses properly presented. A show committee may, at its discretion, bar any entry or person from entering the ring if not suitably presented to appear before an audience, and must bar riders without protective headgear from any Hunter Seat classes.

B. While mounted, all IHSA riders competing in the Hunter Seat Equitation Divisions and/or Hunter Seat warm-up riders at an IHSA sanctioned event, must wear protective headgear which meets or exceeds ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials)/SEI (Safety Equipment Institute) standards for equestrian use and carries the SEI tag. It must be properly fitted with harness secured per the helmet manufacturer. Any rider violating this rule at any time must immediately be prohibited from further riding until such headgear is properly in place. It is the responsibility of the rider to see that the headgear worn complies with appropriate safety standards for protective headgear intended for equestrian use, is properly fitted, and in good condition.

C. In all Western classes, the riders must be correctly attired in suitable show clothes. Clothing must be clean, workmanlike and neat. Chaps are optional at the discretion of the rider. Riders shall wear a western hat or safety helmet and the riders shall be correctly attired in suitable western attire. School identifying logos shall not be allowed on western show clothing. Hair must be neat and securely fastened so as not to cover the rider’s number. (p. 29)

It is interesting that subsection A only makes a general reference to riders being “correctly attired” for the show ring. The only restriction applicable for hunt seat riders specified in Subsections A and B is an ASTM/SEI helmet. There is no
mention of any other apparel items for hunt seat riders. In contrast, Subsection C contains specific language for western riders addressing rider attire. In a broader sense, Rule 4301 states that “if rules of the IHSA do not apply to any given situation, the rules of the USEF and/or the AQHA shall govern.” (2011-2012 IHSA rulebook, 2011) Rule 4301 is written in the context of “class routine” - the manner in which individual classes or events in an IHSA show are conducted. In the absence of language in its rulebook addressing specific rider apparel for hunt seat riders, the IHSA defers to the USEF and/or AQHA rulebooks to specify appropriate hunt seat apparel for ISHA shows.

The 2011-2012 rulebook for NCEA only requires ASTM/SEI helmets for hunt seat riders with attached harness that is fastened when mounted (Rule 7.1) (2011-12 varsity equitation, 2011) There are no other specific rules addressing rider apparel. Similar to the IHSA rulebook, The NCEA rulebook also contains a rule addressing the “competition routine”. Rule 5.4 states “All events for which rules are provided herein must be conducted accordingly. In the case where there are not applicable rules, the rules and regulations of NCAA, USEF for hunt seat Equitation on the Flat and Equitation over Fences, and AQHA for western Horsemanship and Reining, will govern” (2011-12 varsity equitation, 2011).

As the IHSA and NCEA rulebooks defer to the USEF and AQHA rulebooks’ definition of appropriate show attire for items not specifically addressed in the IHSA and NCEA rulebooks, the appropriate sections in the USEF and AQHA rulebooks are examined in more detail.
The 2012 AQHA rulebook is quite detailed in specifying rider apparel for AQHA shows. Rule 445, Attire, (Show rules and regulations, 2011) reads as follows:

(a) In halter, speed events, team penning and other western classes, appropriate western attire is required which includes pants (slacks, trousers, jeans, etc.) long sleeves and collar (band, standup, tuxedo, etc.) western hat and cowboy boots. Special exception because of religious reasons or physical handicap must be requested by filing a written request to AQHA and obtaining written approval prior to participation. The hat must be on the rider’s head when the exhibitor enters the arena. Spurs and chaps are optional.

(b) It is mandatory for riders in all hunter, jumper and equitation classes, including hunter hack, where jumping is required and when jumping anywhere on the competition ground to wear properly fastened protective headgear that meets ASTM/SEI standards or equivalent international standards for equestrian use. The helmet must also be properly fitted with harness secured. It is optional that an exhibitor may wear a hard hat with harness in all classes; however, it is mandatory that all youth and recommended that amateurs wear a ASTM/SEI approved hard hat with harness in all over fence classes. It is mandatory that all exhibitors wear a hard hat in all over fence classes and when schooling over fences.

(c) In all English classes, riders should wear hunt coats of traditional colors such as navy, dark green, grey, black or brown. Maroon and red are improper. Breeches are to be of traditional shades of buff, khaki, canary, light grey or rust (or jodhpurs), with high English boots or paddock (jodhpur) boots of black or brown. Black, navy blue or brown hard hat (with harness for youth in any over fence classes) is mandatory. A tie or choker is required. Gloves, spurs of the unrrowelled\(^1\) type that are blunt, round or that include a smooth rolling rubber ball and no longer than one inch and crops and bats are optional. Hair must be neat and contained (as in net or braid). Judges must penalize contestants who do not conform.

(d) [section omitted – specific to driving classes]

(e) Judges, at their discretion, may authorize adjustments to attire due to weather-related conditions. (pp. 138-139)

\(^1\) Rowelled spurs have spiked discs that rotate freely in the spur shank that extends from the rider’s boot heel. The spikes can be of varying length and sharpness. Excessive spur use by a rider (whether intentional or unintentional) wearing rowelled spurs can cause pain for the horse and sometimes leaves open sores on the horse’s barrel or side.
The equitation division of the USEF rulebook contains a rule addressing
erider apparel in hunt seat equitation classes. Rule EQ 110, Appointments
(Equitation division, 2012), states the following:

1. Personal. Exhibitors and judges should bear in mind that at all times entries
are being judged on ability rather than on personal attire. Riders should wear
coats of any tweed or Melton for hunting (conservative wash jackets in
season), breeches or jodhpurs and boots. Conservative colored protective
headgear with no additional adornments in accordance with GR801.3 is
mandatory. While competing in a jumping class, if a rider's chin strap
becomes unfastened, the rider may stop, re-fasten the chin strap and
continue his/her round without penalty or elimination. A judge may, but is not
required, to stop a rider and ask them to refasten a chin strap which has
become unfastened, again without penalty to the rider. Spurs, crops or bats
are optional. Judges may penalize contestants who do not conform. When
management permits Hunter or Hunter Seat Equitation riders to ride without
jackets, riders must wear traditional, short, or long-sleeved riding shirts with
chokers or ties. Polo shirts and chaps are not permitted except in unjudged
warm-up classes. Management or Judge may eliminate an exhibitor who is
inappropriately attired. (p. EQ8)

EQ 117, Appointments, addresses rider attire for saddle seat equitation classes.

Rule EQ 117, Appointments, (Equitation division, 2012) reads as follows:

1. PERSONAL. Exhibitors and judges should bear in mind that at all times
entries are being judged on ability. However, neatness is the first requisite
regarding a rider's attire and the following requirements are based on
tradition and general present-day customs. Judges must penalize and may
eliminate those competitors who do not conform. Adjustments to tack and
attire for valid medical reasons is permitted provided a dispensation
certificate has been granted per GR1311.

a. INFORMAL: Riding habit will consist of jacket with collars and lapels of the
same conservative color with matching jodhpurs, a collared shirt, tie, vest,
and complimentary gloves, jodhpur boots, and derby or soft hat (protective
headgear may be worn without penalty per GR801.4). Conservative colors
for informal riding habits include black, blue, grey, burgundy, green, beige, or
brown and may contain herringbone, pin stripes, and other combinations of
colors that appear solid. Colors not included in this list are not acceptable
and must be penalized and may be cause for elimination. Only informal dress
is permitted in Saddlebred Pleasure Equitation classes and Morgan Classic
Saddle Seat Equitation classes, day or night.

b. FORMAL: Even more conservative attire is required for evening classes.
Riding habit will consist of tuxedo-type jacket with collars and lapels of the
same color with matching jodhpurs, formal shirt, bow tie, vest or
cumberbund, and matching top hat (women), homburg or other soft hat (men). Solid colors for formal riding habits include dark grey, dark brown, dark blue, or black. Formal shirt must be white or off-white with the bow tie and vest or cumberbund to match shirt or riding habit in color. Colors not included in this list are not acceptable and must be penalized and may be cause for elimination. Formal riding habits are not to be worn before 6:00 p.m. and are not mandatory after 6:00 p.m.; exhibitors competing on Pleasure horses have the option to wear formal attire in Open equitation classes as specified by the rule.

b. OPTIONAL: Blunt end (unrowelled only) spurs and/or riding crops. (p. EQ19)

The hunter division of the USEF rulebook contains a rule addressing rider attire for hunter classes. Rule HU 127 Attire, (Hunter division, 2012) reads as follows:

1. Formal Attire. Riders are required to wear scarlet or dark coats; white shirts with white stock; white, buff or canary breeches and protective headgear. See GR801. All Hunter and Hunt Seat Equitation riders must wear protective headgear while jumping in accordance with General Rules, GR801.2. In classes restricted to junior exhibitors protective headgear must be worn in accordance with GR801. Members of the Armed Services or the Police may wear the Service Dress Uniform.

2. Inappropriate attire. When management permits Hunter or Hunter Seat Equitation riders to ride without jackets, riders must wear traditional, short, or long-sleeved riding shirts with chokers or ties. Polo shirts and chaps are not permitted except in unjudged warm-up classes. Management or Judge may eliminate an exhibitor who is inappropriately attired. (p. HU17)

The USEF rulebook permits the wearing of scarlet coats (pinks) in hunter classes when formal attire is required. However, it is a serious breach of riding etiquette to wear a scarlet hunt coat unless the rider has earned “colors” from a recognized hunt club (in recognition of significant service to the club) or has been chosen to ride on the national equestrian team. For these reasons, formal attire for hunter classes typically consists of dark coats alone.

The jumper division of the USEF rulebook contains a rule addressing rider attire for jump classes. JP 111, Tack and Attire, addresses rider attire for jumper
classes. Portions of Rule JP 111, Tack and Attire, pertaining to rider attire (Jumper division, 2012) read as follows:

5. Attire. Management, at its discretion, may allow competitors to compete without riding coats. If a riding coat is not worn, riders must wear a shirt with a collar or a choker, neatly tucked into riding breeches. A windbreaker jacket or raincoat may be worn if conditions require. In all cases, riders must appear neatly attired to appear before the public or be subject to penalty of elimination by the judges. (p. JP7)

7. Formal Attire. Black, blue, green, grey, scarlet or similar coats are permitted; white or fawn breeches; a white tie, choker or hunting stock, and a white or lightly colored shirt must be worn. Shirts must have a white collar and white cuffs. Members of the Armed Services or the police may wear the service dress uniform with protective headgear. (See General Rules, GR801.2) (p. JP8)

Common themes in rulebooks

The various sections in the rulebooks that address rider attire generally identify both acceptable and unacceptable attire. Some events require ASTM/SEI helmets, and some do not. Some events have both informal and formal standards for rider attire. In many cases, specific colors are identified as acceptable and/or unacceptable. The rules for several events contain specific language that allows the judge to penalize or eliminate the competitor for inappropriate attire. Therefore, it is imperative that the competitive rider understand the rules for rider attire to avoid being penalized or eliminated for inappropriate attire.

Horse industry specific judging literature

McElvoy (2002) addresses rider appearance and attire in horse shows in her book targeted to those interested in becoming horse show judges. In response to the question whether a rider’s appearance and clothing should be
evaluated, she responds by stating “At recognized and breed shows, there is a
certain standard that must be adhered to. …But at unrecognized shows almost
anything often goes as far as clothing is concerned.” She then addresses the
issue of a rider’s weight as follows:

As with the issue of clothing, a rider’s weight can be the cause for great
debate. Some officials will never pin a rider they feel is overweight no matter
how good a rider he or she is. I don’t think this is fair.
As a judge, you may have to look through the shape of the rider to see
his or her horsemanship. In all honesty, I’ve seen very heavy equestrians who
ride “lighter” on horses than some very slender equestrians who have rough
seats and heavy hands.
Adverse rider weight is a hard thing to measure. A slimmer figure most
often does look better than a heavier body on a horse. That being said, if I don’t
feel that the horse is struggling with the rider’s weight, and the rider’s weight is
not negatively affecting his or her performance, the rider should be judged just
like any other rider. (pp. 52-53)

USA Equestrian (the former name of United States Equestrian
specific language regarding rider position and rules for running classes in shows.
There is only a brief mention of rider attire in the Table of Common Faults section
of the Equitation Manual as summarized below:

2 To pin a rider means to rank or place the rider high enough to award a ribbon.
Good: Correct, clean, well fitted hunt clothes.

Minor faults: Ill-fitting clothes, dirty boots, clothes.

Major faults: Inappropriate attire – management or judge may eliminate rider.

Elimination: Lack of mandatory protective headgear in accordance with Article 318.

It is interesting that there are no references in the USA Equestrian hunter seat equitation judge’s manual or in any of the official rulebooks discussed in prior sections that address anything beyond the basics of appropriate show clothes and required safety headgear. The issue of a rider’s weight appears to be the proverbial elephant in the room – i.e., a topic that no organization addresses in official horse show rulebooks or judging guides. Is this because it’s an unwritten rule that thinner, leaner riders are preferred by judges, or is it because it has no bearing on judging decisions in subjectively judged events? This is not clear from the currently available research.

Ready to wear show apparel

Show apparel for western and English events can be quite expensive. An online analysis of inventory held by two well-known tack shops in the Columbus, OH area reflects a wide price range for the individual items that comprise a typical western or English hunt seat show outfit. Equus Now!, a tack shop in Powell, OH (just north of Columbus but still part of the Columbus metropolitan
area) has a significant web presence as well as a large retail storefront. Equus Now!'s primary customer is the English rider who rides in the hunt seat or dressage disciplines. Rod’s Western Wear, a tack shop located in Columbus, OH also has a significant web presence, a catalog operation and a large retail storefront. Rod’s Western Wear's primary customer is the western rider, although there is a very limited selection of English riding apparel.

Because both stores have their inventory listed on their websites, the selection of show clothing as of March 10, 2011 is analyzed. Summaries of these analyses are shown in Appendix B. For hunt seat apparel, helmets represent the most expensive item of the show outfit (median price $295.95 new) followed by tall boots (median price $249.95 new). For western apparel, boots represent the most expensive item of the show outfit (median price $214.94 new) followed by hats (median price $184.95 new). A hunt seat rider purchasing an entire show outfit at the median price could easily spend $855.75. A western rider purchasing an entire show outfit at the median price could easily spend $691.77. Custom made apparel is very popular for western show apparel, and the prices for custom items are much more expensive than ready to wear items.

Equus Now! sells used apparel on consignment in its store and on its website, and the prices of the used items are typically 30-70% of the new item prices. A summary of the used show clothing prices at Equus Now! is shown in Appendix B. Rod’s Western Wear does not sell used items. The quantity of used items in the Equus Now! inventory suggests that there is a healthy resale
market in used English show clothing. There is most likely a similar healthy resale market in used western show clothing, but because Rod’s Western Wear doesn’t sell used item on consignment, this cannot be determined without expanding the analysis to other resale websites such as eBay or Craigslist.
The research literature to date related to equestrian sports is very sparse, and what has been written has primarily focused on the areas of disordered eating and body image. Rather, equestrian sports are more commonly lumped into the category of “judged” (author’s emphasis) sports in which physical appearance plays a prominent role in the scoring. Of the sports in this judged category, gymnastics and figure skating have received the most attention. Although not technically a sport, competitive dance is sometimes also included in the category of judged sports.

There have been very few studies that focus exclusively on equestrian sports. Torres-McGehee, Mady and Laursen (2008) surveyed female varsity equestrian athletes participating in NCAA (now NCEA) horse shows about their attitudes towards eating and perceived body image in both daily apparel and competition apparel (for both English and western disciplines). The authors were interested in determining whether the riders were at increased risk of developing disordered eating patterns in order to obtain the desired slender physique. The authors found that equestrian athletes are at an increased risk of developing
disordered eating, although there was no significant difference between riders in the English and western disciplines. An interesting finding was that the athletes were more interested in appearing smaller in show clothing than they were in daily clothing.

**Other judged sports**

Numerous studies have found body image and disordered eating behaviors in figure skating and artistic gymnastics. Figure skating also has a subjective component to the judging in addition to the technical component. Ziegler et al. (1998) surveyed elite junior figure skaters participating in a skaters' camp for evidence of disordered eating behaviors. The authors found that the skaters had a higher prevalence of dieting for weight loss than in the general population and the skaters were generally underweight compared to pediatric growth charts. The desire to lose weight was not driven by the skaters’ self-perception of weight but by the unique demands of figure skating.

Petrie (1993) examined eating disorders in normal weight female collegiate gymnasts. In the course of this study, Petrie classified the gymnasts on a disordered eating behavior spectrum (seven categories from normal eating and exercising behavior to bulimic behavior) based on the athletes’ self-reported eating behavior. He found that over 60% of the gymnasts exhibited intermediate disordered eating behavior and another 22% exhibited normal or non-disordered eating behaviors. The remaining 18% of the gymnasts exhibited severe disordered eating behavior through excessive exercise.
Petrie (1996) examined eating behavior in male and female athletes participating in lean sports (i.e., sports in which weight or physical appearance is critical to success) and non-lean sports (i.e., sports in which weight or physical appearance is less critical to success) and eating behavior in non-athletes. He found that female athletes in lean sports were more preoccupied with weight than their female non-lean sport and non-athlete counterparts. Additionally, he found that non-athletes, both male and female, had greater levels of dissatisfaction with their bodies and felt less effective in their lives than the athletes. For purposes of this study, diving (male and female), cross country (female), swimming (male), gymnastics (male and female) and wrestling (male) were classified as lean sports. Petrie found that there was no significant difference between male lean sport athletes, male non-lean sport athletes and non-athletes in dissatisfaction with their bodies or the presence of disordered eating behavior. Petrie theorizes that cultural pressures lead to female athletes having more disordered eating behaviors, but this is not fully explored in this study.

Rudd and Carter (2005) also found higher incidences of subclinical eating disorders (i.e., eating patterns that do not meet the clinical definition of eating disorder, but are still departures from normal eating patterns) in lean sports than in non-lean sports, and the incidence of subclinical eating disorders was also higher for females than for males (regardless of sport). For purposes of this study, gymnastics (male and female), swimming (male and female), diving (male and female), cheerleading (male and female), cross country (male and female),
track and field (male and female), synchronized swimming (female), volleyball (female) and wrestling (male) were classified as lean sports.

**Social physique anxiety**

Hart, Leary and Rejeski (1989) introduced the concept of social physique anxiety (SPA) in a pioneering study that examined the anxiety people feel when others evaluate their physiques. In this study, Hart et al. developed a 12-item scale that measures SPA. The social physique anxiety scale (SPAS) has been widely used in subsequent studies of SPA. Many of these subsequent studies have examined SPA in the context of athletes (exercisers) versus non-athletes (non-exercisers).

Van Raalte, Schmelzer, Smith and Brewer (1998) examined SPA in competitive female rowers and swimmers. Athletes in each sport were classified into lightweight and heavyweight categories based on body type and into elite and non-elite categories based on skill level. Van Raalte et al. expected to find lower levels of SPA in athletes having higher skill levels, but this relationship was only found in elite competitive swimmers. Rowers did not exhibit this expected relationship. Based on their findings, they concluded that the sport being investigated (subjectively judged versus objectively scored) affects the levels of SPA experienced by participating athletes.

Hausenblas and Mack (1999) studied SPA and eating disorders in female elite athletes (diving, volleyball, lacrosse and soccer) and non-athletes. The authors found that the elite divers exhibited less SPA than the other athletes and
non-athletes. Hausenblas and Mack suggest that this might not be because of the divers’ higher comfort level with their bodies, but that divers not having the desired body type for diving might have left the sport before reaching the elite level (self-elimination). No differences were found between the divers, the other athletes and the non-athletes with regard to eating disorders.

Krane, Stiles-Shipley, Waldron and Michalenok (2001) examined levels of SPA in female exercisers and athletes with different uniforms. The athletes were divided into categories based on how revealing the uniforms were (revealing, mixed and baggy). Athletes in cross-country, track, swimming, gymnastics and synchronized skating (previously known as precision figure skating) were categorized as wearing revealing uniforms. Athletes in volleyball, tennis and lacrosse were categorized as wearing mixed uniforms, and athletes in basketball, golf, soccer and softball were categorized as wearing baggy uniforms. Although the researchers expected to find a correlation between SPA and uniform, they were not able to support this hypothesis from the data. The exercisers and athletes in different uniforms did not differ in SPA. Krane et al. present as a possible explanation that the athletes in revealing uniforms have developed coping skills over the years and are accustomed to wearing the revealing attire.

Haase, Prapavessis and Owens (2002) expanded the research on SPA by including males in their study. Elite female and male athletes from a variety of sports were studied for relationships between perfectionism and SPA. The results indicated that negative perfectionism and SPA were moderately and
positively correlated for both males and females. Positive perfectionism and SPA were unrelated.

Russell and Cox (2003) examined SPA, body dissatisfaction and self-esteem in collegiate age females of differing exercise levels and race. Russell and Cox found that African-American females had lower levels of SPA, lower body dissatisfaction and higher self-esteem than Caucasian females. They also found that SPA was unrelated to exercise frequency for the participants in this study.

Koyuncu, Tok, Canpolat and Catikkas (2010) examined SPA, body image satisfaction and body fat ratios for female exercisers and non-exercisers of varying ages (18 to 60). Koyuncu et al. found female collegiate athletes had lower SPA and higher self-esteem than then non-exercisers.

Other studies have focused solely on the validity of the original 12-item SPAS. Eklund, Mack and Hart (1996) determined that the original 12-item scale, constructed as a one factor model, was, in fact, a two factor model driven by separate constructs: presentation comfort and negative evaluation. Five of the original 12 items measured presentation comfort, and the other 7 items measured negative evaluation. When the two factors were separated, the validity of the resulting two factor model dropped slightly from the validity of the original one factor model (Cronbach Alphas of .90 and .89 for two independent samples). However, the Cronbach’s Alphas for the revised two factor model still exceeded .79 in their evaluations.
Eklund et al. (1996) also confirmed that item 2 in the original scale (“I would never worry about wearing clothes that might make me look too thin or overweight.”) presented problems because there were low correlations between that item and the other scale items. Eklund’s resolution to this problem is to rephrase that item to a positive statement from the original negative statement (Eklund and Crawford, 1994). Eklund et al. (1996) report Cronbach Alphas of .90 and .89 for two independent samples.

Martin, Rejeski, Leary, McAuley and Bane (1997) further reviewed the validity of the original 12-item scale and determined that two additional items (item 1 “I am comfortable with the appearance of my physique/figure” and item 5 “When I look in the mirror I feel good about my physique/figure”) related more to body satisfaction and not the two factors of presentation comfort or negative evaluation in the SPA model. Martin et al. suggest that the SPAS should be reduced to 9 items.

Motl and Conroy (2001) suggest that two additional items (item 11 “I usually feel relaxed when it is obvious that others are looking at my physique/figure” and item 12 “When in a bathing suit, I often feel nervous about the shape of my body”) should be removed from the scale, thus reducing the original 12 items to 7 items. Motl and Conroy feel that item 11 duplicates another item in the scale and that item 12 is pertinent only for females.
Summary

Very little research has been conducted specifically addressing equestrian athletes outside the areas of injury prevention and management, and psychological aspects of equestrian athletes. However, the findings of higher levels of social physical anxiety and subclinical eating disorders for other subjectively judged sports, such as diving, swimming and gymnastics, can be relevant for equestrian athletes. As a result, more research into equestrian athletes is needed.
CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Because there has been very little research on social physique anxiety among collegiate equestrians, the methodology for this research consists of individual case studies using an interview technique. This exploratory research is intended to identify some of the key factors that are relevant to the study of social physique anxiety in equestrian athletes.

Individual interviews were conducted with female IHSA collegiate equestrian team riders during November and December, 2011. Interview questions consisted of both general demographic items and equestrian specific items (amount of riding experience prior to college, collegiate equestrian team experience, etc.). Interview questions not specifically related to social physique anxiety were also included to make the subject or topic being studied less obvious to the participants. Items from the original Hart, Leary and Rejeski 12-item social physique anxiety scale (SPAS) were also incorporated into the interview instrument with modified wording. These items were adapted to suit both the intended research sample and the flow of the questions in the interview instrument.
The preliminary interview instrument was presented for approval to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of The Ohio State University in April, 2011 and was approved by the IRB in August, 2011. The interview questions were reviewed (pre-tested) by two riders having previous collegiate equestrian team riding experience (tester # 1 rode on her collegiate NCAA (now NCEA) team for two years, and tester # 2 rode on her collegiate IHSA team for four years) in order to test the validity of the questions. Unclear wording, question order and other minor issues were corrected based on their review. Additional questions were also developed on the basis of their input. The finalized interview questions can be found in Appendix C.

A snowball technique was employed to find participants for the study. Initial invitations to participate in the interviews were e-mailed to collegiate equestrians known to the researcher. These initial e-mails were then forwarded by the initial contacts to other riders. The solicitation text in the e-mail message can be found in Appendix D. Potential participants were recent or current members of The Ohio State University and University of Findley equestrian teams. Both universities have active equestrian teams in both the English hunt seat and western disciplines, and both participate in the IHSA organization. The Ohio State University is a state supported university with 64,000+ students ("Facts", 2011). The University of Findley is a private university with 3,900+ students ("UF Fast Facts", 2011). These two institutions were selected in part
because of their location in Ohio and their differing environments (large public school versus small private school).

Participants who responded to the e-mailed solicitation were interviewed in person when possible and via Skype when personal interviews could not be arranged due to logistical issues. Participants who were interviewed in person completed informed consent forms prior to beginning the personal interview. The informed consent form for the in-person interviews can be found in Appendix E. Participants who were interviewed via Skype completed the informed consent process prior to the Skype interview by including the required consent language in an e-mail response prior to the scheduled interview time. The informed consent form for the Skype interviews can be found in Appendix F. In both types of consent, the participant acknowledged their rights as a human subject and consented to the interview process. All participants completing the interview process received $25 gift cards to a well-known grocery store or general store (their choice) as an incentive to participate.

The individual interviews each took approximately 60 minutes to complete. The interviews, which were audio recorded with the participants’ prior consent, were transcribed and coded afterwards. The transcriptions of these interviews can be found in Appendices G - O. The transcripts were independently coded for emerging themes by two trained readers (the researcher and another person trained by the researcher), and the coding was compared for consistency. The initial inter-rater reliability after the initial independent coding was calculated to be
82%. Differences in reader interpretation were then resolved when possible, and the inter-rater reliability for the two coders was recalculated to be 92%.
CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Demographic overview

Nine female equestrian team members were interviewed for this study. Five of the riders currently participate (or have recently participated) on their university’s hunt seat equestrian team, and four of the riders participate on their university’s western equestrian team. One of the five hunt seat riders is a former, recent member of her university’s hunt seat team. As an entirely coincidental result, the split between the current riders is equal at four hunt seat riders and four western riders.

The nine participants range in age from 19 to 22, with an average age of 20. Years of participation on their equestrian team range from one year (for the former rider) to four years, with most participants reporting two to three years of participation on their equestrian team. Prior to joining their collegiate equestrian team, their riding experience ranged from a low of a half year to a high of 17 years, and the quality of these experiences ranged from summer camps to very competitive, high level show circuits. The participants vary widely in their riding
skill and general horsemanship expertise, and, as a result, approached the interview questions with a variety of experiences and personal reflections.

Horse ownership similarly varies among the nine participants. Seven participants reported either currently owning horses or having owned horses in the past, whereas two have never owned a horse. Of the seven riders with horse ownership experience, five reported owning one to two horses during their lifetime, buying and selling horses as their riding skills improved and their needs changed. One rider reported owning a total of six horses (four at the present), but she is not typical of the respondents in this study.

**The riders**

Rider # 1 is a hunt seat rider who no longer rides on her IHSA hunt seat team. She participated for one year in the walk/trot/canter hunter seat equitation event (the second lowest level). At the time this rider was participating, the walk/trot/canter event had not been divided into two sub-events as indicated in Table 15. She has never owned any horses and had ridden for approximately four years before college. Prior to college, she did not have any show experience.

Rider # 2 is a second year rider on her IHSA hunt seat team. She currently rides in the novice hunter seat equitation on the flat and novice hunter seat equitation over fences events (the second highest levels). She has owned horses in the past, but does not own any horses currently. She had ridden for
approximately nine years before college and had extensive show experience in local and IEA shows.

Rider # 3 is a third year rider on her IHSA western team. She currently rides in one of the intermediate western horsemanship events (the second lowest level). The intermediate western horsemanship event was divided into two sub-events for the 2011-2012 year, and she did not indicate in which sub-event she rides. She has never owned any horses and had ridden for approximately 1/2 year before college. Prior to college, she did not have any show experience.

Rider # 4 is a third year rider on her IHSA hunt seat team. She currently rides in the novice hunter seat equitation on the flat and novice hunter seat equitation over fences events (the second highest levels). She has owned and leased horses in the past, but does not own any horses currently. She had ridden for approximately ten years before college and had extensive show experience in regionally rated events.

Rider # 5 is a second year rider on her IHSA western team. She currently rides in the advanced western horsemanship event (the second highest level). She currently owns several horses and had ridden for approximately fifteen years before college. Prior to college, she had extensive show experience in 4-H and breed show events.

Rider # 6 is a second year rider on her IHSA western team. She currently rides in one of the intermediate western horsemanship events (the second lowest levels). The intermediate western horsemanship event was divided into two sub-
events for the 2011-2012 year, and she did not indicate in which sub-event she rides. She currently owns two horses and had ridden for approximately eleven years before college. Prior to college, she had limited show experience in local shows.

Rider #7 is a fourth year rider on her IHSA hunt seat team. She currently rides in the open hunter seat equitation on the flat and open hunter seat equitation over fences events (the highest level). She has owned horses in the past, but does not own any horses currently. She had ridden for approximately twelve years before college and had extensive show experience in top level A rated shows.

Rider #8 is a third year rider on her IHSA hunt seat team. She currently rides in the novice hunter seat equitation on the flat and novice hunter seat equitation over fences events (the second lowest levels). She currently owns one horse and had ridden for approximately fourteen years before college. Her show experience prior to college was limited to a few local shows.

Rider #9 is a second year rider on her IHSA western team. She currently rides in one of the intermediate western horsemanship events (the second lowest levels). The intermediate western horsemanship event was divided into two sub-events for the 2011-2012 year, and she did not indicate in which sub-event she rides. She currently owns one horse and had ridden for approximately seventeen years before college. Prior to college, she competed in local unrated shows.
RQ 1: Do riders perceive any unwritten bias towards certain rider attire and rider physique?

Eight of the nine riders believed that there is a bias towards both rider attire and rider physique. There was more disagreement among the riders with respect to bias for rider attire than for rider physique, however.

**Rider physique**

Riders from both disciplines indicated that a bias for a thin and tall physique exists in competitive equestrian sport. Several words appeared frequently in their interviews: thin (777 instances), long (67 instances), lean (16 instances), tall (6 instances), and slender (3 instances). Two hunt seat riders described the ideal “equitation body” (author emphasis; i.e., the body shape that seems to be preferred and subsequently rewarded with a higher placement by judges in equitation classes) as tall and thin, with a focus on having the longest line possible from the shoulders through the hips down to the heels. The western riders expressed similar thoughts about the necessity of having the longest line possible (from shoulders to heels), and they noted that they emphasize this line through careful selection of show clothing and the use of strategic color placement in their show outfits. Unfortunately, the hunt seat riders do not have as much flexibility in this aspect.

Eight of the nine riders believed that there is a bias towards tall, thin riders. Rider #1 had a strong belief that there is a bias towards tall, thin riders.
She described the perfect rider body as “super tall and skinny and [like] real long legs”. She also mentioned that female riders “aren’t supposed to have boobs…” because “it doesn’t look good on a horse”. She stated that being thin was “something that was really pushed a lot - is that a rider should be thin.”

When asked if she thought that judges use body types to decide their placements in a class, rider # 1 indicated that “a lot of it was just based on what each particular judge liked, but, [um] we would always talk about having ‘eq bods’…[like] equitation bodies on the [university name redacted] team, which is, [you know,] being really thin and tall, which most people aren’t naturally. And that’s the kind of thing that judges look for, it’s what looks best on a horse.” She continued with “it was usually the people with a specific body type that placed higher, unless they really screwed up.”

Similar thoughts were expressed by other riders as well. Rider # 2 said, “I think that that’s the way everything is judged nowadays, is you have that look, and some, a lot of the judges I would say are like that in IHSA, is that you have a specific look.” She described the look as “It’s everything all together, I’d say 5’7”, under 130 pounds, [um] make sure your hair’s done right, [um] a nice fitting helmet…..and being tall and stretching down as your body shape…”

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3 Several of the participants used a variety of extraneous, verbal “filler” words, such as “um”, “like”, etc. in their responses. In order to present their thoughts in an easier to read format, these words are been shown enclosed with brackets.

4 The rider is referring to her breasts.
Rider # 3 remarked that she makes sure her “stomach and everything is really, really flat and [like] tucked in.” She continued by saying, “I make sure I’m sitting tall, and I keep a really slender figure…” When asked if she thinks that judges use body types to decide their placements in a class, she seemed a little ambivalent in stating, “we’ve been told there is a look and there is something the judges are looking for, so I kind of have that mindset, [like] that I’m sure that if, you know, someone didn’t fit a look they were looking for, [like] body type wise, if they had the best ride in the class, [like] they’re still going to place higher.” It appeared that rider # 3 personally thought that judges will place a superior ride by a rider with a less desirable body shape higher than a poor ride by a rider with a desirable “eq bod”, but she admitted that she had been led to think otherwise by her coaches.

When asked if she thought that judges use body types to decide their placements in a class, rider # 4 noted, “I think it depends on the judge, I think that….I’ve have seen that before, or even if I haven’t seen it, our old coach kind of gave us that mentality”.

Rider # 5 perceived the horse and rider combination as an overall picture. She stated, “I guess horsemanship, the definition of horsemanship class is the way you look, [like maybe], maybe, [um] not only how you ride, but how your body moves and how it sits, so I think, I think a big contribution to that is your body, you know. Some people that are abnormally tall or abnormally short wouldn’t look as…wouldn’t look as balanced on a horse, so the overall picture
wouldn’t look as good, but I mean I don’t think, I don’t know that…beyond that…I
don’t know……yeah, yes, I think looks obviously affect that, because that’s the
point, that’s what they’re looking for."5 In describing her show outfit, she stressed
that the way her outfit fits emphasized a long, continuous line and made her legs
look longer.

Rider # 7 described a typical look in equitation, but then reflected that
body type was more of a judging factor at the lower levels. In the more advanced
levels, judges relied more on actual riding ability to place the riders. She stated,
“I would say that just a typical look in equitation is long legs, skinnier body type,
tall people I think, I mean if you look at someone on a horse, I think judges favor
that a little bit more in equitation, but, [um] at [like] the open level, it’s kind of
interesting because they do a little bit more testing so they can see who can
actually perform on the flat.” After providing some examples of the skill based
tests, she concluded, “But I would say that in the lower levels, sometimes it’s
hard to distinguish between somebody who can really, who’s [like] riding and
someone who kind of looks a little bit better on the horse...[researcher: Like
perched on the horse?] Yeah, and I think that some judges do favor, like I said,
the longer legs and skinnier body type.”

Rider # 8 commented, “I think it’s very unfortunate though that this sport is
based so much on image, because I know a lot of girls who’ve struggled with that
and their weight. It makes them feel very uncomfortable because it is very tight

5 Rider # 5 was clearly deliberating in her mind before emphatically stating “…yeah, yes, I think
looks obviously affect that……”
fitting, and it…it’s probably not…[you know,] pointing out, it’s pointing out areas
that they didn’t want to be quite as exposed, but [um you know], if you have…my
old coach used to call it the ‘eq bod’, which is tall, but not [like] gauntly, but thin,
tall, long…on the horse, you have to have a long line down the horse, and the
clothes tend to really accent that, if you already have that body type.”

When asked if she thought that judges use body types to decide their
placements in a class, rider # 9 noted, “Yeah, I definitely feel like people who are
thinner get [like get] favored over heavier set people, especially girls. Yeah, I
think, [well I mean,] with boys I don’t think it’s as big of a deal, but for [like] girls,
[like] if you have two people that are probably [the] similar {in}⁶ abilities, [like] the
one who looks better as far as [like] thinness is probably going to do better.”
She continued by saying, “the judge a lot of times just makes a lot of decisions
based on [like first like] first impressions, and [like] I feel like it’s probably more of
a subconscious thing maybe, but I definitely feel [like] if you’re heavier, [like] it
really [like] negatively affects how well you do, which I mean, it’s [like]….I feel
bad, but it’s [like] the way…[researcher: The way it is?] Yeah.”⁷

The lone exception, rider # 6, made no references to body shape in her
interview with the researcher. Her comments focused solely on bias towards
rider attire. Therefore, the researcher concluded that she either felt that there

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⁶ Words added to the transcript in order to enhance comprehension by the reader are shown in
braces.

⁷ Rider # 9, in particular, peppered her conversation with the word “like” so much so that the
unabridged transcript is difficult to understand. As with the other riders, the extraneous, verbal
“filler” words have been shown in brackets.
was no bias towards rider physique or felt that it was too insignificant to mention in her conversation with the researcher.

**Rider attire**

Overall, the riders expressed more varied opinions when asked if they perceive a bias towards rider apparel in the show ring. Seven of the nine riders thought that there was a bias or expectation of a certain look in rider attire. The look is influenced by a combination of garment style, color and sometimes visible brand markings. The remaining two riders seemed to be neutral in their thinking about the importance of rider show apparel.

A common theme expressed by the riders was the importance of catching the judge’s eye immediately as they entered the show ring or in the first lap of the ring. To explain in more detail, the horses (with riders mounted) enter the show ring in a single file at the walk. If the class or event is large with many entries, the first riders may complete one or more laps before everyone is in the ring. The riders are all looking for a way to attract the judge’s attention and avoid being lost in the crowd during the class. Their show clothing, particularly for the western riders, is used to attract the judge’s eye.

When asked if the judges pay attention to the riders’ outfits (assuming it meets the standard established in the rulebook) and use this as part of their judging criteria, rider # 1 stated, “I think it would depend on the judge, but I assume so, because a lot of it is what catches their eye the most, and who they look at the most.”
Rider # 2 didn’t think that the judges focus specifically on rider apparel, but she thought that the rider’s apparel contributed to the overall look. She believed a polished appearance was important, and she related an experience in which a teammate showed with a helmet and helmet cover and didn’t place well in her event. She recounts, “I mean it wasn’t that she rode bad, it just, it wasn’t that polished, finessed look that you need to be first in the class and stand out from everybody else…you want to get [like] seen in the class, so you want to [like] make sure that you catch the judge’s eye, and you catch it the first direction or the first time you go by him.” She also thought that sticking to the commonly accepted colors was important. She described one of her show coats by stating, “Yeah, it’s not [like] an ugly…, it’s a really pretty [like] light brown, and it has [like] really light green lines and purple, it’s really pretty, and it really fits me well, but it’s brown, and it doesn’t belong in the equitation world.” This was an interesting, albeit common, opinion among the riders because the rulebooks do not prohibit brown at all.

Rider # 3 believed that the judges absolutely pay attention to the riders’ outfits. “I think they are, I mean….you know, what’s [like] the common saying [like] ‘Don’t judge a book by its cover’? I mean that’s the nice thing, that’s what everybody says in life, but people judge people on their outward appearance and their physical appearance, and I mean I’m not going to think that just because the judge steps in the arena that they’re going to throw all of that out of their human behavior and whatnot. They’re still going to….it just natural, they’re going to be
‘Oh, I really like her shirt’ or that [like], if you’re showing outside and your shirt catches the sunlight and it’s all rhinestoned out, [like] that’s going to draw attention, and hopefully, you know, it draws attention at a good time, not when your horse [like] is on the wrong lead or something. In my personal opinion, yeah, [like] they’re going to take into account your show clothes, definitely.”

When asked if the judges pay attention to the riders’ outfits (assuming it meets the standard established in the rulebook) and use this as part of their judging criteria, rider # 5 commented that the clothing was important because it was part of the overall picture, but it was secondary to the riding ability. She noted, “if that girl has [well fit….] well fitting, nice looking outfit that makes her look good, it makes the way she’s sitting and makes the way she’s riding look better, it makes the whole thing look better.” She continued by stating, “…but when you’re, when you’re nitpicking and you’re looking at two, and you’re thinking ‘which rider do I like better, what picture do I like better?’, you know, the one that looks nice, the nice outfit will make her look like a better rider, make the picture look better.”

Rider # 6 had an interesting perspective on whether judges pay attention to riders’ show outfits. She noted that it depended on the judge, and she then identified a difference between male and female judges in the importance they attached to the riders’ show clothing. She remarked, “Typically, judges that are

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8 When a horse canters, it leads with one of the two forelegs. If the horse is tracking left (i.e., moving in a counterclockwise direction), it should be on the left lead. If the horse is tracking right (i.e., moving in a clockwise direction), it should be on the right lead. Being on the wrong lead for the direction of travel is a serious error (unless it has been specifically requested by the judge).
women focus more on the attire, and judges that are men focus more on how you ride. So, it’s… [Researcher: That’s interesting! Is that just from personal observation?] Just from observation, and then our coaches tell us that the…if there’s a woman, if there’s a woman judge, they’re really like check your appearance before you go in there, they’ll make sure there’s no dirt on your chaps, there’s no dirt on your boots, there’s no dirt on your hat because they know they’ll look at that, where with a guy judge, they’ll just make sure that everything is where it is supposed to be and then he’s going to focus more on whether if your legs are in the right spot, if your back is straight.”

Rider # 7 agreed with rider # 5 in thinking that judges use rider apparel to separate riders of equal ability. She remarked, “…I think that presentation is not a huge part, but if you have a rider that is a good rider and another rider who’s equally as good and one’s more, [um, like] more presentable, I would say they would pin the more presentable one.” She continued by saying “Yeah, and also I think that if you are [like] polished and look nice, I think the judge is more, [um,] will look at you more, and they’ll [like] overlook the people who aren’t so spectacular, so to speak, because I mean in a class with [like] 12 people and you’re riding around, sometimes you get lost [in the…] on the rail or something.”

Rider # 9 thought the riders’ outfits helped judges form more favorable first impressions. She stated, “I don’t feel like it’s a big [like] ‘Wow, [like] she’s…her outfit’s not the greatest one, so I’m not going to place it’, but it’s [like] a small

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9 To pin a rider means to rank or place the rider high enough to award a ribbon.
difference. It could be a small difference between first or second or something like that, just...it's [like] the more polished look I feel [like] gives the judge a better impression of you.” She continued by noting, “That’s a good way, like attention to detail, [like] I just feel like that gives a good impression, this person knows what they’re doing, is putting their best [like] effort and appearance forward.”

Two riders were less convinced about the importance of the riders’ show outfits for the judges. Rider # 4 was more uncertain in her opinion about whether or not judges pay attention to rider attire. She struggled to find show clothing that fits and acknowledged that she has fit issues with her outfit. She also noted, “…I mean I’ve seen girls go into the ring with a black jacket, and I don’t know that it’s necessarily in the rulebook ‘don’t have black’, but it’s just [like] kind of a...[researcher: it’s more of a tradition thing then?] Yeah, a tradition, I don’t know if it was her riding, but I was in the same class with a girl on my team who had a black coat both days, and she didn’t place, and I...when I’m riding I don’t really, I’m not able to focus on anything else but me, but I kind of wonder, I don’t know, cause I know she’s ridden for a long time, but I wasn’t watching her ride, so I can’t really compare what she got to how she was riding. But I do know she was wearing a black jacket and she didn’t place.” She concluded with, “…it makes me wonder.”

Rider # 8 knew her opinion differed from that expressed by other riders. When asked if the judges pay attention to the riders’ outfits (assuming it meets the standard established in the rulebook) and use this as part of their judging
criteria, she replied, “No, I don’t. My teammates will probably disagree.” She continued by stating, “…it’s a preoccupation I think that people have with…the brand. Yeah, and the look of everything, and what it comes down to is, you’re going by the judge at [like] speed\(^{10}\), so it’s not like they’re sitting going [like] ‘Oh, those Tailored Sportsman\(^{11}\) breeches are incredibly, [you know,] appropriate for this event!', they see a blue coat and olive pants go by, you know….The people in ‘the world’\(^{12}\) are very focused on brand name and the actual look of each individual object, when I think it’s really more as a whole….that they look at.”

However, rider # 8 seemed to contradict herself a bit because earlier in the interview she had commented, “The shirts, I guess the ‘style’ right now, the style changes over time, and it’s ridiculous because really, it’s…the unfortunate part is it does play a lot into the judging.” when describing the individual components of her show outfit. She continued by saying, “…you can definitely look the part in off brand clothes or in….what it comes down to is your riding. So as long as you look presentable, it really doesn’t matter…”

\(^{10}\) “Speed” in this context means the pace at which the horse and rider (near the rail or the perimeter of the show ring) pass the judge (who usually stands in the center of the show ring). If the horse is trotting or cantering (i.e., anything faster than a walk), the judge most likely gets no more than a glimpse of the passing rider and his/her attire at a distance – certainly not long enough or at a close enough distance to notice small details and brand logos.

\(^{11}\) Tailored Sportsman is an expensive, well-known brand of breeches that many riders prefer.

\(^{12}\) Rider # 8 had previously referred to the equestrian community as ‘the equestrian world’ in her interview.
RQ 2: Do riders perceive that coaches believe there is unwritten bias towards certain rider attire and rider physique?

The majority of the riders (eight of the nine riders) perceived that their coaches believed there is a bias towards rider physique. Some of the coaches were very direct with the riders about the issue and emphasized the need to be as thin and tall as possible when riding. The riders can create an illusion of length by sitting tall in the saddle (i.e., sitting as erectly as possible without being rigid) and by stretching the legs down as much as possible while still maintaining correct leg placement.

Some of the hunt seat riders made reference to a coaching change during their time on their teams by mentioning both their previous and current coach in the same context. These riders clearly thought that the previous coach strongly believed there was a bias towards tall, thin riders, and this was communicated to the riders in various ways. These riders believed that the current coach also was aware of a bias towards tall, thin riders, but he or she used more positive language and actions when communicating that to the riders.

Rider #1 related some common phrases she heard from her coach while riding on her team, such as “Thin wins” and “You can’t make your thighs longer, but you can make them thinner”. Riders #2 and #4 referred to a BMI (body mass index) policy that was implemented by the previous coach to discourage heavier riders from participating on the team. Rider #2 noted, “The coach from the last year’s team that we were at, repeatedly would say comments to this girl
about, [um, you know,] you really need to lose weight, and finally she put in a BMI policy because she was just not listening to her, and then she ended up not being able to ride on the team anymore.” Rider # 4 explained, “…she enforced a BMI policy where you needed to be under a certain BMI to ride and then under a certain BMI (body mass) to jump…” When asked if the BMI limit was a reasonable BMI limit (i.e., not one on the lower end of the scale that would indicate being underweight), she responded, “It was a reasonable BMI……it was [like] the line between [like] overweight and obese, it wasn’t [like] the line between regular and overweight.”

Rider # 3 stated, “[Um,] I mean….just from my coaches, we’re told that, [you know,] we’ve been told there is a look and there is something that the judges are looking for, so I kind of have that mindset, [like] that I’m sure that if, [you know,] someone didn’t fit a look they were looking for, [like] body type wise, if they had the best ride in the class, [like] they’re still going to place higher {than the rider with the preferred body type but poor ride}.”

Rider # 6 noted that her coaches sometimes picked point riders for the team based on the person who was judging and what qualities they knew that particular judge valued in riders. She stated, “…they’ve said this before,

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13 The BMI is a common, if limited, measure of body mass based on an individual’s weight and height. A BMI of 30 or more indicates obesity, and a BMI of 25 to 29.9 indicates that the individual is overweight.

14 The coach selects in advance a point rider for each event or class in the show. The points earned by the point rider count toward the team point totals for the team competition. The judges do not know which riders are the point riders, and many times, the coaches do not tell the riders themselves whether they are the point riders until after the event (to avoid placing extra stress on the rider).
sometimes they’ll choose a point rider not on skill but based on what they think the judge is going to look for…” She continued by remarking, “…they kind of know the judges and what they’re going to look for, so they try to base even our point riders on what they think the judge is going to look for and also ability level, if they don’t think the person is going to perform well, they won’t pick them, but it’s also a lot on if they think that two people are equal, they’ll pick the one that the judge is going to look at more.”

Rider # 7 said, “Well, sometimes when you’re watching and you see all the tall girls getting pinned, in the top four or the top three, [they’ll be like,] they’ll say something like ‘OK, I think the judge is looking for a taller body type, so you need to elongate yourself and [like] try to look taller’.”

Rider # 8 stated, “[Um,] they’re aware of it. This year we haven’t had the talk yet. About body types. I’m sure it will have to come up at some point, but our coach last year especially was very aware of it, and it’s….judging, if it’s consistent judging, it has a very discernible pattern to it, and you can actually look at a class and based on…[like] other placings that preceded it, you can pretty much point out who they’ll pick to be first, second and third.” She continued by saying, “…some judges aren’t as bothered by body type as others, but there are certain ones that…it’s just kind of how it goes, it’s something they value more than maybe being tight to the saddle or something, so I think [the coaches….] the coaches are very aware of all the judging patterns…by being there and observing it…..”
Rider # 9 mentioned, “Yeah, well the first year I was here, they were…[um,] there was a girl on our team who was kind of [like] heavier and then she rode for the team at semi{final}s and she didn’t do that well. So they picked another girl to ride for Nationals for the team, which partially I think was [like, you know,] she was [like] heavier and she [like] didn’t do as well, ….so they wanted to see if they could get [like] better…”

The riders also perceived that their coaches believed there was a bias towards rider attire. There were numerous references to the teams having mock shows before the season begins so that the coaches could review the riders’ show outfits and suggest modifications. On some occasions, the coaches accompanied the riders to stores as they assembled their show outfits.

According to the riders, the coaches reviewed the riders’ show outfits to make sure they “don’t have something that’s a weird color and that will look bad” (rider # 1). Rider # 3 stated, “…our coach keeps very close tabs on what is in style and trends…” She continued by saying, “…the judges know what’s in style, so she’s really big on that.” and “…they still hold the idea that when you walk into the arena [like] the judge is just going to look at you at a walk first and judge your outfit, and if it’s not going to grab his eye or it’s out of date, out of style, you’re going to have to work harder then and have a better ride to get his attention.”

Rider # 5 noted, “my coach is actually particularly picky and is known in the horse world outside for being picky because she’s, [um,] very experienced.
She knows what she likes and she knows what looks good. She’s very good with clothing, very good with clothing."

**RQ 3: Is there a difference in how riders feel when wearing show clothes and street clothes?**

The nine riders described in detail their show outfits during the interviews. The show outfits for both disciplines were frequently described as form fitting and tight to the body. The western and hunt seat show outfits will be discussed in further detail in the following paragraphs.

The western riders indicated that their show outfits were built around a uniform base that was worn by all the riders on the team. This base consisted of black riding boots, black show pants or black jeans, black chaps (either smooth leather or suede) and black western hat. Their show shirts were the one component of the show outfit that allowed for individual expression or variation, and this was the one element of the show outfit that incorporated colors other than black (although several riders described their show shirts as having significant black portions in the design).

Rider #3 described her shirt as a form fitting, long sleeve shirt made of black stretchy material. Decorative accents included a faux crocodile skin finish on the fabric and crystals (rhinestones) on the top half of the shirt (front and back) around the upper chest, shoulders and arms. These crystals continued down the sleeves to the sleeve cuffs. In contrast, the lower portion of the shirt (where the shirt tucks into the pants and chaps) was plain black. The overall
color scheme was black, red and gray. Rider #5 described her shirt as a long sleeve shirt made of black stretchy material. The decorative accents on her shirt consisted of a white leather triangular section from the shoulders to the center front of the shirt (it was unclear from the interview whether this triangular design feature is present on the back of the shirt). The visual line between the white and black sections was emphasized with pink, green and clear crystals. The crystals continued down the sleeves to the elbow, and the lower portion of the sleeve and cuff is black.

Rider #6 described her show shirt as a very thin and very tight shirt made of stretchy material. The predominant colors were blue, white and black. Rider #9 described her show shirt as a black top that fit close to the body but was not made of a thin stretchy material. She described her show shirt as “more of like a jacket….sometimes I tuck it in, sometimes I wear it more like a jacket”. Decorative accents included gold and silver leather appliqués embellished with Swarovski crystals (a well-known Austrian brand of high end glass crystals).

The riders stressed the importance of black for the lower portion of their show outfit for several reasons. Black is a fairly neutral color that doesn’t clash with other colors. This is an important factor in collegiate riding because the riders show a variety of differently colored horses during the show season, and it is important that their show outfit complement as many horses as possible. This is less of a factor in traditional, non-collegiate (i.e., individual) showing because the rider typically can plan the color of his or her show outfit to complement a
specific horse’s color. Black was also mentioned for the way it does not draw attention to any unwanted movement of the rider’s legs and lower body while riding. Most importantly, black was identified as the preferred base color of the show outfit because of its slimming properties. A theme mentioned by several of the riders was the necessity of presenting a long, lean body line while on the horse, and having all portions of the show outfit the same color from mid torso (i.e., the lower half of the show shirt) through the boots created a long, continuous line.

The western riders frequently commented on how form fitting their show shirts and chaps were. Rider # 6 described her shirt as very thin. “They’re very thin, they’re not thick style shirts, and they want it to be thin because it clings to your body better, and then they can see the way [like] if your back is straight, if it’s curved, if your shoulders are up, if they’re down, because when…if a shirt is thicker, it’s harder to see your body position, and in horsemanship, they judge you so much on your body position and how you look in things like that, so they want it to be where they can literally pick out every little thing on your body. So the shirts are really thin for that reason.” When talking about her chaps, the same rider stated, “They have to be super tight, it usually takes two to three people to get you into your chaps. You have to suck it up and people are [like] pulling and zipping…” Rider # 3 also reflected on how tight her chaps were by describing how she was able to tighten her belt “one, if not two, notches tighter” when she pulled her chaps as tight as she can.
When asked to describe their show outfits, the hunt seat riders all described essentially the same show outfit. There were some differences noted in show shirts, but substantially all other portions of the show outfit were remarkably similar for all the riders. All riders mentioned that they ride in black leather tall boots. Three riders mentioned specific brand names (Ariat and Grand Prix). Helmets were black, and four riders mentioned specific brand name (Charles Owens and GPA). Rider #2 indicated that these two brands are the two most popular brands among hunt seat riders, and riders choose one or the other due to fit issues (GPA fits long, oval shaped heads and Charles Owens fits round shaped heads). Breeches were either tan or olive, and four riders mentioned specific brand names (Ariat and Tailored Sportsman) when talking about their breeches.

Riders had more flexibility in choosing show shirts and hunt coats. Color was a primary concern for hunt coats, and dark colors were preferable. However, rider #4 stated that black was not acceptable because “black is a dressage oriented color, so you don’t want black.” Rider #8 also noted, “Navy jackets are in, mine’s not in, it’s fine, mine’s gray.” Riders #1 and #2 indicated that their jackets had a subtle pattern in the fabric (pinstripes for rider #1 and plaid for rider #2).

Show shirts were button down long sleeve shirts with two collar options: the traditional, separate ratcatcher collar that the rider wears on top of the collar band attached to the shirt, or a newer style in which the collar is attached to the
shirt and wraps around to fasten on the other side. The wrap around style was mentioned by riders #2 and #7 whereas the separate ratcatcher style was mentioned by rider #1. The other two hunt seat riders did not mention collar style in their descriptions. The colors mentioned by the riders were white and light pastels.

Accessories, such as black leather gloves, belts, earrings and “lucky socks” (by rider #7), were also mentioned as the riders described their show outfits.

Fit issues were mentioned by the hunt seat riders as well. Hunt coats and breeches were the items most frequently mentioned with regard to fit. Rider #2 stated that her jacket was “very form fitting” but with “enough room to…release” (i.e., allow her arms and shoulders to move forward when jumping). Rider #8 described the fit as “tricky, because you have to make it look very tailored, but you also need to be able to move.” Rider #7 indicated she preferred her breeches to be tight by stating, “Like my pants, I like them to be fitted instead of [like] loose, because it makes me look [like] taller and longer and a little skinnier.”

After being asked to describe their show outfits, the riders were asked a series of questions about how they felt (emotionally and physically) when wearing their show outfits. A common theme was that the riders feel confident in their show clothes. Rider #1’s comment of “It makes me feel like I know what I’m doing.” was echoed by other riders as well. Rider #2 mentioned, “it makes you feel polished”. Rider #4 noted, “usually I feel confident in my outfit, I think it
looks polished and I feel like I’m ready to go.” Rider #5 commented, “I think it makes me confident, but because I really like it, and it was custom made to fit me so that I know it complements me and that...and the way that I ride. I look polished, and that gives me confidence to know that I look like I know what I’m doing.” Rider #9 noted, “I like my outfit a lot, so I feel like if I look good, you feel good. It makes you more confident about your riding abilities, and just makes you [like] overall just do well.”

However, when asked about whether they were physically comfortable in their show clothes, the riders’ responses varied quite a bit. Several of the western riders mentioned that their chaps, in particular, were very uncomfortable because they were so tight. Rider #3 noted, “the comfort level depends on how much of it I have on. I know [like] I take my chaps off when I’m not close to my class because they’re very form fitting…” She continued to describe how she pulled her pants and chaps up past her waist and tightened her belt one to two notches before mounting the horse. She explained that wearing the pants and chaps in that position was comfortable while on the horse, but it was not so comfortable when on the ground. This is echoed by rider #6 when she said, “it’s a little uncomfortable, for the pants come up really high.”

The hunt seat riders had similar differences of opinion. Rider #1 did not like the way her collar fits (“just the collar was always really tight. I always felt like I couldn’t breathe…”), but she thought the rest of the show outfit was
comfortable “as long as it’s not too hot”. Rider # 7 confessed, “I like my show outfit, I wish I could wear it more, it’s just really comfortable."

In summary, the riders mostly felt physically comfortable in their show clothing, with the exception of the items mentioned previously. Most of the riders (seven) felt very emotionally comfortable in their show clothes, even though they knew that the tightly fitting show outfits displayed their bodies prominently. One reason for this might be the fact that the more experienced riders had participated in horse shows for so many years that they no longer felt uncomfortable about displaying their bodies in their show clothes. Rider # 5 expressed this sentiment in this way: “I've been doing this for so long and I’ve worn so many show clothes, and I've done, [you know,] shown individually, you have two classes back to back, and you have to change your outfit outside the ring…..I have no shame.” Rider # 3 stated that the desire to have a long, lean body shape was no different from what she had experienced in other situations. “..but I mean I think it’s kind of a constant thing, just like…in society [like] you want to have a slender, lean figure or with me, it’s just because I was in dance and I was in swimming, so I have always been around, it’s just something….personal levels in my street clothes, yeah, to make sure I look slender and lean.” Rider # 8 stated that “I actually think that the equitation clothes look really good on my body, so I tend to actually feel really comfortable in them.” Another possible explanation might be that riders who are uncomfortable with having their bodies on display in tight show clothing may
have abandoned showing all together, therefore avoiding any discomfort they may have felt when wearing the tight fitting show clothing.

The riders were asked whether they had the same feelings or anxieties when dressed in street clothes (i.e., not show clothing). Six of the nine riders did not have any strong feelings about whether they felt different when wearing the show clothing versus wearing their normal street clothes. Rider # 1 preferred wearing her street clothing because she was not comparing herself to other riders who had, in her opinion, the perfect riding bodies. She related, “[Um, like] in the riding [like] at the horse shows, there’s all these, [you know,] six foot tall girls that are super tall and skinny and [like] real long legs, and they’re [like] the perfect riding type. [Um, like the…you know,] there are people that have [like] swimmer’s bodies that have broad shoulders and long arms - it’s the same way with riding. Some people are built for it, and some people aren’t.”

However, riders # 2 and # 5 preferred their show clothes over their street clothes. Rider # 2 noted that she agonized over picking out the outfit she’s going to wear each day and worried about whether everything matched or looked good together. In contrast, she had a set outfit for her show clothes and didn’t have to make as many decisions in selecting the outfit. Rider # 5 felt very confident in her show clothes, particularly because her show shirt was custom made to fit her body, and she knew that she looked good in it. Her comments regarding her street clothes were neutral.
In summary, the majority of the riders felt at ease in their show clothes, and they had no worries about their appearance when wearing their show clothes. This comfort or lack of concern carried over to their street clothes for most of the riders, with one rider strongly preferring their street clothes and two riders strongly preferring their show clothes. As a result, there was not a difference in how the riders felt when wearing their show clothes and their street clothes.

RQ 4: Do riders experience social physique anxiety as a result of this perceived bias?

The researcher did not directly incorporate the 12 items from the Hart, Leary and Rejeski 12-item social physique anxiety scale (SPAS) into the interview instrument due to time constraints. The decision not to include the entire 12 items SPAS in the interview instrument was solely to keep the expected length of the interviews to 60 minutes or shorter. Rather, certain interview questions addressed similar issues, and the riders’ responses were analyzed to determine whether the riders’ experience social physique anxiety when wearing both their show clothes and street clothes.

The data suggest that five of the nine riders did not experience social physique anxiety when wearing their show clothes even though they all acknowledged a bias towards tall, thin riders. The riders differed in how they reacted to this bias. One of the riders experienced high levels of stress when wearing their show clothes, whereas three other riders experienced some degree
of psychological discomfort when wearing their show clothes, but have
developed coping mechanisms to help them deal with the stress.

Rider # 1 felt quite a bit of pressure to conform to the desired ideal
physique, and she knew that she did not have the preferred body shape for
equitation. She noted, “Riders aren’t supposed to have boobs\(^{15}\), which I do.”
She continued to state, “[Um,] I feel like I should be thin…..and my legs are too
short.” She freely admitted that she felt more comfortable in her street clothes
because she wasn’t comparing herself to everyone else.

Three of the riders felt anxiety when dressed in their show clothes but
varied in how they handled the anxiety. Rider # 3 felt that she was being judged
on her appearance as she entered the ring for her class or event (prior to even
demonstrating her riding skills), and her failure to impress the judge at that point
meant that she would have to work extra hard to compensate for this deficiency.
She mentioned, “…when you walk in the arena, [like] the judge is just going to
look at you at a walk first and judge your outfit, and if it’s not going to grab his
eye or it’s out of date, out of style, you’re going to have to work harder then and
have a better ride to get his attention.” While not specifically addressed, it
seemed that the rider felt that an unfavorable first impression would lead to
additional stress and pressure during the class because she would then feel the
need to have a spectacular ride with no errors during the class to make up for the
poor first impression.

\(^{15}\) The rider is referring to her breasts.
Rider #5, a rider with extensive show experience, felt equally at home in her show clothes and her street clothes, but indirectly acknowledged a degree of anxiety over her show clothes. When asked if she had any anxieties about her body presentation when wearing her show clothes and then when wearing her street clothes, she responded that she did not. However, when answering another question, she commented, “Cause you can sit and ride just as well as the next girl, but if she has an outfit on that looks better and fits her better, she’s going to look like she’s riding better…” This comment implied that she knew how important her physical appearance was in the judging of the classes, and while she was at ease when wearing her show clothes, she still felt some anxiety over her appearance in the show ring.

Rider #6 clearly felt uncomfortable in her show clothes. She noted, “It definitely draws attention to everything, so [I mean, it’s a little.] it’s a little weird, you can see everything on your body, there’s no hiding it.” However, she had developed a coping technique to deal with the anxiety. She explained, “…so it's just you kind of have to ignore it and think nobody’s going to notice it, so….everybody's got on the same thing!”

The remaining five riders felt little or no anxiety related to their show clothes. Rider #2 felt more at ease in her show clothes than in her regular clothes. She appreciated the relative simplicity of picking out her show outfit because it did not involve many decisions. In contrast, picking out her daily clothes provoked a lot of anxiety for her. She remarked, “I'm one of those people
who can’t ever decide, and [like] ‘what should I wear today, what should I wear today?’ I’m always worried about if my shirt matches my shoes, and [like] if my jeans look ok, and I worry about that stuff a whole lot more than I have [like] my set outfit for the shows.” Rider # 2 didn’t let minor issues or problems with her show clothes interfere with her focus when riding. She noted, “I try not to let myself get worried too much about little stuff like that, I’m [like] more focused, [um, you know,] on finding distances to jumps and making sure that my horse is in front of my leg and going to the fence. [Researcher: the actual riding part?] Exactly.”

Rider # 4 seemed to be unconcerned about her appearance in her clothes. Rider # 4 concluded, “…I don’t think about it that much, but now that I’ve thought about it”, she did mention that she thought her calves were big and that her tall boots emphasized this in her opinion, but her manner and tone of voice when discussing this did not make the researcher think that this issue troubled her very much.

Rider # 7, another rider with extensive show experience, did not express any anxiety from wearing either her show clothes or her street clothes in normal circumstances. She did, however, share an incident from a time when she had been taking some medications that caused temporary weight gain. During this period, she did experience anxiety. She commented, “I was on a couple of medications that made me [like] gain weight, and when I put on my show clothes and I was a little bit bigger than I normally am, it made me feel self-conscious
about….[like] the tight fitting breeches, yeah, it doesn’t [like] feel right, [so,] but I wouldn’t say it [like] really affects my riding ability, but it does make you feel self-conscious, and especially in the equitation on the flat, you think [like] ‘oh, did the judge not pick me because that girl had longer legs and was skinnier?’, that kind of thing.”

Rider # 8 also expressed no anxieties about her body in her clothes. She was very comfortable in her show clothes and had even incorporated style elements of her equestrian clothes into her street clothes. She was naturally tall and thin, and she believed that the show clothes were flattering on her body. She noted, “…I actually think that the equitation clothes look really good on my body, so I tend to actually feel really comfortable in them.”

Rider # 9 also indicated that she had no anxiety about her body in her clothes. She noted that she liked her show outfit a lot, and also mentioned that “they’ve always said [like] I had a good body for riding…”

The nine riders were fairly evenly split as to whether they experienced social physique anxiety when wearing their show clothing. It was not clear from this research what factors may have influenced their tendencies to experience social physique anxiety. It is possible, although this requires additional research to verify, that the riders’ innate personalities may help insulate them from feeling social physique anxiety.

The riders’ physiques or body shapes may also contribute to their tendencies (or lack of) to experience social physique anxiety. The riders were
not specifically asked to describe their own bodies or physiques during the interviews. However, the researcher personally observed that the riders, with the exception of rider # 1, had slender body builds and looked quite thin when wearing their street clothes. Rider # 1 was the exception, as she appeared to carry more excess weight than the other riders. There was much variability in the riders’ heights, with some of the riders being quite tall and others being shorter.

**RQ 5: Are there other things (not related to body image) about competition that riders are dissatisfied or satisfied with?**

Riders were asked about other aspects of IHSA collegiate riding that they liked or disliked. Several themes emerged that are addressed below.

Riders were asked how they felt about riding unfamiliar horses in the IHSA competitions. The riders were split almost equally in whether they liked or disliked riding unfamiliar horses in the shows. Two of the most experienced riders with the highest level show experience (riders # 5 and # 7) expressed dissatisfaction with this aspect of collegiate riding. Rider # 5 lamented that this format prevented the rider from having any emotional bond with the horse, and this was the aspect she missed most from her previous show experience with her own horses. She stated, “you’re no longer a team, that’s…you’re not a team going out there to perform together…” This lack of emotional bonding with the horse was also mentioned by rider # 6 who reflected, “[Um,] it’s hard when it’s ‘OK, mount your horse’, and you can’t touch it before that time, you’re not even allowed to touch it on the face…before you [like before you] can get on.”

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Rider # 7 (a high level rider) initially did not like riding unfamiliar horses in IHSA competition, but she has gradually adjusted to the lesser quality of horse typically found in collegiate riding. She also expressed dissatisfaction with the reduced riding time available to her in the collegiate riding format. “Well, it was a really hard transition coming from riding [like] those horses on the A circuit to riding these types of horses, so I kind of dislike that a little bit, and I dislike the fact that I can’t ride as much as I would like to.”

Other riders were amenable to riding unfamiliar horses in IHSA competitions. A common theme was that the riders like the challenge of handling difficult horses and seeing how well they can manage in such situations. Rider # 6 reflected, “It’s a good challenge because you want to see just what…how much you’ve learned and what you can handle.” Rider # 9 stated, “I think of it as a challenge, like, I like the challenge…” and “I think it makes you a better rider to learn to ride other horses [like] quickly.”

Every rider responded that they enjoy the camaraderie present in the team format of collegiate riding. Several riders specifically mentioned that their teams felt like family to them and that their coaches actively cultivated this family atmosphere by hosting dinners, cookouts and other fun non-riding activities for the team. Rider # 3 noted, “[Um,] the team’s been [like] more of a family to me, [um, like] some, some of my closest friends and my coaches, [like] I see them more than my own parents, and they tell me I can turn to them for anything, so it’s kind of…[um], very important to me, and it’s just all of it. I mean, the shows
are the fun part, but, [like I] ……I started at the very bottom, so I knew I needed the lessons so… I enjoyed them because I was always learning something, but it’s probably the camaraderie, being around everybody.” Rider # 6 stated, “I like being around people that like the same things that I do, and we all, we all get along, it’s kind of a little family, and so even if we don’t see each other every day during the week or whatever, we still can kind of just jump right back into it.”

Some riders loved the fact that collegiate riding was a team sport for reasons other than the camaraderie. One high level rider with extensive show experience (rider # 5) noted that the team environment changed her perspective and reduced the pressure she felt to ride and place well as an individual. “It’s not just about, [you know,] your personal goals and the personal way you want to win, it’s, it’s about your team now. And I played team sports in high school, and then I showed individually, and that was always pretty separate, but it’s, [it’s], I really enjoy, [enjoy….] there’s a lot of competition when you’re an individual, and I feel like there’s almost [like] less when you’re, when you’re on a team. It’s still competitive, but there’s people, you, you… that are [like] on your side.”

Several riders mentioned that they used their riding as an escape from the everyday academic pressures facing university students. Rider # 4 said it the best: “Riding is definitely my [like] de-stressor, so once a week I like to go and just get away from my nine roommates and….Yeah, so it’s one thing that’s mine, it’s only mine, none of them do it, I get away from them, and I always come back smiling.” Rider # 6 offered, “It’s a big stress reliever for me, because school is
[like] so stressful with work and just classes, so going out to the barn, even if it’s just for my hour lesson or whatever, it’s completely, you...all you can worry about is what you’re doing and I'm not, even if my coach yells at me for something, it’s fine because it’s just … it’s so different from my normal thing...."

The fact that collegiate riding is expensive and requires a large time commitment was also mentioned by rider # 4. She stated, “...it’s expensive, [um,] definitely the expense, and, [uh,] it’s time consuming, which isn’t a bad thing but at the same time I’m pretty busy, so it's just...the barn’s half an hour away and it’s…it just takes a lot of time.” To add some perspective to her statement, consider that an hour long riding lesson16 can easily stretch to almost two hours when you include the grooming and tacking up of the horse before the lesson and the cooling down and untacking of the horse afterwards. If the barn is half an hour away as mentioned by rider # 4, the trip to the barn for a weekly lesson can easily consume three hours of the rider’s time. The riders must carve that out their busy student schedules, so it is easy to understand why they found it very time consuming.

RQ 6: Do riders perceive a double standard towards female and male riders?

The data indicate that there was a clear difference of opinion between the western riders and the hunt seat riders as to whether male riders experience the

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16 Team coaches typically require the riders to take at least one lesson a week with the coaches in order to ride on the equestrian team. Riders are encouraged to take additional lessons if they are able to do so.
same level of scrutiny over their appearance and show outfits in the show ring. The four western riders all indicated that the men on their team were able to put together acceptable show outfits with less expense, and they had more flexibility in color selection for the hat, chaps and boots than the women had (brown was permissible for the male riders). The men’s shows shirts were far simpler and less embellished (and therefore less expensive) than the women’s show shirts.

Rider # 3 stated that the male riders on her team “…they just [like] went to a department store and [like] picked out a new color dress shirt, and he just had to go and have it custom tailored and whatnot.” Rider # 3 also mentioned that “his shirts aren’t anywhere as expensive as ours are.” Rider # 6 stated, “…and they can wear brown, whereas the rest of us have to wear black, but they can wear brown, [um,] because they’re guys, and it’s [like] more acceptable for a guy to wear brown… than a girl.” Rider # 6 continued by saying, “So there’s not quite as much emphasis on their outfits, they have a little bit more flexibility.” Rider # 9 remarked, “Their outfits are a lot simpler than the girls’ outfits, and, [um,] I guess [like] their styles don’t change … I guess it’s not as trend dependent as girls.”

Rider # 5 expressed a clear preference for the women’s show shirts over the men’s more simple show shirts. She commented, “…but I think it’s more attractive to see a female, [like,] ride… it looks better, it’s more attracting, you’re more attracted to that, [you know,] the form fitting and the glittery outfit.” She continued by stating, “I think that a judge would be more attracted to, [you know,]
a really attractive outfit that catches your eye and makes the rider look pretty versus the plain shirt, a plain boy.” and “...when you’re a boy, I think that you don’t look ‘pretty’, it’s just not as cool.” Rider # 5 stated that the male riders might be at a disadvantage in attracting the attention of the show judge because they wore plainer, less flashy (i.e., less embellished or decorated) show shirts. “I think he’s at an extreme disadvantage because...the way our show clothes fit really complement our bodies and really show the way we ride, [you know,] they’re tight fitting and they make, they make the way we sit up there, [you know,] look elegant”. She continued by saying, “I don’t think that does that with boys...you don’t get that accentuation, you don’t get that, [you know,] shiny, gleamy shirt that catches your eye, [you know,] they just look plain”.

However, the five hunt seat riders expressed a different view. In their discipline, the men and women wear essentially the same outfit, and the primary difference is the addition of a dress tie for the men (in lieu of the ratcatcher collar for the women). Their comments indicated equal focus on the male riders' apparel. Rider # 2 stated, “...I think that their ties have to be done a certain way, and they still have to have the same color jacket, and they still have to have the same white shirt, still the same color breeches, everything, everything has to look just as good.” Rider # 4 indicated that judges might be a little more lenient with the male riders in terms of fit because male riders have fewer choices available to them (men’s riding clothes can be difficult to find in tack stores), and, as a result, the fit of the show outfit might not be as good as if there were more
options available to them. Rider # 7 stated, “I mean I think that they still have to look presentable and nice…., but I think that they definitely have to look the part as well.”

It is clearly apparent that the different show outfits worn by the western and hunt seat riders plays a role in whether the riders perceived a double standard between the male and female riders. The hunt seat riders have a much more prescribed show outfit that limits differences between riders’ outfits. The western riders have more variability in their show outfits, and as a result, a clear difference emerges between the male and female riders’ outfits.

**Other themes not specifically addressed by the research questions**

Other themes surfaced from the conversations with the riders that fall outside the scope of the research questions but are still interesting and worthy of discussion.

*Makeup and hair*

The importance of facial cosmetics and hairstyles was a clear theme that emerged in the rider interviews. The western riders all described essentially the same look. Hair was pulled back from the face and fastened in a low bun at the nape of the neck (if the hair was long enough) or pulled back and tucked into the western hat (if the hair was not long enough to wear a bun). All of the riders emphasized that there could never be any loose or flyaway hairs (“whispies”), and hairnets were used to keep the bun neat and tidy. Essentially, the bun was
the only portion of the hair that was visible. An example of the hairstyle worn by
the western riders can be found in Table 16.

Facial cosmetics or makeup were described by the western riders as “full
face stage makeup” (rider # 3), “just like dance” (rider # 5), “very costumey” or
“over dramatic” (rider # 6). Rider # 9 remarked that they “play beauty shop”
when getting ready for their shows. Several riders remarked that their coach
always advised them to put on more blush and lipstick every time one of the
riders asked her if she had enough makeup on. The heavy makeup is critical so
the riders’ faces can be seen from a distance, and it is also possible that their
faces must have a dramatic, theatrical look in order to avoid being overwhelmed
by the elaborate decorative features on the top portion (upper chest and
shoulders) of their show shirts.

The hunt seat riders’ descriptions of hair and makeup were not as uniform
as the western riders’ descriptions. With respect to hair, the hunt seat riders all
described the same look. Hair must be completely tucked up in the safety
helmet. Hair was pulled back from the face and fastened in a low ponytail at the
nape of the neck (if the hair was long enough) or pulled back and tucked into the
safety helmet (if the hair was not long enough to wear a ponytail). The ponytail
was flipped up inside the helmet. All of the riders emphasized that there could
never be any loose or flyaway hairs or any hair falling out of the helmet. Hairnets
were used to shape the hair so that it covered the top portion of the riders’ ears.
Essentially, the portion of the hair over the ears was the only portion of the hair
that was visible. An example of the hairstyle worn by the hunt seat riders can be found in Table 16.

The hunt seat riders were not as consistent in their opinions on the importance of facial cosmetics. They were, however, consistent in stating that the makeup was fairly subtle. Rider # 1 described it as “pretty neutral and nothing really crazy”. Rider # 2 stated, “And, as far as makeup goes in the hunt seat world, it's not as, you know, you don't have as much makeup on as the western people do obviously...”. Rider # 4 described it as “not overboard at all”, and Rider # 8 stated, “Makeup’s not ever an issue or a problem, you can also wear glasses if you need to, it’s not like your face has to look a certain way.”

Hunt seat rider with hair in hairnet over top half of ear

Western rider with hair in bun


Table 16. Close up view of hunt seat and western hairstyles

It appeared there were differences between the two disciplines regarding the importance of makeup and hair. Riders from both teams emphasized the
importance of hair. For both disciplines, hair was neat, tidy and almost completely contained in the hat or helmet. Having the hair completely contained eliminates any visual distractions caused by hair flying loose and moving in the breeze created by the horse and rider as they moved around the show ring. The main difference lay in the intensity of the facial cosmetics or makeup, and this might be attributed to the differences in show clothing worn by the western and hunt seat riders. The western riders wear show shirts with elaborate decoration that frames the shoulders and face. The rider’s face must not be overwhelmed by the clothing, so vivid, theatrical makeup is necessary. In contrast, the hunt seat riders almost uniformly wear white or pastel show shirts and dark colored show coats. Soft, natural makeup is expected because theatrical makeup might overwhelm the muted, classic look of the hunt seat show clothing.

Family support

Another theme that emerged from the interviews is that the riders’ families were very supportive of their daughters’ riding. All nine riders mentioned that her love for horses began at an early age. Some of the riders have families that are (or were) involved in the horse industry (riders # 4, 5 and 9), and they were introduced to equestrian sport through family activities. Others have mothers who loved horses in their youth (riders # 7 and 8) and cultivated the same love in their daughters. Two of the riders sustained serious riding related injuries prior to college (rider # 1 broke an arm and rider # 4 broke a leg), and their families continue to support their riding after the injuries.
Families supported their riders in various ways. Some traveled to the IHSA shows to provide morale support (mentioned by riders #2, 3 and 4). Almost all provided financial support by paying for riding lessons, expenses related to horse ownership (for those riders who own their own horses) or IHSA related expenses. It was clear that these riders could not participate in equestrian sport without the financial and emotional support of their families.

**Coach’s attitude**

Another theme that emerged from the riders’ conversations was the importance of the coach in setting the overall tone or atmosphere for the team. Some of the riders referred to a coaching change that took place during their tenure on the team by mentioning the “old coach” and the “new coach” in their conversations. Based on the comments, the new coach seemed to foster a more cohesive team atmosphere and was very positive in his/her coaching of the team. The old coach was more critical in his/her coaching of the team, and this translated to a less enjoyable experience for the riders. Because it was clear that the riders valued the team aspect of collegiate riding and the support system that it provided, they did not like when the old coach harshly criticized some of their teammates.

The coaches’ attitudes toward competitiveness and inclusiveness also played an important part in the team dynamic. Some of the riders mentioned that their coaches were fully aware of the bias towards taller and thinner riders, but also noted that their coaches encouraged riders of all shapes and riding abilities
to participate in collegiate riding. These coaches, in particular, appeared to value collegiate riding for reasons not limited to winning in the show ring.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

This exploratory study contributes to the very limited literature on body image in equestrians (i.e., one study by Torres-McGehee et. al (2008) on NCAA (now NCEA) varsity equitation athletes) by examining the importance of rider appearance in equestrian sports and riders’ attitudes towards their appearance. Interviews with nine female collegiate riders provided insight by sharing their experiences in Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) competition, a more inclusive format (in terms of rider skill) than National Collegiate Equestrian Association (NCEA) competition, the other predominant collegiate riding format.

Research themes

The six research questions posed in this study identified several predominant themes worth noting. The strongest theme addressed perceived bias by judges with respect to rider attire and rider physique. The riders expressed the belief that there was a bias towards tall, thin riders in equitation classes. Equitation classes are events in which the rider’s skill in controlling the horse and the rider’s physical appearance on the horse are judged. The rider’s
physical appearance is a combination of proper riding technique, body position and appropriate rider attire as defined by the rulebook. The ideal equitation body, or “eq bod”, was described as tall and thin, with a focus on having the longest line possible from the shoulders through the hips down to the heels. One rider noted, “my old coach used to call it the ‘eq bod’, which is tall, but not gauntly, but thin, tall, long…on the horse, you have to have a long line down the horse...” To some extent, riders could emphasize (or create an illusion of) a tall and thin appearance through their show clothing choices. The western riders had more flexibility in modifying their show clothing through the use of color and design elements than the hunt seat riders, who were constrained by a more traditional, uniform “look”. For example, the western riders all described wearing solid black on their lower bodies (from waist to feet) to create a long visual leg line, and several riders noted that the black on their show shirts continued upwards as well (up to the bust line or chest area), further lengthening the visual line from the feet to upper torso.

A second theme concerned the importance of rider attire and presentation. The riders were less in agreement as to whether there was a bias or expectation towards specific rider apparel in the show ring. Many riders expressed the importance of catching the judge’s eye immediately upon entering the show ring. This was particularly important if the class had many entries or participants. The show clothing was part of the riders’ show strategy to avoid being overlooked or lost in the crowd. One rider noted, “you want to get seen in
the class, so you want to make sure that you catch the judge’s eye, and you catch it the first direction or the first time you go by him.”

There was more disagreement among the riders when asked if they believed that the judges paid a lot of attention to their show outfits. Some felt that their show clothing was merely part of the overall picture (of the horse and rider) that they wanted to present to the judge. However, other riders believed that the judges used show clothing to differentiate between two similarly skilled riders when deciding their class placements. In this situation, unflattering, ill-fitting or out of style show clothing would negatively affect their placement in the class. One rider stated, “if that girl has a well-fitting, nice looking outfit that makes her look good, it makes the way she’s sitting and makes the way she’s riding look better, it makes the whole thing look better.” She continued by stating, “…but when you’re nitpicking and you’re looking at two, and you’re thinking ‘which rider do I like better, what picture do I like better?’, you know, the one that looks nice, the nice outfit will make her look like a better rider, make the picture look better.”

The riders described their show outfits in detail. The western riders all indicated that they wore a similar base outfit of black pants, black chaps, black boots and black hat. Their show shirts could be of any color and design, and many described highly ornamented show shirts embellished with crystals, appliques and other design elements that allowed for personal expression of the riders’ personalities. The hunt seat riders all described essentially the same
outfit that consisted of a show coat, show shirt, breeches, tall boots and helmet. There was some flexibility in color choice for the coat and shirt, but the coats were uniformly described as dark and the shirts as pastel or white. Both western and hunt seat riders described the fit of their show outfits as close to the body.

The riders also discussed the importance of facial cosmetics and hairstyles in their show appearances. The western riders described very theatrical, heavy, costumey makeup that complemented their very highly embellished show shirts, whereas the hunt seat riders described very subdued, neutral makeup. Both western and hunt seat riders described sleek, controlled hairstyles (hair pulled tight to the head and completely tucked under either a western hat or helmet) that incorporated hairnets to prevent flyaway hairs.

The contrast between the western riders’ show appearance and the hunt seat riders’ appearance was quite interesting to the researcher. The western riders’ show clothes, in many ways, seemed to the researcher to be the equestrian equivalent of the highly embellished evening gowns worn by beauty pageant contestants. The hunt seat riders’ show clothes, in stark contrast, were much less embellished and were far more subtle in overall appearance. This contrast between the two styles of show clothing could easily be the subject of another detailed study exploring the roots of equestrian clothing and the context of western and hunt seat riding disciplines amid the social and economic environments of each riding style.
Another closely related theme is whether coaches have a similar bias as the judges. A majority of the riders perceived that their coaches believed there is a bias for certain rider attire and rider physique. The riders indicated that their coaches either assisted the riders in initially selecting their show clothes or they reviewed the riders’ existing show clothing prior to the start of the show season. The riders indicated that the coaches’ selection of team point riders for individual shows would often take into account the coaches’ knowledge of the individual judges and their known preferences. Rider physique and rider attire were considered, particularly if the coaches knew that that particular judge valued those aspects in addition to riding technique. One rider explained, “…they’ve said this before, sometimes they’ll choose a point rider not on skill but based on what they think the judge is going to look for…” She continued by remarking, “…they kind of know the judges and what they’re going to look for, so they try to base even our point riders on what they think the judge is going to look for and also ability level, if they don’t think the person is going to perform well, they won’t pick them, but it’s also a lot on if they think that two people are equal, they’ll pick the one that the judge is going to look at more.”

Another emerging theme concerned the riders’ attitudes toward their show clothes and street clothes. The majority of the riders did not have strong feelings about whether they felt different when wearing their show clothing versus wearing their normal clothes. They felt equally comfortable in their show clothes.
and street clothes. One rider strongly felt more comfortable in her street clothes, and two riders preferred their show clothes over their street clothes.

The show clothing purposely fits close to the body in order to highlight the rider’s body position when riding. One rider explained, “They’re very thin, they’re not thick style shirts, and they want it to be thin because it clings to your body better, and then they can see the way if your back is straight, if it’s curved, if your shoulders are up, if they’re down, because when…if a shirt is thicker, it’s harder to see your body position, and in horsemanship, they judge you so much on your body position and how you look in things like that, so they want it to be where they can literally pick out every little thing on your body. So the shirts are really thin for that reason.” This is particularly important in the equitation classes, but because it is so form fitting, some riders may feel uncomfortable displaying their body physique so prominently. However, most of these riders did not report any social physique anxiety (SPA) when wearing the very tight show clothing. One rider was quite uncomfortable displaying her body in the show clothes, and three of the riders were somewhat uncomfortable, but had developed coping strategies to mitigate the anxiety they felt. In general, it appeared that the riders having more extensive show experience seemed to be more comfortable in their show clothes than the riders having little or no show experience. The specific reasons for this were not explored in this study, but this could be a topic for future study.

More general, non-body image related themes also emerged from the study. Riders expressed satisfaction with other elements of collegiate riding not
related to body image. Many of the riders reported that their team had become their “family away from home” – in other words, a built-in support network. The riders clearly valued the friendships they had forged with their teammates. Other riders valued the support provided by the coaches. For many of the riders, their college years represented the first time they had lived apart from their parents. As a result, some riders viewed their coaches as “friendly parent stand-ins” in addition to being their riding coaches. Although the research questions did not expressly examine this aspect, it may be that the strong familial bond that these riders felt with their coaches and teammates helped mitigate any social physique anxiety they might experience in the absence of this support network.

A final theme concerning gender differences in rider appearance also emerged. The riders were divided in opinion as to whether or not a double standard existed for male and female riders with respect to rider attire. The western riders clearly perceived a double standard and cited numerous differences in rider attire for the men on their team. These differences included a wider range of acceptable colors, a simpler style of show shirts with fewer decorative elements and the less expensive nature of the men’s’ show clothes. One rider remarked, “So there’s not quite as much emphasis on their outfits, they have a little bit more flexibility.” The hunt seat riders did not perceive a double standard between male and female riders in their show attire. One rider noted, “…I think that their ties have to be done a certain way, and they still have to have
the same color jacket, and they still have to have the same white shirt, still the same color breeches, everything, everything has to look just as good.”

**Limitations**

The researcher decided to limit (for purely logistical reasons) the scope of this study to equestrian team members in the immediate geographical region (Ohio, which has a rich tradition of equestrian competition). Because there are no NCEA equestrian teams in Ohio, this limited the participation in this study to IHSA equestrian team members.

Another limitation was the exclusion of male IHSA riders from this study. Because eight of the nine riders interviewed for this study indicated that there were male riders on their teams, it would be interesting to look at social physique anxiety in equestrian sport from a masculine point of view.

Nine riders participated in this exploratory study. The views and opinions expressed by these riders were representative of this small group only. As a result, the themes identified in this study cannot be extrapolated to the equestrian population as a whole without conducting additional research involving a much larger sample of equestrians.

**Further research**

Based on the findings of this exploratory qualitative study, the following items are suggested for additional study of this topic: 1) Expansion of the scope to include both IHSA and NCEA team members from additional states and
competitive zones/regions. This may identify whether there are regional differences present within each collegiate team format (i.e., IHSA Zone 1 relative to IHSA Zone 2, etc.), as well as differences present between the two competition formats (i.e., IHSA relative to NCEA). 2) Inclusion of male riders in the IHSA format would also be an interesting continuation of this exploratory research, although a comparison of the IHSA and NCEA formats would not be relevant for the male riders. 3) Expansion of the scope to include surveys of judges and coaches who participate in the collegiate riding formats. As some of the judges may officiate in both formats (IHSA and NCEA), a cross-format analysis from the judges’ and coaches’ perspectives may add some balance to the perspectives provided by the riders in this study. 4) Expansion of the scope to include various quantitative measures of body image, including appearance orientation, appearance evaluation, figure rating scales, SPA measured by the original SPAS, etc. 5) Expansion of the scope to include equestrians not competing in a team environment. This could include both older equestrians (middle age and older) and younger equestrians.

**Implications**

The nine riders interviewed for this study were, for the most part, quite comfortable with their physical appearance and were quite comfortable with their bodies being on display in the show ring. The one exception was rider # 1, who experienced quite a bit of anxiety over her physique when she compared herself to the idealized equitation body (the so-called “eq bod”). The findings of this
The findings of this exploratory study (relative to SPA) are, in many ways, not unexpected, given the diverse findings of previous studies examining SPA in athletes and exercisers. Van Raalte et al. (1998) concluded that the nature of judging (subjectively judged versus objectively scored) affected the level of SPA experienced by the athletes more than the athletes’ skill level (elite versus non-elite). The riders in this study noted that the judging in equitation classes (hunt seat terminology) and the horsemanship classes (western terminology) was more subjective in nature, and as a result, the riders’ appearances became very important.
Hausenblas and Mack (1999) theorized that the elite divers they studied exhibited less SPA than other elite athletes and non-athletes because the divers not having the desired body type quit competitive diving before reaching the elite level. The implication of this attrition was that the divers in their study who were still in the sport had bodies more suited to the sport, and this contributed to lower levels of SPA in those divers. While this finding could not be replicated in this study, it was interesting to note that the one rider who exhibited the highest level of SPA when wearing her show clothing quit riding on her collegiate equestrian team after riding only one year at a beginner level. This lends some credence to Hausenblas and Mack’s theory that athletes having body types not conducive to their sport may self-eliminate from competition before reaching elite levels.

Krane et al. (2001) could not find a correlation between SPA and uniform style (revealing uniform versus baggy uniform) and suggested that athletes in those sports with a revealing uniform had developed various coping skills over the years and had grown accustomed to wearing the revealing uniform. A similar situation was noticed among the riders in this study. The riders with more extensive show experience were generally very comfortable in their show clothes (or were at least able to joke about their appearance when wearing show clothes), whereas the most inexperienced rider was quite uncomfortable having her body on display when wearing her show clothes.

It was unclear from this exploratory study whether equestrians in general experience higher levels of SPA in their equitation classes than athletes in other
subjectively judged sports. However, it did seem that all of the riders in this study felt some external pressure to conform to an idealized body type described as tall, thin and long legged (the “eq bod”) that some did not possess naturally. While the college age riders in this study were mostly comfortable with that expectation (with the exception of one rider), how does this expectation affect younger equestrians who are still developing their own perceptions of body image?

The vast majority of riders are female, and many of them begin riding and showing in their formative (pre-teen and teen) years when they are most vulnerable to developing a negative body image that may follow them through adulthood. How many body image related issues might be prevented in equestrians, both young and old, if the horse show community were able to move away from rewarding riders with the currently idealized “eq bod” and move towards rewarding proper riding technique as demonstrated by equestrians of all shapes and sizes? Perhaps a place to start is by increasing awareness among equestrian coaches and judges of body image issues among equestrians.

It is possible that the perceived preference for certain body shapes is perpetuated by the actions of show judges and coaches. The nine riders participating in this study did not seem to place a higher value on having the desired “eq bod”, but they did realize that having an “eq bod” gave them a competitive advantage in the show ring with regard to equitation classes. The judges rewarded riders who possess qualities that they personally like (which
may include a preference for tall and thin riders), and the coaches noticed what is winning in the show ring. They then reacted to their observations by coaching and training their riders to have the desired qualities, thus perpetuating the cycle.

How can we raise the awareness of body image and its emotional effect on riders among judges and coaches? Perhaps a series of coaching and judging workshops about body image and equestrians could be presented at the beginning of each competitive season. If logistics prevent this, then perhaps articles could be submitted for publication in the show organizations’ printed publications (the USEF’s *Equestrian Magazine*, the AQHA’s *Journal*, etc.), in their electronic mailings or on their websites (www.usef.org, www.aqha.com, www.collegiateequestrian.com www.ihsainc.com, etc.)

Parents also play an important part in equestrian sport. The support they provide for the riders, particularly for those riders younger than collegiate age, is important. Parent education can be accomplished through publication of body image articles in the printed publications of non-collegiate equestrian team organizations, such as the Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA), the middle and high school equivalent of the IHSA. The IEA publishes its own magazine, *Take the Reins*, which features articles of interest for young equestrians

Of course, all of these education efforts cannot occur without the cooperation of the show organizations. Before we can begin to educate the
coaches and judges, we can try to increase awareness of body image issues by the organizations' board of directors.

Participation in equestrian sport should be a rewarding experience for all of those involved. Equestrian sport is unique in that it requires a partnership with an animal, and that partnership is developed through empathy with the rider's equine partner. The horse doesn't care about his or her rider's physical appearance, so why should the judges and coaches be so concerned about it?
References


Appendix A

NCEA Varsity Team Roster Analysis
# NCAA (Now NCEA) Varsity Team Roster Analysis

Teams Appearing on www.varsityequestrian.com list of NCAA (now NCEA) teams

2011-2012 Year

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<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Division *</th>
<th>HS</th>
<th>West</th>
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**Total Division 1 Schools 18**

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(1) 2010-2011 roster, 2011-2012 roster not available

**Total Division 2 Schools 5**

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<thead>
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<th># of riders</th>
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Note: Division assignment per www.varsityequetation.com as of 1/9/2012
Appendix B

Analyses of Local Tack Shop Inventories
# Analysis of Local (Columbus, OH area) English Tack Shop Inventory
## Hunt Seat Apparel as Listed on Store's Website @ 3/9/2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># of Items</th>
<th>High Price</th>
<th>Avg Price</th>
<th>Median Price</th>
<th>Low Price</th>
<th># of Items</th>
<th>High Price</th>
<th>Avg Price</th>
<th>Median Price</th>
<th>Low Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ladies Hunt Coats</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
<td>$85.76</td>
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<td>$20.00</td>
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<td>$184.45</td>
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<td>Ladies Breeches</td>
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<td>Ladies Show Shirts</td>
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<td>Ladies Tall Boots</td>
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<td>$809.95</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>$549.95</td>
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Note: Used items are listed individually. New items are listed by item (multiple sizes per item possible, so actual inventory count may be higher than indicated).

# Analysis of Local (Columbus, OH area) Western Tack Shop Inventory
## Western Apparel as Listed on Store’s Website @ 3/10/2011

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<th>Low Price</th>
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<th>Avg Price</th>
<th>Median Price</th>
<th>Low Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>$89.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ladies Pant</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladies Show Shirts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ladies Boots</td>
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<td>Ladies Hats</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Store does not sell used items. New items are listed by item (multiple sizes per item possible, so actual inventory count may be higher than indicated).
1. What is your first name? You may use a pseudonym if you wish.

2. How old are you?

3. How did you get interested in horses and riding?

   Was riding an activity that your family was involved in? Were they supportive or critical of your riding?

4. Did you own (or own now) a horse?

   If yes, tell me how you got him/her, what he/she's like, and do you have him/her with you in college now?

5. Before college or university, how many years had you been riding?

   How many times per week did you take lessons, and in what discipline were they (for example, western, hunt seat, jumping, reining, etc.)?

6. Did you ride on an equestrian team (such as an Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) team) during middle or high school?

7. Did you show as an individual (in other words, not as part of an equestrian team) during middle or high school?

   If yes for last question, tell me about your experience in those shows. In what level shows did you participate (for example, A or AA, unrated/local, breed, open, NRHA shows etc.), in what discipline, and how frequently?

8. Are you currently riding on your university's equestrian team?

   If yes, what discipline do you ride on your team? (western/English/both) and for how long?

   If you are not currently riding on your university's equestrian team but have in the past, why did you stop (for example, too much money, no time, lost interest, didn’t like the format or quality or horses, other reason)?

9. How would you categorize your university team compared to other teams in your zone or region?

   Very competitive
Somewhat competitive
Neither competitive or non-competitive
Somewhat non-competitive
Non-competitive

What do you like the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, is it the camaraderie, being able to travel to shows, the actual riding or something else?

What do you dislike the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, riding unfamiliar horses, politics, making an individual sport into a team sport, etc.

In what class(es) or event(s) do you compete? Show list of classes on separate card.

If there are too many riders for everyone to show or complete in a given event or class, who decides who shows for your team? For example, the coach, team captain(s), team vote, seniority, riders picking straws, etc.?

Does your school have a show outfit that everyone wears (i.e., a standard show outfit), or do you pick your own outfit?

Tell me about your show outfit. Describe all elements such as boots, spurs, hat, gloves, colors, amount of decoration, etc. Is it very form fitting?

What factors do you consider when choosing your show outfit? For example, horse color, body shape, equitation weakness that you want to de-emphasize, etc.

Did you have to get approval from the coaches before wearing this outfit?

If your university provides the show outfit, are you allowed to tailor it to fit your body, or are you limited in how you can modify the outfit? Can you provide examples?

If your university has a predetermined show outfit, are there certain items that you have to provide yourself, or do they provide all parts of the show outfit?

Which items did you provide?

Are hairstyle and makeup important aspects of your appearance at shows? Do
your teammates help each other with hair and makeup at shows and share tips and/or tricks?

How do you feel when you are wearing your show outfit? Do you feel confident about your riding ability when wearing your show outfit? Are you physically and emotionally comfortable in your show outfit?

Do you ever feel self-conscious or uncomfortable about certain aspects of your body when wearing your show outfit? If yes, tell me what makes you uncomfortable.

Do you have the same feelings or worries when wearing your regular street clothes?

When you didn't feel positive about your appearance in your show outfit, did it affect your confidence level and/or how you performed that day?

Has your coach ever suggested that you lose or gain weight in order to be more competitive in your event? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation? How does the coach guide you?

Has your coach ever suggested that you increase or decrease your level of fitness? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation? How does the coach guide you?

Does your team have fitness or conditioning requirements or standards (either official or unofficial) in addition to riding related requirements? If so, what are they?

Do you think the riders on your team are supportive of each other, or are they critical of each other? What have you seen or experienced that makes you think this?

What does your coach do (or not do) to encourage a supportive team environment? Can you describe any examples?

How do you feel about having to ride unfamiliar horses in IHSA shows? Does that add a lot of stress for you, or do you see this as a "challenge"?

When you are riding equitation or horsemanship classes, do you ever think that the judges favor certain body types or have a preferred "look" and use this to
decide placings? Have you personally seen evidence of this occurring? If so, can you describe what happened?

In your opinion, do you think that your coaches think that judges favor certain body types or looks in equitation classes? Have you seen or hear your coach say something that might indicate this?

Do you think that judges pay attention to riders' outfits and use this as part of their judging criteria? For example, as long as the riders' outfit meets the rulebook standard, fits well and is in good condition, do you think what the rider is wearing influences the judge?

Are there male riders on your college or university equestrian team?

If so, do you think that the male riders experience similar levels of scrutiny over their appearance or their show outfits?
Appendix D

Text for E-mailed Solicitations to Participate
Text for E-mailed Solicitations to Participate

Dear [name],

I am conducting a research study as a requirement for my master’s degree in Consumer Sciences. I am looking for female college students (age 18 and older) who are currently riding on their college’s IHSA equestrian team (or have ridden on their college’s IHSA equestrian team within the past two years). I am looking for both English and western riders.

Participants will receive a $25 gift card to either Target or Kroger (your choice) upon completion of a personal interview. This interview will be held in Campbell Hall on the Columbus campus of The Ohio State University. If we cannot coordinate our schedules to accommodate a face-to-face interview, the interview may be conducted via Skype. Interviews are expected to last 60 minutes.

Please respond to me at privette.3@osu.edu by [month day], 2011 if you are interested in participating in this research study. Please let me know if you will need a single day parking pass for the Columbus campus.

Thanks!

Tricia Privette
Privette.3@osu.edu
614-582-6565

Tricia Privette
Candidate for Master's degree
The Ohio State University
College of Education and Human Ecology
Department of Consumer Sciences
privette.3@osu.edu
614-582-6565 (cell)

Dr. Nancy A. Rudd
Advisor and Associate Professor
The Ohio State University
College of Education and Human Ecology
Department of Consumer Sciences
rudd.1@osu.edu
614-292-4385 (office)
Appendix E

Consent Form for Interviews Conducted in Person
Date: ______________, 2011

Consent Form for Interviews Conducted in Person

Thank you for participating in this interview session. I am conducting these individual interviews to obtain data for a research study as a requirement for my Master of Science in Education and Human Ecology degree program. I am conducting this research study with the guidance of my advisor, Dr. Nancy A. Rudd.

The purpose of this study is to obtain qualitative data from female collegiate equestrians who ride in the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) format. The data that result from these individual interviews (i.e., your answers) will be used to identify possible themes and/or concerns present among the riders being interviewed, and the results may be used to guide future research in this area.

Your commitment consists of approximately 60 minutes of your time, during which you will answer questions asked by the interviewer. You may refuse to answer any of these questions.

This interview will be audio recorded, and a transcript of the questions and answers will be produced from the audio recording.

All personally identifiable information, if any, will be removed from the transcript if complete transcripts are included in the final written research project. Your responses will remain confidential.

If the personal interview is conducted via Skype, there is a potential for breach of confidentiality. Although every effort to protect confidentiality will be made, no guarantee of internet security can be given as, although unlikely, transmissions can be intercepted and IP addresses can be identified.

You will receive a $25 gift card to either Kroger or Target (your choice) at the completion of this interview. If you withdraw before completing the personal interview today, you will receive a pro-rated gift card for $15 to either Kroger or Target (your choice). By law, payments to subjects are considered taxable income. Please consult your tax advisor for guidance if you have questions regarding this incentive payment.

Participation is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate, withdraw from or stop this interview at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled as described in the previous paragraph.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-
related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

If you agree to participate in the individual interview, please read, complete and sign the statement on the following page.

I, _________________________________ (printed name), have read the above disclosures and agree to participate in this research study willingly and without duress. My responses will remain confidential, and I acknowledge that I will receive a $25 gift card as an incentive upon completion of the interview (or a $15 gift card if I choose to withdraw before the completion of the personal interview). I affirm that I am 18 years old or older.

____________________________________ (signature)

________________________ (date)

For questions, concerns, complaints, or if you feel that you have been harmed as a result of study participation, you may contact:

Tricia Privette
Candidate for Master’s degree
The Ohio State University
College of Education and Human Ecology
Department of Consumer Sciences
privette.3@osu.edu
614-582-6565 (cell)

Dr. Nancy A. Rudd
Advisor and Associate Professor
The Ohio State University
College of Education and Human Ecology
Department of Consumer Sciences
rudd.1@osu.edu
614-292-4385 (office)
Appendix F

Consent Form for Interviews Conducted via Skype
Consent Form for Interviews Conducted via Skype

Thank you for participating in this interview session. I am conducting these individual interviews to obtain data for a research study as a requirement for my Master of Science in Education and Human Ecology degree program. I am conducting this research study with the guidance of my advisor, Dr. Nancy A. Rudd.

The purpose of this study is to obtain qualitative data from female collegiate equestrians who ride in the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) format. The data that result from these individual interviews (i.e., your answers) will be used to identify possible themes and/or concerns present among the riders being interviewed, and the results may be used to guide future research in this area.

Your commitment consists of approximately 60 minutes of your time, during which you will answer questions asked by the interviewer. You may refuse to answer any of these questions. This interview will be audio recorded, and a transcript of the questions and answers will be produced from the audio recording.

All personally identifiable information, if any, will be removed from the transcript if complete transcripts are included in the final written research project. Your responses will remain confidential.

There is a potential for breach of confidentiality for interviews conducted via Skype. Although every effort to protect confidentiality will be made, no guarantee of internet security can be given as, although unlikely, transmissions can be intercepted and IP addresses can be identified.

You will receive a $25 gift card to either Kroger or Target (your choice) at the completion of this interview. By law, payments to subjects are considered taxable income. Please consult your tax advisor for guidance if you have questions regarding this incentive payment.

Participation is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate, withdraw from or stop this interview at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled as described in the previous paragraph.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you
may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-
800-678-6251.

If you agree to participate in the individual interview via Skype, please respond by e-mail
and include the following paragraph in your e-mail message:

I, [insert your name], have read the disclosures that were e-mailed to me and agree to
participate in this research study willingly and without duress. My responses will remain
confidential, and I acknowledge that I will receive a $25 gift card as an incentive. I
affirm that I am 18 years old or older.

For questions, concerns, complaints, or if you feel that you have been harmed as a
result of study participation, you may contact:

Tricia Privette
Candidate for Master's degree
The Ohio State University
College of Education and Human
Ecology
Department of Consumer Sciences
privette.3@osu.edu
614-582-6565 (cell)

Dr. Nancy A. Rudd
Advisor and Associate Professor
The Ohio State University
College of Education and Human
Ecology
Department of Consumer Sciences
rudd.1@osu.edu
614-292-4385 (office)
**Interview transcript # 1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your first name? You may use a pseudonym if you wish.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s [rider name redacted, to be referred as Rider # 1]</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>How old are you?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Twenty two.</td>
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<tr>
<th>And how did you get interested in horses and riding?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Um, you know, I always liked horses, every little girl wants a pony, but, um, I rode for a few years when I was younger, probably from the time I was ten to fifteen, and then I took several years off, and then found out about the [university name redacted] equestrian team and decided to get back into that, and so I started riding on the hunt seat team my... at the end of my sophomore year at [university name redacted].</td>
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<tr>
<th>Was riding an activity that your family was involved in? And were they supportive or critical of your riding?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Um, none of my family rides or has ridden. At first, they were supportive, but now after breaking my arm, they’re not so supportive.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Did you own (or do you own) a horse now?</th>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Before college or university, how many years had you been riding?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Probably four. [Four continuously... or in chunks...] Continuously. [You said from ten to fifteen, right?] Um hmmm.</td>
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<tr>
<th>How many times per week did you take lessons, and in what discipline were they (for example, western, hunt seat, jumping, reining, etc.)?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Um, is this for [university name redacted] or...? [prior to [university name redacted]] Prior to [university name redacted], probably just once a week in English... hunt seat.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did you ride on an equestrian team (such as an Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) team) during middle or high school?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Did you show as an individual (in other words, not as part of an equestrian team) during middle or high school?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
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<tr>
<th>If yes for last question, tell me about your experience in those shows. In what level shows did you participate (for example, A or AA, unrated/local, breed, open, NRHA shows etc.), in what discipline, and how frequently?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Question skipped. N/A</td>
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<tr>
<th>Are you currently riding on your university's equestrian team?</th>
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No.

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<tr>
<th>If yes, what discipline do you ride on your team? (western/English/both) and for how long?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question skipped. N/A</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th>If you are not currently riding on your university's equestrian team but have in the past, why did you stop (for example, too much money, no time, lost interest, didn't like the format or quality or horses, other reason)?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A lot of it was the format and... the trainer. It just wasn’t fun anymore. It was just stress... it got really stressful, and I didn’t enjoy it anymore. [So it got too competitive?] Um, ... [between the girls or?].... No, it was just kind of.... I guess it was that I got really tired of being yelled at all the time... and being told I wasn’t good. [And that was coming from the trainer?] Yes.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th>How would you categorize your university team compared to other teams in your zone or region?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither competitive or non-competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat non-competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Um, I would say it was somewhat competitive.</td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>What do you like the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, is it the camaraderie, being able to travel to shows, the actual riding or something else?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I thought the shows were really fun. I really liked being able just to hang out with the other girls on the team. Like we would go to shows at [name redacted] or [name redacted] or [name redacted], so it was fun to be able to get out of town with them for a while and go to shows. We got to hang out the whole weekend. [So a lot of it was the camaraderie?] Um hm. [not necessarily the actual riding in the classes?] Um hm.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you dislike the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, riding unfamiliar horses, politics, making an individual sport into a team sport, etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Um hm. It was... a think a lot of it came from the trainer, I didn’t like who I was riding for. And so it put a lot of pressure on everyone to do well and like be a certain way and look a certain way. And that on top of it, the politics of who wins and who doesn’t, a lot of it is really political in judging, and the people that are the prettiest usually win.</td>
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<tr>
<th>In what class(es) or event(s) do you compete?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Um, I did the walk/trot/canter hunt seat equitation. I only did it for one year, so... I was a point away from moving up a level when I quit. [Oh!] I know, the last show I was at, I was one point away from going to regionals, and I didn’t get it. [Aw, that had to be frustrating!] Yeah, it was.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If there are too many riders for everyone to show or complete in a given event or class, who decides who shows for your team? For example, the coach, team captain(s), team vote, seniority, riders picking straws, etc.?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It was the coach. [It was the coach?] Um hm. For, um, each level, they had a point squad, which were the riders that would collect the points for the team, and you had to try out for it, so it got really competitive. And then throughout the year, if you wanted to try out again, you could bump someone out of it by doing like a ride-off and you’d have to compete for it. [So the point squad, were they the only riders that rode the events, or were they the designated rider to pick up the points?] They were the designated riders to pick up the points, and there were two people in each division that did it, and so you didn’t know if it was going to be you or the other person in your division that would get the points for each show. But in the over fences classes, those were the only two people that would ride because there was a limit on how many people you could have in each division over fences.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Did your school have a show outfit that everyone wore (like a standard outfit), or do you have to provide your own outfit?**

We provided our own.

**Tell me about your show outfit. Describe all elements such as boots, spurs, hat, gloves, colors, amount of decoration, etc. Is it very form fitting?**

Um, the one I had, I really liked. Um, it was kind of uncomfortable, I really hate the collars, they’re tight [the ratcatchers?] Um hmm, I don’t like those, but, um, I really liked the one I had. I still have my... I still have it... but not all of it is stuff that I still wear, but I had a navy, like dark navy pinstriped hunt coat, and tan like side zip Tailored Sportsman breeches that I really like - I still have those. And black leather gloves that I still wear for competition, and the boots that I have are Ariat Monacos that are black tall boots with like sterling silver logos on the side, so they’re real fancy. But, I never wore spurs when I rode with IHSA, so I didn’t have any at the time, but I do now. [Helmet?] A GPA Titium [with the stripey?]… Uh, yeah, it has the silver stripe with the air vents in the front.

**What factors do you consider when choosing your show outfit? For example, horse color, body shape, equitation weakness that you want to de-emphasize, etc.**
Um, at the time when I first bought it, I had never competed before, so I didn’t really know a lot about it...it was mostly what looked the best and what was the most flattering on me. And, but now it’s more..., cause I’m doing shows individually now, so I know what horses I’m going to be riding, so some of it is more what would look best with whichever horse I’m riding in terms of colors and show shirts and things like that. Um, but at the time it was just trying to get whatever looked best and was the nicest that I could afford. [And you had to kind of do something fairly neutral, particularly with horses, because you had to make sure you didn’t clash with the horse, right?] Um hmm, yeah, so I had a dark navy hunt coat and a white show shirt. [That’s pretty basic.] Um hmm.

Did you have to get approval from the coaches before wearing the outfit? Did they have to sign off on each of the items?

Yes. Um hmm. They don’t really sign off on it, but the big thing is making sure you don’t have something that’s a weird color and that will look bad. [And were they concerned about fit?] Um hmm.

If your university provides the show outfit, are you allowed to tailor it to fit your body, or are you limited in how you can modify the outfit? Can you provide examples?

Question skipped. N/A

If your university has a predetermined show outfit, are there certain items that you have to provide yourself, or do they provide all parts of the show outfit? Which items did you provide?

Question skipped. N/A

Are hairstyle and makeup important aspects of your appearance at shows? Did your teammates help each other and share tips and/or tricks?

Hair was really important, but makeup wasn’t so much of a concern. I know in, like on the western team, it was a really big deal. You had to have all of the makeup on and stuff, but for hunt seat, it was pretty neutral and nothing really crazy, um, but the hair was really important. It had to be really perfect, and so we were always sharing tips and tricks to get it to look good and to get your helmet on. [And what was interesting about the hair that had to be just so?] Um, like it has to cover your ears, like down to, like halfway down your ears and in the hairnet so it was smooth and no little hairs sticking out by your ears, and then the ponytail had to be low and then flipped up under your helmet so it all stayed up, and you couldn’t see the back of your hair at all, and...it became a fine art to getting it ready.

How do you feel when you are wearing your show outfit? Do you feel confident about your riding ability when wearing your show outfit? Are you physically and emotionally comfortable in your show outfit?
No, just the collar was always really tight. I always felt like I couldn’t breathe, um, but other than that I like it. It’s comfortable as long as it’s not too hot. But, I like it… it makes me feel like I look like I know what I’m doing. [Makes you look like a real rider?] Yeah, (laughs).

Do you ever feel self-conscious or uncomfortable about certain aspects of your body when wearing your show outfit? If yes, tell me what makes you uncomfortable.

Yes. Riders aren’t supposed to have boobs, which I do. [Well that’s kind of hard when most of them are women!] Yeah it’s just, you know, it doesn’t look good on a horse. Um, I feel like I should be thin, like I know I would be a better athlete if I was really thin, um, and that was something that was really pushed a lot - is that a rider should be thin. And my legs are too short. [And so was it you felt like the breeches accentuated your short legs, or that and the boots or…?]…It’s just like wearing light tan, skin tight pants - it’s not the most flattering thing on anyone. [So part of it is the color of them?] Um hmm. Yeah.

Do you have the same feelings or worries when you’re wearing your regular street clothes?

Not as much. [Any reason that you can think of why? Do you feel more covered up in your street clothes?] No, I think it’s because I’m not comparing myself to everyone else. Um, like in the riding like at the horse shows, there’s all these, you know, six foot tall girls that are super tall and skinny and like real long legs, and they’re like the perfect riding type. Um, like the…you know, there are people that have like swimmer’s bodies that have broad shoulders and long arms - it’s the same way with riding. Some people are built for it, and some people aren’t.

When you didn’t feel positive about your appearance in your show outfit, did it affect your confidence level and/or how you performed that day?

Um, it made me worry more about how I would place, but once I got in the ring, I didn’t really think about it, because it kind of…adrenaline kicks in and you just do it…..[um hmm, so automatic pilot, sort of?] Yeah.

Did your coach ever suggest that you lose or gain weight in order to be more competitive in your event? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?

Yeah, that happened a lot. Um, she, my coach, would come to…. I remember specifically she came to a meeting one time, and told us that the reason that we weren’t winning was because we all needed to lose weight. So we all needed to start working out more and going to the gym and not eat as much and all that. And people didn’t really pay attention, because most of the people on the team were really fit, and so it was like it was weird that she would come and tell all of us that we were too fat and that’s why we didn’t win.
Has your coach ever suggested that you increase or decrease your level of fitness? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?

Yeah.  [She wanted you to go start working out at the gym...?] Um hmm.  [She wanted the whole team to work out at the gym?] Yeah.

Does your team have fitness or conditioning requirements or standards (either official or unofficial) in addition to riding related requirements? If so, what are they?

No.  [So it was strongly suggested...] but not required.

Do you think the riders on your team are supportive of each other, or do you think they are critical of each other? And have you seen or experienced anything that would make you think this?

I feel like most of the time they were pretty supportive of each other and helping each other out. You know, if someone is having trouble with something, like helping them fix it. Especially in riding, if you were riding together, helping the other person figure out what they were doing wrong. Um, I don’t remember people ever being really critical of each other. Um, but I think people were honest. Like if someone was really crappy, they would just say they're crappy, maybe not to their face, but they would say it.  [So you can be constructive and be honest and have it be in a positive light, or it can be critical, do you feel like it was more the positive that was going on?] Usually it was more positive.

What does your coach do (or not do) to encourage a supportive team environment? Can you describe any examples?

Um, we had a lot of social events where we would all go out and do stuff together, so that was cool, we’d got to know each other better and become friends. But she wasn’t ever really involved in that, it was mostly like the president and vice president and social chair that did that kind of thing. Um, but in lessons, it was a lot more competitive to… outride the other people you were riding with.  [Ok, so viewing it almost as a mini show then?] Um hmm.

How did you feel about having to ride the unfamiliar horses in IHSA shows? Did that add a lot of stress, or did you see this as a “challenge”?

It was really stressful, because, um, if you got a bad horse, there wasn’t really any way you could win, but if you got a really good horse, then it would increase your chances of placing high. Um, so a lot of it was luck, who got which horse depending on who would win.

When you are riding equitation or horsemanship classes, do you ever think that the judges favor certain body types or have a preferred "look" and use this to decide placings? Have you personally seen evidence of this occurring? If so, can you describe what happened?
Um, yeah, a lot of it was just based on what each particular judge liked, but, um, we would always talk about having “eq bods”... like equitation bodies on the [university name redacted] team, which is, you know, being really thin and tall, which most people aren’t naturally. And that’s the kind of thing that judges look for, it’s what looks best on a horse. [...And so have you personally seen evidence of this occurring, or is this just the scuttlebutt from the team members talking...?] Um, yeah, it was usually the people with a specific body type that placed higher, unless they really screwed up. [...Ok, so if riding skills were level, you could pick out who was going to place in the class depending on their body type, it that what I’m hearing?] Um, not necessarily, like it still was a lot about riding and position and stuff, but that’s just like what looks the best, and so that was an indicator of what would place higher.

**In your opinion, do you think that your coaches think that judges favor certain body types or looks in equitation classes? Have you seen or hear your coach say something that might indicate this?**

Yes. [...Have you seen or can you describe what you’ve seen that might support this?] Um, we were always told that “thin wins”, and “you can’t make your thighs longer, but you can make them thinner”.

**Do you think that judges pay attention to the riders’ outfits and use this as part of their judging criteria? For example, as long as it meets the standard in the rulebook, and it fits, and it’s in good condition, do you think they are paying a whole lot of attention to what you’re wearing?**

Um, I think it would depend on the judge, but I would assume so, because a lot of it is what catches their eye the most, and who they look at the most.

**Do you have any male riders on your college or university equestrian team?**

No.

**If so, do you think that the male riders experience similar levels of scrutiny over their appearance or their show outfits?**

Question skipped. N/A
Appendix H

Transcript: Rider # 2
What is your first name? You may use a pseudonym if you wish.
I'm [rider name redacted, to be referred to as Rider # 2].

How old are you?
I'm nineteen.

How did you get interested in horses and riding?
I first starting riding when I was, competitively riding, when I was in 7th grade, but I did horse camps when I was little, and my... actually my first birthday party when I was one year old, my parents brought a pony to the house, like it was just not a good idea, but, um,... I started in 7th grade, and then 8th grade was my first year in IEA, and then I've just been doing that since, yep.

Was riding an activity that your family was involved in? Were they supportive or critical of your riding?
My mom was very supportive of it, my mom kind of wanted a horse when she was younger, so that was kind of where the whole thing started a little bit, but, um, my dad is not very supportive of the sport. He doesn't really think it's a great idea, and, um, he's always concerned about the safety of it. But, you know, it's....he still comes to the horse shows, like he still goes to everything and is there for me like when I come in and out of the ring, so he does that for me, but it was up to him, I probably wouldn't do it.

Do you own (or did you own) a horse?
I did own a horse. I've owned... um, technically, I owned two horses.

Tell me how you got him/her, what he/she's like, and do you have him/her with you in college now?
My first horse, I got her when I was in 8th grade, and she was a three year old, and we just found her on the internet, and she was really cheap, and it was a terrible idea. So, it was kind of one of those things where I just started riding, and, um, it was... my mom just wanted a horse, to tell you the truth. So we got a horse, and, um, we, you know, soon realized training is necessary, and that was going to take a little bit. Um, so she was actually sold within like three years, and I really honestly never rode her because she was so green. And then just when I was a sophomore in high school, we came into this wonderful horse from, um, [state name redacted], who actually just had had a baby, and she was really out of shape, like hadn't been worked in a year. And they were like "you can have her cheap", like go ahead, and she, um, was great, and we did the children/adult jumpers, like the 3'6" jumpers, together for two years. She, ...I sold her before I came to school because it was just too expensive, um, to keep her here.

Before college, how many years had you been riding? I think you said... when did you say you started?
In 7th grade. [In 7th grade, continuously all the way through now] Yep.
Before college, how many times per week did you take lessons, and in what discipline were they (for example, western, hunt seat, jumping, reining, etc.)?

I took lessons probably once a week, um, if not twice a week when I was getting ready for regionals or zones or nationals, and I rode in hunt seat…in the hunter/jumper equitation.

Did you ride on an equestrian team (such as an Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) team) during middle or high school?

Yes, for five years. [For five years, you started as …] in 8th grade.

Did you show as an individual (in other words, not as part of an equestrian team) during middle or high school?

I did, I showed with my horse as well, like in outside shows, um, all throughout, starting in 7th grade before I was even in IEA, um, but as, you know, I kind of got older and my sister started riding, it was really expensive to do normal horse shows, so we had to just stick with IEA.

Tell me about your experience in those shows. In what level shows did you participate (for example, A or AA, unrated/local, breed, open, NRHA shows etc.), in what discipline, and how frequently?

Um, starting in like 7th and 8th grade, I actually showed a lot, um, it was just local shows. Um, nothing big or anything, I’ve never shown, I’ve never shown in an A rated show. It’s just been… um, I think the highest I did was a B, and I ended up not showing because my horse was lame when she got off the trailer, so that was depressing, but… But they were mainly local shows from like 7th to like 9th grade, and then in 9th grade, I just did IEA, and I did, um, three years in open in IEA, and one year in intermediate, and the first year was in novice.

Are you currently riding on your university’s equestrian team?

Um hmm.

If yes, what discipline are you riding on your team? (western/English/both) and for how long?

The hunt seat team. [Are you doing flat or are you doing….] I do both, flat and fences. [How long have you been riding on the university’s team?] This is my second year.

If you are not currently riding on your university’s equestrian team but have in the past, why did you stop (for example, too much money, no time, lost interest, didn’t like the format or quality or horses, other reason)?

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<th>How would you classify your university team compared to other teams in your zone or region?</th>
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For me, I'm a very competitive person, and I would say a very, like a very small part of the team is very, very, very competitive, including myself, but, um, the team is kind of in... our team personally is in a transition period right now, where we were not really competitive, like not really a lot of people were doing it to go and win. And we actually just switched barns, so, um, we are kind of refocusing and redeveloping the idea for the team, so we're headed down towards the path of very competitive, so right now I would actually say we're not, like... [So right now, it's kind of just a fun thing to do for a lot of the riders...] It's just a fun thing to do, but, you know, as you go to more horse shows, and like people in open and, you know, some of the other girls on the team and me, who've I've done this for five years, and it's my goal to get to nationals every year, um, it's... they're seeing that, and they want to be a part of that and kind of grow the team a little bit more.

What do you like the most about riding on your college equestrian team? For. and I'll just throw out some things to give you an idea... is it the camaraderie, is it being able to travel to shows, is it the actual riding and the lessons and the classes or something else?

For the love of the horses and not necessarily the money or the prestige or you know... exactly. And so there's not really a.... whole thing behind it, like pushing you in some direction, or to get this person to buy this horse or make them go to this show so I can have money, it's just you know we're having fun. You don't have to show if you don't want to, it's completely up to you.

What do you dislike the most about riding on your college team? For example, I'll just throw some things out, do you not like riding unfamiliar horses, do you not like politics, or the whole making a team sport out of what is fundamentally an individual sport?
Um, I really don’t like the politics of it. Last year was like our transition period, and there was a lot of like...I mean we’re all girls, so there’s a lot of backstabbing, and that’s how the horse industry works. And that’s probably like the least favorite part about the whole riding and everything, that’s probably the worst part that my dad dislikes about it, it’s how much under the table stuff that there is. And last year it was really hard because half of the team was split. So it was kind of like these groups wanted to go this barn, and we wanted to stay at the current barn, and it was just a lot of...[And so when you say split, there was not a common feeling about whether to stay put or go somewhere else?] Uh hmm. And so, I mean it’s solved, and, you know, we’re all back to the team and it’s all ok this year, but last year the whole movement and the like the politics from it were just horrendous.

**In what class(es) or event(s) do you compete? I think you already mentioned this, you were now open...**

I competed open in IEA. I started in novice on the flat and fences last year, and I went to nationals for flat last year, and I actually just pointed up in the first horse show to intermediate, so now I’m intermediate in flat and fences. So, I’ll go to regionals......the IEA points are different than IHSA, and you need a lot more points to qualify. **[for regionals?]** For regionals, yep. So you need 35 points, and usually if someone doesn’t get that in one year, and those points will carry over. So like, the first...for my fences, I had to use my first horse show to still ride in novice fences, so now that I’ve pointed up to Intermediate, I’ll ride in Intermediate the rest of the year. But come time for regionals, I’ll go back to novice for regionals. **[Ok, so it really is a big deal then to point up a level.]** It is, it is, it’s very difficult. Actually they made it 26 points this year.

**If there are too many riders for everyone to show or compete in a given event or class, who gets to decide who shows for your team? Is it the coach, team captain(s), team vote, seniority, riders picking straws, etc.?**

Um, the coach picks in this instance, and usually every flat rider is allowed to ride, um but for fences, there is usually a limit in spots. Usually you only get eight positions for like open, intermediate and novice, so we usually assign it two, two and four, respectively, for those, and the coach picks, like, who’s going to ride, and you can switch it from day to day. Like switch out your novice riders, usually there’s a lot of people in novice. **[So that’s the one that gets the four slots, then, the novice?]** Yes, novice gets four slots, and the rest of them get two.

**Does your school have a show outfit that everyone wears (i.e., a standard show outfit), or do you have to pick your own outfit?**
Um, we have guidelines, so to say, that we have to have a specific color, um, hunt coat, a specific color shirt, and we have kind of like suggested breeches that we should own. We don’t have to have those since they’re really expensive Tailored Sportsman ones that are.. [so a certain brand?] yes, they’re like $250 for a new pair, and then also tall boots. So it’s not like you have to buy this coat, or you have to buy this certain brand, besides the breeches, it’s just like saying specific colors.

Tell me about your show outfit. Describe all elements such as boots, spurs, hat/helmet, gloves, colors, amount of decoration, etc. Is it very form fitting? Just kind of walk me through your show outfit.
Ok, well starting with the head, you have your helmet, I have a Charles Owens GR8, and it’s a all-black helmet with, um, it kind of like has the little bit of a design on the top of it. [Does it have the stripe?] It’s not a stripe, but it’s all black, you can’t tell that it’s there, but it’s just like this kind of like outline, and it goes all the way back.. You can get them like different, like some of them have black/silver like that, and the GPAs are like just the strip back. But, um, either you’re a Charles Owens person or you’re a GPA person is how it works. But I have a Charles Owens, and then... [and is that because of the way it's fitting your head, or is just that's what you like?] ..... Um, it’s how it fits your head. The Charles Owens [ed. note: should be GPA per context of conversation] is kind of more for like narrow heads, I would say, and if you have like a thin head, it kind of fits your head a little bit better, and it’s not as wide, whereas the Charles Owens kind of like has a better shape to it so to say...[like more round?]...Yeah, so it’s more full. It’s a full helmet ... and it’s for us big headed people, so... (laughs) But it fits awesome. And then my show shirt is an Essex Classic, and it’s a white show shirt, just plain white, um, buttons up at the top, and then it also is the new collars where they button right across, instead of having a collar that you put on separately [so you don’t have the separate ratcatcher then?] Yep, it’s just, they literally will button, like there’s two buttons on each side and you just like connect them. [So is that more comfortable than the other shirt?] It is a lot more comfortable, and it’s so much easier than having to keep track of your collars, there’s just two buttons and you button it over, and it looks the same, you can’t even tell. And you can get really cool patterns on the inside of it, like blue and pink, that’s like the best part about picking out show shirts is the inside of them. Um, and then I have an Ariat show jacket, and it’s very form fitting. It’s... um, I mean still enough room to...[to move your shoulders?]... to release, yep exactly. But, um, the entire like shoulders have shoulder pads in them, and it is...kind of has the hourglass shape to it. Um, but it is just a plaid, like navy blue, very light plaid. I have Tailored Sportsman breeches, and those are in a green beige color, and those are kind of like, the, you know, the ones we’re supposed to get. But we also wear, you know, Ariats. Never wear like different colored in the show ring, it always has to be tan or beige. And then I have Grand Prix tall boots, which are just black. Very tall, tall boots that cover your entire knee. And, um, for spurs, it depends on the horse, but, um, they usually just hand you leather normal strapping ones that just go... [and so those are actually provided as part of the tack?]...provided by the facility, um hmm.

What factors do you consider when choosing your show outfit? For example, horse color, or your particular body shape, or any equitation weakness that you want to de-emphasize or hide…it sounds like you’re not having a whole lot of leeway....
No, I… honestly, I'm kind of like a brand name person, I guess, and I go after the names that like you see in the Olympics I guess, and like the ones that are like the first ones you open in like Dover like magazine, you know, the first two pages are Tailored Sportsman and Ariat coats. I mean it doesn't really get any ….like I don’t really go any farther than those two things, just because in equitation, you have to have “the look”, so to say and, you know, having that modern but still classic look, you can get that with those like brand name things. But that’s just been like… comparing actually, I'll give you an example. My two helmets, I used to have a Charles Owens, um, Hampton, which was an older version of an equitation helmet. It was, um, a velvet helmet, and then it had a leather strap to it. It was a very classic look, and it was fine, but, you know, the fact of the matter is, is when you were wearing it, it looks old…it just, like, it’s not that you’re riding bad or anything, it just is an older look. [so it's not the current, up to date style…] Yeah, so that’s why I switched my helmet to like, it’s not that it was any different, it's still a Charles Owens, but it was a modern equitation look, what, you know, a current judge now would look for, instead of, you know… [so you’re not going to see many of the velvet helmets any more, it's all going to be the microfiber, or whatever you call it….] Yeh, because that’s “the look”, so…. [“the look” in quotations…] Yep.

Did you have to get approval from the coaches before wearing this outfit?

Yes, we had to bring all of our clothes to …um, we had a mock horse show before our first horse show this year, and we had our outfits like checked out to see, you know, if our jackets were ok, if our shirts were ok, to make sure we know how to properly dress ourselves, but also our coach sent out guidelines for what we should be wearing, not only at shows but at lessons. So like, you should, you know, probably have your tall boots on, if not your chaps, and not wear jeans, wear breeches, have your shirt tucked in, and don’t have your hair hanging out of your helmet, just guidelines. [to have a polished…] Exactly. […clean look so they can see body lines?]… Yep.

If your university provides the show outfit, are you allowed to tailor it to fit your body, or are you limited in how you can modify the outfit? Can you provide examples?

Question skipped. N/A

If your university has a predetermined show outfit, are there certain items that you have to provide yourself, or do they provide all parts of the show outfit? Which items did you provide?

Question skipped. N/A

Are hairstyle and makeup important aspects of your appearance at shows? Do your teammates help each other with hair and makeup at shows and share tips and/or tricks?
I am the hair queen….[you're the hair queen!]  I am the hair queen, you’re talking to the hair queen of the hunt seat team. I do everyone’s hair. Hair is one of my pet peeves, so I guess it’s one of the most important parts of all, like when I go to a horse show, your hair has to, has to be good. Hair has to be over your ears, and it has to be tight, nothing falling out of the back of your helmet. It’s not like western, where you get all, you know, curl your hair and like have it in a bun and put a whole bunch of makeup on. Um, it’s, you know, a classic look, you have your hair back in your helmet, um, and the helmet pulled down over your hairnet so it’s not showing. And, as far as makeup goes in the hunt seat world, it’s not as, you know, you don’t have as much makeup on as the western people do obviously [it's not as pageant looking then?], exactly, but on the other hand, there, you know, when you’re riding around a whole bunch like in a flat class, you do like get worn out, so it’s good to have some makeup on to like make sure you still look lively, I guess. I actually had a judge tell me that once last year, that that was the difference between first and second, was that the other girl looked like she wanted it more than I did, but we were riding for 45 minutes, and I was just worn out at that point. [a 45 minute class?...] Yeah, it was really fun… it was, actually, it more of an hour long class, and it was 45 minutes without our stirrups. It was at regionals. Yeah, it was really intense, it was started, and then she couldn’t decide, so she started calling people into the middle if she didn’t like you, so then there were three of us left, and she still couldn’t decide. We had no stirrups this whole time. So she called us into the middle, she told us to get off. We got off, we all got asked a question, and we were like “oh, this is it, thank goodness”, and we had to switch horses and get back on for another twenty minutes and then finally the class was decided, so it was… [I've never heard of one going that long]……yeah, it was longer than my class at nationals. It was kind of a disaster, but it was good that I had makeup on that day. [so you are the hair queen…] Yes. [so you’re doing everybody’s hair and making sure that it’s covering the ears and in the hairnet…..] Thick hair nets, you don’t ever have the thin ones, same color hair band as your hair, you keep it the same. If you have bobby pins, make sure they’re not sticking out anywhere, and no like loose hairs…[little fringes?]…Nope, it doesn’t happen.

How do you feel when you are wearing your show outfit? Do you feel confident about your riding ability when wearing your show outfit? Are you physically and emotionally comfortable in your show outfit?
I love wearing my, um, my outfit. I think that, I feel like that’s like the ultimate goal when you’re riding is to get to have the chance to wear that outfit and go into the show ring. Just because it makes you feel polished, and like that’s the final touch that you need to feel, you know, wonderful, and feel like a 100%. Um, it’s not that I don’t feel that in lessons, but you’re in like, um, crappy breeches and an old sweatshirt. [So when you’re dressed in the show clothes, it’s like “ok, this is it”…..] Yep, this is…[the best effort] exactly, so it kind of gives you that final bit of, you know, percentage to work for in class.

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<th>Do you ever feel self-conscious or uncomfortable about any parts of your body when wearing this outfit? If yes, tell me what makes you uncomfortable.</th>
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<tr>
<td>No, everything that I own like fits fine, I mean my head’s really big, so my helmet looks a little funny, but that would be the only thing, I just laugh about it. (laughs)</td>
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<td>Um, I probably worry about those more than I do my horse show clothes. It’s, I mean it’s always like I take 45 minutes to decide what I’m wearing in the morning. I’m one of those people who can’t ever decide, and like “what should I wear today, what should I wear today?” I’m always like worried about if my shirt matches my shoes, and like if my jeans look ok, and I worry about that stuff a whole lot more than I have like my like set outfit for the shows…. [so for showing, you have thing, you know that’s what you’re going to wear, and it takes out all of that decision making….]Yep, um hmm. But I still, I mean I still have like probably 8 or 9 shirts that I have that are, like I have two or three white ones, but then I have like pink and blue and, um, like a really pretty plaid yellow one that I have for like outside horse shows…[so you’re talking about show shirts] …show shirts, and then I also have a brown hunt coat, too. But, I, yeah, it’s uh, I just got it for free, and I was like “sure I’ll take it!” even though, I wore it once and it was in the jumper ring, and it was just more like of a fun thing than…. [brown might be coming back!]…..Yeah, it’s not like an ugly…. it’s a really pretty like light brown, and it has like really light green lines and purple, it’s really pretty, and it really fits me well, but it’s brown, and it doesn’t belong in the equitation world……[because they want blue…]  Yep, it’s the look (laughing).</td>
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When you didn’t feel positive about your appearance in your show outfit, did it affect your confidence level and/or how you performed that day? And I guess, the only I know, if something didn’t quite fit right, or if it was you were fiddling with it, weren’t comfortable….
Um, actually I did have a time when my, like, my show collar was not going on my shirt, and it was too big. It didn’t, like, I think we got the wrong collar with the shirt, so it would like go over my…like the outside of my hunt, like my jacket, it would slip, and it was just too big, so I honestly just took it off, and I really didn’t worry about it. I don’t know, I don’t, I try not to let myself get worried too much about little stuff like that, I’m like more focused, um, you know, on finding distances to jumps and making sure that my horse is in front of my leg and going to the fence…… [the actual riding part...] Exactly.

Has your coach ever suggested that you lose or gain weight in order to be more competitive in your event? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?

Um, no.. no one has said anything to me personally. I have been in experiences where I’ve heard other things being said to people, um, such as like George Morris clinic, um, a few years ago where he told someone that she was really fat and that she should probably take up tennis instead. Um, and the coach from the last year’s team that we were at, repeatedly would say comments to this girl about, um, you know, you really need to lose weight, and finally she put in a BMI policy because she was just not listening to her, and then she ended up not being able to ride on the team anymore. So, I guess, from, that like point of view and like being an outsider on that, it was a little hard to like see her go through that, because, you know, it is hard for some people to lose weight. Though I do understand it from the side of the sport where you do have to have that look and being, you know, a little bit overweight does matter when you’re on the horse. And especially in IEA shows and IHSA shows where a horse is going around six times a day, and you know, if you’re carrying... it’s carrying you around, and you’re a little bit overweight, it’s hard, um, on the horses, so I kind of get it from like the horse care part, but then from the friend part, it’s really hard to hear that for other people.

Has your coach ever suggested that you increase or decrease your level of fitness? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?
Yes. Um, a lot of “you need to work out your back a little bit more, you need to have a six pack to sit, correctly sit the trot”, which is actually completely, it’s totally right, that you do need to have a six pack to do that... [so that would be core strength and abdominal strength, right?] Exactly. And a lot of my.. my weakest part I guess is my back and like sitting down and like actually like holding myself still from the waist down, but like keeping my legs still as well too and not like getting the upper body going with it. And so by keeping that still and making that stronger, it makes your base of support stronger, so then everything else will quiet down. So, um, I had to work out, I had like a workout routine last year before nationals that my coach gave me, of things I could do every different day, doing abs this day, then working on my arms the next day, doing my back, which was really helpful, it really helped before nationals. And, I honestly, I don’t really have time to work out now other than the two or three lessons I have a week now, but... that’s about it. I’m really, really, really busy.

Does your team have fitness or conditioning requirements or standards (either official or unofficial) in addition to riding related requirements? If so, what are they?

We do not currently, but we are... I’m an officer on the team, and we are currently thinking about, um, implementing some, like either offering people workouts that they could do, or having specific workout times that we’ll all meet and go to the gym and do different things. We have, um, like a nurse on our team, and also like a nutrition major, so they’re really good about exercise science, they’re really good about knowing exactly what we should be doing, and they’ve offered multiple times to help us, not like designing specific workouts for an individual person, but as a team as a whole, so we’re actually looking to install some of that. [so they’re actually riding on the team, the nurse and....] Yes. Yeah, um, and, in fact, when I first was looking at colleges, [university name redacted], which is also in our region in IHSA, they have team workouts where I think they work out four or five days a week..., in the morning......so other IHSA teams are doing it. [So right now, it's not required, but some of the other teams, they have gone that way...] Um hmm.

Do you think the riders on your team are supportive of each other, or are they critical of each other? What have you seen or experienced that makes you think this?
Um, I think that for the majority of the part, we’re all very supportive of each other, but again it is the horse world, so there’s a lot of like jealousy and a little bit of like talking behind other people’s backs, but I would say for the majority of the part, everyone’s very supportive of each other, even if you’re in the same division, like it’s like “Ok, I made it to regionals, you should go to regionals too, we can be first and second and go to zones” and stuff like that. So, on the level of like support like that way, it’s really easy to get support throughout the season, but once you go beyond regionals, it’s really hard to get people to come to zones and nationals. Like last year, two...three of us qualified for zones, and it was at [university name redacted], which is twenty minutes away, and two girls from our team of 40 came. So that was kind of hard for all three of us to deal with, but, um, then we went to nationals, and I think four or five girls came, and those were in Kentucky, so it was like compared to a 20 minute drive to a three hour drive, but...So I mean that... yes and no, I guess it depends on the person and what like their competition goals are, um, but since the majority of the team right now is not, like I said earlier, is not like competitive or anything, it’s still very supportive during the season.

What does your coach do (or not do) to encourage a supportive team environment? Can you describe any examples?

Um, we’ve done like team building activities. We had like our barn orientation this year, and we like set up a buddy system, so an underclassman or like new person to the team was paired with an upperclassman, and like we kind of gave them tips about like how to horse show, and they were our horse show buddies, so we like help them when they got on, you know, help them when they were going around the ring, helping them out besides the coach. And so that was, that’s always good to set up a little support system, because sometimes people like stick with their friends, and new people feel left out a little bit. But, that was something we did this year, and I think that was a really great thing. [sounds like a good thing] It was a really good thing to do. I did it in IEA all the time. We always had like horse show buddies at every horse show, and you had to make sure you were there when they were getting on their horse to clean their boots, make sure they have everything, make sure they look good before they got on the horse, and stuff like that.

How do you feel about having to ride unfamiliar horses in IHSA shows? Does that add a lot of stress for you, or do you see this as a "challenge"?

I love it. I grew up doing it, so it’s.. um, I only had two horses, but other than that, it was just IHSA...or IEA, and that was all I got to do. I like the challenge of getting a new horse, um, but I do get worried if like someone says “Oh, that’s a bad draw”, “Oh, you’re going to have to use your leg on that one”. But I mean I’m not... I’ve had some scary moments with horses like rearing with me when they’re like in the in gate about to go into the ring, but it’s all good. I think it’s fun, I like wild animals. It’s fun. My mom thinks I’m crazy, but.... [that's probably the part your dad didn't like] I’m a thrill seeker.
When you are riding equitation or horsemanship classes, do you ever think that the judges favor certain body types or have a preferred "look" and use this to decide placings? Have you personally seen evidence of this occurring? If so, can you describe what happened?

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<th>Oh yeah, absolutely, I think that that's the way everything is judged nowadays, is you have that look, and some, a lot of judges I would say are like that in IHSA, is that you have a specific look. Take the horse show we went to last weekend, on Saturday, the judge was, actually, was very...he was different in the way he judged his classes. Like the first class seemed to be very, like, this person won because they looked the best, you know, they had the look, and then it went down from there, but in the second class, you know someone who was kind of not as tall, who was a little bit overweight won the class because she had a better ride than everybody else. So it was more, like, how you rode the horse with this judge, compared to our Sunday judge, who was all about the look. And literally placed the class if you were skinny, or if you were 5'7&quot; and taller, if you had this helmet, if you had like the look...to place.</th>
<th>It's everything all together, I'd say 5'7”, under 130 pounds, um, make sure you're hair’s done right, um, a nice fitting helmet, like a new..., a GPA or Charles Owens are the two that you always see, um, and being tall and stretching down as your body shape is,... you have your line from your ear to your shoulders to your hip to your heel, everything has to be straight, and that's how it should be the entire ride. So anything other than that, no, it's not right.</th>
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<tr>
<td>In your opinion, do you think that your coaches think that judges favor certain body types or looks in equitation classes? Have you seen or hear your coach say something that might indicate this?</td>
<td>Do you think that judges pay attention to riders' outfits and use this as part of their judging criteria? For example, as long as the riders' outfit meets the rulebook standard, fits well and is in good condition, do you think what the rider is wearing influences the judge?</td>
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Um, I don’t think they’re paying as much attention to that, so to say, but I mean it’s still like the look, I guess, but the specific clothes you need for hunt seat is different from what you need for western and it’s different from what you need for eventing, so to say.  

[but that is where “meets the rulebook standard”…] yea, exactly.  Um, like, there’s an example, I don’t know if you can use this, but one of the girls on our team rode cross country, so she had a jacket with four buttons instead of three, for the hunt seat team, and her helmet was, um, like a gray, like a bright gray colored thing, so we had to put a cover on it because it wasn’t black, and.. which I mean it probably would have been ok, some of the GPAs are gray, but it wasn’t…it didn’t look like… [it was a cover] exactly, and so she didn’t place at all.  I mean it wasn’t that she rode bad, it just, it wasn’t that polished, finessed look that you need to be first in the class and stand out from everybody else…[so a lot of it is standing out from everybody else]….You want to get like seen in the class, so you want to like make sure that you catch the judges eye, and you catch it the first direction or the first time you go by him.

Are there male riders on your college or university equestrian team?

We do, we have one.  Yep, he’s, he’s adorable.  He like holds everyone’s mirrors for makeup and stuff.

If so, do you think that the male riders experience similar levels of scrutiny over their appearance or their show outfits?

Um, I think so, I think that their ties have to be done a certain way, and they still have to have the same color jacket, and they still have to have the same white shirt, still the same color breeches, everything, everything has to look just as good.  [So the only difference in the guy’s outfit is that they’re actually wearing a tie instead of the collar]… Um hmm.  Yeah, that’s, I’m pretty sure that’s the only difference between the two is that.  And their…, obviously, their breeches are like a little different shape, but, like they’re a little bit wider, but..  [a little bit wider, explain this..] Like the hips… [are they not as tight?]  No, no, they’re not, they’re like a little bit looser [so they have a little bit more give] Yeah, and then, I mean their coats are the same, obviously, the white shirts, and their tall boots are the same, too.
**Date:** November 7, 2011

**Interview transcript # 3:**

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<tr>
<th>What is your first name? You may use a pseudonym if you wish.</th>
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<td>[rider name redacted, to be referred to as Rider # 3]</td>
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<th>How old are you?</th>
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<tr>
<td>I'm twenty.</td>
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<th>How did you get interested in horses and riding?</th>
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<td>Um, well, I first started horses like in middle school through Girl Scouts actually... [Girl Scouts?] Yes, we like... [working on your badge?] Yeah, I did like a summer camp of horseback riding, like summer camp. It was like a day camp, and so we went and rode during the day and like stayed at the campgrounds, and then I stayed... I did like a summer camp the next two years at just the barn that we rode at, but it was all English, and I never did anything else with it until I came to college, and the involvement fair, I like saw the western equestrian team, and it just kind of like took off from there, and they were all really nice.</td>
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<th>Was riding an activity that your family was involved in? Were they supportive or critical of your riding?</th>
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<td>I mean, they sent me to the summer camp because I wanted to go, so they were supportive then, and now, now with the um college team, my parents like help me financially pay for it, so they’re completely supportive. They, my mom comes to all the shows, and my dad just comes to nationals, but they’re supportive.</td>
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<th>Did you own (or own now) a horse?</th>
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<td>No, no.</td>
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<th>If yes, tell me how you got him/her, what he/she's like, and do you have him/her with you in college now?</th>
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<th>Before college or university, how many years had you been riding?</th>
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<td>Never a full year, like maybe a cumulative of two months, if you put three summers together [so basically it was only at the summer camp?] Yes.</td>
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<th>How many times per week did you take lessons, and in what discipline were they (for example, western, hunt seat, jumping, reining, etc.)?</th>
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<td>[so technically, it was all in the summer camp then, right?] Before I came to college, yes.</td>
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<th>Did you ride on an equestrian team (such as an Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) team) during middle or high school?</th>
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<td>No. No. We didn't even have those where I'm from.</td>
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**Did you show as an individual (in other words, not as part of an equestrian team) during middle or high school?**

No.

If yes for last question, tell me about your experience in those shows. In what level shows did you participate (for example, A or AA, unrated/local, breed, open, NRHA shows etc.), in what discipline, and how frequently?

| Question skipped, n/a. |

**Are you currently riding on your university’s equestrian team?**

Yes, I am.

If yes, what discipline do you ride on your team? (western/English/both) and for how long?

Western horsemanship, and since I started at [university name redacted] two Falls ago, so this will be my third year on the team.

| If you are not currently riding on your university’s equestrian team but have in the past, why did you stop (for example, too much money, no time, lost interest, didn’t like the format or quality or horses, other reason)? |
| Question skipped. n/a. |

| How would you categorize your university team compared to other teams in your zone or region? Show possible options on separate card. |
| Very competitive |
| Somewhat competitive |
| Neither competitive or non-competitive |
| Somewhat non-competitive |
| Non-competitive |

| We’re very competitive. |

**What do you like the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, is it the camaraderie, being able to travel to shows, the actual riding or something else?**

Um, the team’s been like more of a family to me, um, like some, some of my closest friends and my coaches, like I see them more than my own parents, and they tell me I can turn to them for anything, so it’s kind of…um, very important to me, and it’s just all of it. I mean, the shows are the fun part, but, like I ……I started at the very bottom, so I knew I needed the lessons so… I enjoyed them because I was always learning something, but it’s probably the camaraderie, being around everybody.

| What do you dislike the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, riding unfamiliar horses, politics, making an individual sport into a team sport, etc. |

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Um, about my team personally, what I don’t like is, I’m [office position redacted] this year, so I feel like if things go wrong, not riding wise, but structure wise, what we have to have done for like being a team and all the paperwork and stuff, if something doesn’t get done, I feel like it’s my fault. [so you’ve got the weight of the team on your shoulders, right?] Just for like the clerical reasons, not the showing aspects. [so stepping out of your officer role, then, think back to the last two years, was there anything you didn’t like for those years?] Um, I didn’t like for post season teams the people that weren’t as committed as I was, because since they only pick one person for each division to go on the post season team, um, I, you know, dedicated myself to be competitive wanting a spot on post season in like January and started taking more lessons and everything, and you would get riders who would slack and not step up to the level they had to be, so that was the only thing that would bug me is when people are kind of not taking it seriously, that we wanted to win post season, so they had to step up their game. [now post season, was that only nationals, or does that include regionals and zones as well?] Um, it’s semifinals and nationals, because if you, what is it, if you win your zone, you automatically go through regionals and just show as a team at semifinals, so I mean if our team doesn’t even win the zone, then you’re kind of done, but that’s a… post season mainly then for the team concept is semis and nationals.

In what class(es) or event(s) do you compete?

Um, I competed in the beginner western horsemanship for two years, and now I’m in the intermediate western horsemanship. [so did you point out of this, then?] No, after two years, you have to move up to the next division, but I, last year, I was, um… I only showed like two regular season shows, so that I didn’t point out and was a post season team rider and went to the semis and nationals in beginner. I went to nationals in beginner as a team rider my first year and my second year. [ok, so because of the two year rule, then you had to roll up the next year?] um hmm. [are you just doing horsemanship?] Correct. [you’re not doing any reining?] Nope. That’s a little much, reining!

If there are too many riders for everyone to show or complete in a given event or class, who decides who shows for your team? For example, the coach, team captain(s), team vote, seniority, riders picking straws, etc.?

Our coaches handle all of our entries. They decide who’s going to show based on points and like the whole like political placement thing, well we want to save this person for post season, or we want to see if this girl will do better than the other one, so they decide who shows based on points, and then I think it would be the same if there’s ever too many people, they would decide who’s going to ride and just as for the regular season shows, they decide the point riders and don’t even tell anybody. So, it’s all on our coaches. [ok, so it sounds like there’s a little bit of strategy involved in terms of how they’re picking riders to ride…] there is. [through the year, then right?] Um hmm, correct.
Does your school have a show outfit that everyone wears (i.e., a standard show outfit), or do you pick your own outfit?

No, we don’t have a standard outfit. Um, our... the most standard is that our coach has decided that everyone wears black boots, black pants and chaps, and black hats, and then she has to approve everyone’s show top, and everyone’s different. They’re very different... range of colors and styles and stones and everything. Um, we... for a scrimmage, we did do like a whole team outfit of a gray button down with our team logo on the like chest and whatnot... but that was because we were invited to a NCAA scrimmage, and that’s what they wear, so we just were kind of playing by their rules for it. [and so the black hat and the pants basically and the shoes and everything, it that just to keep everyone looking kind of uniform, or is there any other reason behind that?] Um, I’ve been told the black, it gives you a longer line, and if you’re..., you know, from your hip all the way down through your shoes is black, it’s kind of, it’s going to look better, it’s going to make your leg look longer, which is usually a good thing.

Tell me about your show outfit. Describe all elements such as boots, spurs, hat, gloves, colors, amount of decoration, etc. Is it very form fitting?
Ok, um, well it's a black hat. Um, our coach is very particular on how it's blocked and shaped. I don't really know the details on it, but I just know she took my hat once and went and had it done herself, because she didn't like how they had done it before, and she wanted to have it supervised and have it look perfect. Um, then my show shirt, I have a new one for this season, which is exciting, um, but they're very form fitting, and if your shirt isn't form fitting, all of the….most of the shirts, you tuck them so, it gives it a.. um, a very sleek look. Very seldomly, there's…I wore a shirt once that you didn't tuck in because it had a lot of embellishments around the bottom,… but it's soft, it's kind of like, um, a stretch black material, like a sport material, and it's long sleeved, and the detailing, um, has like a high stand up collar, and it's red, gray and black, like a detailed fabric…and it kind of, it looks like crocodile skin, like it has that scaly, like the rectangles to it, um, but it's just….it's like black for the outermost and then gray and then red, and it's all rhinestoned out… [so it's pretty glitzed?] Um hmm, yep, and that's just on like the top half, like the chest, the collar and down the arms, and then the cuffs, but it's doesn't go, like, well it's on the back for just the top half of the back, but there's nothing on my sides or my stomach, and then I have a black belt that all embellished, and the belt buckle is all embellished, plain black ultraseude chaps, plain black show pants and plain black riding boots. [so it's very plain from the waist down, so all the decoration, the emphasis is up here, right...] Correct. […]around your face?] Correct. It keeps a nice long line, and if there is any movement, it's not as detectible, which you don't want to be able to see it. Oh, I don't know if this matters, I wear like big, black rhinestone earrings, if you count that as part of my… [well sure!] We, our coach really doesn't do necklaces, and if you have shirt that's open front, she likes a scarf tie. I used to have an open front shirt and wore a black scarf tie, but earrings, we usually try to have some sort of matching earrings. [that's all part of the outfit.] What factors do you consider when choosing your show outfit? For example, horse color, body shape, equitation weakness that you want to de-emphasize, etc.
I know, not for me personally, but there are girls on the team who had problems keeping their core tight and from moving, so they would wear like body shapers underneath their show outfit, and, um, I know my show shirt has shoulder pads in it, um, I know, I'm trying to think, there's something else then you said that but now I can't remember, um... what was the question again? See I thought of something else, but now I don't remember what you were saying... [What factors do you consider when choosing your show outfit? For example, horse color, body shape, equitation weakness that you want to de-emphasize, etc.] Um, there.. our coach keeps very close tabs on what is in style and trends, ...um, I know she... the girls that were buying chaps this year, she does not want them wearing like the smooth leather chaps because those are going out of style...[so she... nap, she wants the nap on it?] Um hmm, she wants like the ultrasuede ones, um, so I know like with shirts she's gotten...she has to approve all.. everyone's shirt because she's like "I don't want you spending money on something that will only go like maybe through the rest of this season", like the judges know what's in style, so she's really big on that. [and so do you get the approval before you buy something?..] Yes. [...] Um hmm, correct, we went to [store name redacted] and did a group shopping trip, um hmm. Yes. Or I got my shirt, I bought through her, she had already, she knew she had already approved it, and I just bought it off of her, so they do that sometimes too, they'll have people come to their farm, when, um, their IEA team, basically for post season, for IEA and for IHSA, if anyone's looking for a new shirt, they'll bring in a couple of people that they know that they like with this vendor, their designs, and you can buy them off them, but often it's approved before purchase. [she's got kind of a fashion sense, that she knows when trends have peaked or are going away and things or trends that are rising....] Um hmm, and she takes it all into account, I mean, your riding ability, yeah, that's what you're being judged on, but they still hold the idea that when you walk in the arena like the judge is just going to look at you at a walk first and judge your outfit, and if it's not going to grab his eye or it's out of date, out of style, you're going to have to work harder then and have a better ride to get his attention. [after that?] Correct.

Did you have to get approval from the coaches before wearing this outfit?

Yes. And I mean for girls that have shown like before they come on the team, usually whatever show clothing they have, they all, they usually approve that, and if they have some big problems with it, they'll just work throughout the year to try to find something else for them, but.... I didn't have anything starting, so that's why I was like "Ok, let's go shopping!", and she picked everything out, and we agreed on stuff first.
If your university provides the show outfit, are you allowed to tailor it to fit your body, or are you limited in how you can modify the outfit? Can you provide examples?

Question skipped. n/a

If your university has a predetermined show outfit, are there certain items that you have to provide yourself, or do they provide all parts of the show outfit? Which items did you provide?

Question skipped. n/a

Are hairstyle and makeup important aspects of your appearance at shows? Do your teammates help each other with hair and makeup at shows and share tips and/or tricks?

Yes, for us it is very... it’s very big. Hair is low bun, that’s it, it’s your only option. [that’s the only option, so if you have short hair like me, what do you do?] Um, it’s just kind of slick it back, yep so it’s not going to have any whispies and put on your hat. I mean everyone wears a hat, so it’s …our coach is even with people who have whispies in the front that don’t fit in the bun, before you go into your class, she has you tucking them and pinning them and hair spraying them more. There’s going to be nothing sticking out and out of place. Um, I danced my entire life, so I kind of already had a handle on the act [you know the bun routine?] um hmm, because our makeup is like full face stage makeup, and we get a lot of people that don’t know how to put on makeup, have never work makeup before…. [so are you the makeup queen for the team, then?] I don’t like doing other people’s makeup, but they’ll come to me ask “Is this enough?”, and I’ll say “No, our coach is going to tell you at least more blush and more lipstick” every time. She’ll tell you go put on more blush or go put on more lipstick, but…. [so you’re looking for that face that can be seen] um hmm [...] yay up in the stands…] Yep, like I wear a dark red lipstick all the time. I used to wear brown lipstick because I had a green, black and yellow shirt, so I’d wear like a coffee brown lipstick, um, but I like, I always do a shimmer eye shadow to the brow bone, a dark and light accent color, um, pink cheeks, eyeliner, um, mascara and noticeable lip color and, um, and the bun. And basically I know… we just showed yesterday, and I did about six people’s buns when we got there in the morning, did everybody’s hair, that’s usually….most people can do their own make up, it’s usually the hair, getting your bun down, so…. [I understand, it’s kind of hard to work on the back of your head when you can’t see it.] Yeah.

How do you feel when you are wearing your show outfit? Do you feel confident about your riding ability when wearing your show outfit? Are you physically and emotionally comfortable in your show outfit?
I’m confident about my riding ability, yes. Um, the comfort level depends on how much of it I have on. I know like I take my chaps off when I’m not close to my class because they’re very form fitting, like we get them...either you get them custom made or you get them tailored, so they’re very form fitting, and even ...it’s worse when I come out of a class, because when I first mount up for the first ride of the day, I pull my show pants up even further, so they’re usually above my belly button, and then I pull my chaps up to about the same spot, because when I sit down I have room for it, but then when I get off the horse, I like can’t breathe. Saying “I can’t breathe!, I can’t breathe!” is probably one my most common things, but it looks really good! Um, but that’s like the only thing, so then I just take my chaps off, like when I pull my chaps up and I pull my pants up, I always move my belt at least one, if not two, notches tighter and my chaps as tight as they can go, so once I get off the horse it’s like ....[letting it all go!] yeah, letting it all go, because then you’re like pulling your pants back down and all that, so that’s the only uncomfortable aspect in my opinion, but when I’m on the horse, it’s comfortable, it just when I get down, yeah, I can’t breathe. [get them off as quickly as possible] Yes.

### Do you ever feel self-conscious or uncomfortable about certain aspects of your body when wearing your show outfit? If yes, tell me what makes you uncomfortable.

Um, I just know that if I make sure that like my stomach and everything is really, really flat and like tucked in, I like suck my stomach in, yeah because I mean it hurts because my pants are pulled up so high. [so you’re sitting tall] I make sure I’m sitting tall, and I keep a really slender figure, and I just ...cause if I get worried or nervous in class at a lope, I’ll start to like let my stomach go a little bit and it just looks sloppier, so ... just keeping my shoulders back and sitting really tall and keeping a really slender figure is only, it’s like my biggest worry, when I do that.

### Do you have the same feelings or worries when wearing your regular street clothes?

Um, I mean it’s kind of uncomfortable walking around sucking it in every day, but I mean I think it’s kind of a constant thing, just like ...in society like you want to have a slender, lean figure or with me, it’s just because I was in dance and I was in swimming, so I have always been around, it’s just something... personal levels in my street clothes, yeah, to make sure I look slender and lean.

### When you didn’t feel positive about your appearance in your show outfit, did it affect your confidence level and/or how you performed that day?

Question skipped in error.

### Has your coach ever suggested that you lose or gain weight in order to be more competitive in your event? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?

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Um, not to me, but I know we’ve had girls on the post season team that they’ve… there was a girl they were really close with, and she had been on the team for four years, and they knew her on a personal level, so they felt comfortable saying “You know you’re going to be more competitive if you’re more toned up”, and they’re like so…. it wasn’t, uh, “If you don’t lose this weight, you won’t get to show”, but it was “you know you’ll have a more competitive advantage if you know you’re toned and tight and you don’t have like any body issues” or whatever, so they were just kind of like, you know… they have, um, a son who’s in college who’s really big on his like, he’ll go to the gym and stuff, so “Go to the gym with our son, like he’ll take you, like he’ll help you do workouts and stuff.”

and, you know, he kind of knows what’s going on like in the workout aspect, so, that was their only thing - “Go workout with him”. [so it was more of a …motherly and fatherly approach?] Yes. [as opposed to…] They don’t turn to the new girls on the team and say “You need to lose weight”. They don’t turn anyone away from the team based on their body image, and they, it was just kind of, it was her last year on the team, she was going for an individual title… [and they really wanted her to do well] um hmm, yeah., and they knew that she understood that they weren’t, you know, picking on her but that she would understand it, but I just.. I mean I’ve been told like “Well make sure you don’t gain any weight because you look great!”, so that’s the only thing I’ve gotten.

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<th>Has your coach ever suggested that you increase or decrease your level of fitness? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?</th>
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<td>Um, the only thing maybe that would fall into fitness wise is that they want to make sure that you keep your legs strong, so… I know we’ve had girls that they’ve been like, they’ll be like “Kick, kick harder, squeeze, don’t let that horse slow down, don’t let the horse break”, and they’re like “I’m squeezing as hard as I can”, they’re like “then you need to go workout for your legs, you need to make your calf muscles stronger”…so that’s been the only fitness thing that, I mean, I’ve been an active person, so I never really had the problems, like just my normal everyday activities like keep me fit enough, so… strong legs is the biggest thing then [well if you danced all your life, you’ve got strong legs!] Yeah (laughing).</td>
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<th>Does your team have fitness or conditioning requirements or standards (either official or unofficial) in addition to riding related requirements? If so, what are they?</th>
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No. I mean, I would say no, um, there’s nothing that like we do as a team, like we don’t… [so no team workouts?] No, we don’t have “this is the lifting time for this week, or this is the running times for this week” No., it’s nothing like that. [so it’s very laid back] Yeah, it’s only really taken into account when it gets into post season, and you get the people who want to be very competitive. It’s …our team, they kind of take the approach that you going to get out of it what you put into it, so… and you can just, it can be a fun, leisure recreation thing for you, but you kind of need to realize then you won’t be going to semis or nationals, so that’s basically the only thing. The girls getting really competitive are the ones working out and doing all of that.

**Do you think the riders on your team are supportive of each other, or are they critical of each other? What have you seen or experienced that makes you think this?**

Um, the majority.. I would say everyone’s very supportive of each other. Um, the only time when you get into people that are critical, are girls competing within the same division, and they both want that post season spot. [and there’s only one spot and more than one of them] Yes, yes, that’s when it gets the most critical. I know one of my closest friends on the team wasn’t at the show yesterday and was texting me asking about the girl that was in her division. “Well, where did she place and what was our coach telling her, and like how was her ride”, and all of that, so… but there are girls in my division that.. from my team… that I beat that, you know, say “Congratulations!”, and they’re very supportive, so it’s kind of … [it’s a little bit of both then?] um hmm.

**What does your coach do (or not do) to encourage a supportive team environment? Can you describe any examples?**

Um, we, we do like dinners and whatnot, and we, we just had a cookout at our coaches’ house as a team. We brought in a team from, uh, [state redacted] who we made friends with in, um, semifinals last year, um, the coaches had been friends for a while, but we like had the teams become friends this past year, so we brought them in for a scrimmage and like had a big cookout, and so it was like a bonding event for our team and their team. We’ve gone and played laser tag as a team, um, we…when we, um, go to shows or go on team trips, that’s basically the biggest bonding thing because you’re all like staying in a hotel together and we’ll go out to dinner. When we go on team trips like you go to dinner every night with the team. [so there’s pretty much a focus on the social aspect…] Yep. [of the…] They want everyone (unintelligible) in the family. um hmm.

**How do you feel about having to ride unfamiliar horses in IHSA shows? Does that add a lot of stress for you, or do you see this as a "challenge"?**
Because I didn’t show, like I didn’t have a horse, I didn’t ever show my own horse, I didn’t have a problem with it. I just came in and I was like “All right, let’s try this horse today at lessons, let’s try this horse next time.” I know people that have a problem because they’re like “I’m so used to showing my horse, and I understand my horse”, and I’m like.. I think they have more of a challenge with accepting riding other horses just because they’re like “My horse wouldn’t do that” and like “I can’t, I can’t understand this horse” in like one lap on the rail, but I keep an open mind to it. The only time that it like makes me nervous or uneasy is… um, you can talk to the horse holders in a show, and they often know a little bit about it. If they kind of are like “Well, make sure you do this, this and this to make him go”, like, so sometimes talking to them can be a bad thing or a good thing, sometimes they’re like “Oh, he’s a great horse, like he knows what he’s doing, he’ll just go around and do whatever you ask him to do”, but sometimes they’re like “Well, she doesn’t like this lead, like you’re really going to have to work on her to like get her to pick it up”, so..that’s only ever my problem is listening to other people, which I probably shouldn’t, should just get on up there and go do it.

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<th>When you are riding equitation or horsemanship classes, do you ever think that the judges favor certain body types or have a preferred &quot;look&quot; and use this to decide placings? Have you personally seen evidence of this occurring? If so, can you describe what happened?</th>
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<td>Um, I mean… just from my coaches, we’re told that, you know, we’ve been told there is a look and there is something that the judges are looking for, so I kind of have that mindset, like that I’m sure that if, you know, someone didn’t fit a look they were looking for, like body type wise, if they had the best ride in the class, like they’re still going to place higher. Like…, in my opinion and maybe I’m just like being naïve in thinking the judges are going to do the right thing, they’re going to give the best rider like, you know, the higher placings, but I feel like it’s a very fair association, and they will do that, like they won’t you know place someone lower because of their body type or their look, but, um, it takes… I mean, they take it into account, that’s what I’ve been told.</td>
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<th>In your opinion, do you think that your coaches think that judges favor certain body types or looks in equitation classes? Have you seen or hear your coach say something that might indicate this?</th>
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<td>Um, yes, I mean my coaches have their opinion on, I mean this, this is going to be a good type, like it’s not …maybe it’s more of like they have a look or a type that it’s not going to like distract from your riding ability….maybe that’s what I’m like going for. They don’t want your look to like, if you have a great ride, they don’t want your look to kind of make the judge like not place you as high. They want it to not negatively affect you.</td>
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Do you think that judges pay attention to riders’ outfits and use this as part of their judging criteria? For example, as long as the riders’ outfit meets the rulebook standard, fits well and is in good condition, do you think what the rider is wearing influences the judge?

I think they are, I mean….you know what’s like the common saying like “Don’t just a book by its cover”, I mean that’s the nice thing, that’s what everybody says in life, but people judge people on their outward appearance and their physical appearance, and I mean I’m not going to think that just because the judge steps in the arena that they’re going to throw all of that out of their human behavior and whatnot, they’re still going to… it’s just natural, they’re going to be like “Oh, I really like her shirt” or that like, if you’re showing outside and your shirt catches the sunlight and it’s all rhinestoned out, like that’s going to draw attention, and hopefully you know it draws attention at a good time, not when your horse like is on the wrong lead or something. In my personal opinion, yeah, like they’re going to take into account your show clothes, definitely.

Are there male riders on your college or university equestrian team?

We have one… as of now.

If so, do you think that the male riders experience similar levels of scrutiny over their appearance or their show outfits?
Um, I mean I know our coach makes all of our male rider about, you know, making sure his shirt...we had two last year... making sure their shirts are tailored and like fit properly, and their hats still have to be blocked, and, you know, their pants and their chaps still have to fit properly. Um, it’s a little bit easier, because I know one of the guys last year for nationals, to go and get a new shirt, they just like went to a department store and like picked out a new color dress shirt, and he just had to go and have it custom tailored and whatnot. Um, the guys always pretty much have to wear a scarf, so they’re matching... well that’s how our coach likes it... their matching scarf is sometimes... 

[so like an open shirt with a scarf?] Um hmm, they’ll like unbutton the top one. Our boy right now, he’s actually the only person on our team for his reining and horsemanship who doesn’t wear all black. He wears, um, brown chaps and a brown hat and a brown scarf, and like yesterday he wore a white shirt that was like brown and teal plaid. Um, I know for like nationals he showed in like six classes, and he had about eight different shirts that, depending on how he did in the class, she would change him in and out of them and be like “well, you know, this other... the other guys are wearing just plain white, so you’re not going plain white, like you’re going to wear this shirt instead”. [why would you want to wear white at a horse show?] Yeah, you get guys that just wear plain white button downs. Um hmm, so.. he, I don’t know, it’s kind of maybe, his shirts aren’t anywhere as expensive as ours are, but, um, ....[but overall, there’s still that same level of attention in terms of the way things are fitting, and ..] Yeah, you don’t want your shirt.... [having that line on your legs with the same color of chaps and boots and pants....] Yeah, I know, we like had... kind of like a dress rehearsal type of thing maybe, like everybody trying on their show clothes before post season, like the one guy, his shirt wasn’t tailored yet, and it would like flap out in back, and that’s a distraction, and it’s a bad one, so that’s ....the guy still needs to be like a clean tailored fit, but it’s like not skin tight like my shirt, you know it’s still..

[nor hundreds of dollars!] yes... but there’s no extra fabric billowing around.
Appendix J

Transcript: Rider # 4
Date: November 8, 2011

Interview transcript # 4:

What is your first name? You may use a pseudonym if you wish.
[Rider name redacted, to be referred to as Rider # 4]

How old are you?
Twenty.

How did you get interested in horses and riding?
Um, I just always wanted to ride horses, um, you know, every little girl wants a pony I guess. My grandpa was a jockey, and he would always tell me his like stories about it, so I said “Dad, I want to ride a horse”, um, so I started riding when I was eight. [so your grandpa, was he quarter horse or thoroughbred or..] Thoroughbred racing, yeah. [wow, I've never met anybody before who knew a jockey] He wasn’t like super famous or anything.

Was riding an activity that your family was involved in? Were they supportive or critical of your riding?
It was, for the most part, um, they always came to all of my shows, my mom and my dad, my sister rides too, so it was kind of like a family thing. Um, but then there was a point when my dad was little critical of it because I had a pretty bad accident, broke my leg, and he said, you know, “I don’t want to watch”. He was the one who was with me when I broke my leg, and it was really hard for him. I was thirteen when it happened, and after that he kind of boycotted it for a little bit and just didn’t really want to take part in it... but now, I’m still ok and everything, and he’s better now, but for a while there….

Did you own (or own now) a horse?
Um, I don’t currently own a horse, me and my sister had a horse for about three years when I was in high school. We shared her, um, and then we both kind of outgrew her, so we moved on and then we just leased horses from there.

If yes, tell me how you got him/her, what he/she’s like, and do you have him/her with you in college now?
Question skipped, covered in earlier question.

Before college or university, how many years had you been riding?
See, I was about eighteen [ed note: rider means eight] when I started …ten years.

How many times per week did you take lessons, and in what discipline were they (for example, western, hunt seat, jumping, reining, etc.)?
For the first year, I took lessons once a week, and I rode western when I was like eight, and then I switched to English riding, and I did mostly dressage and eventing, um, and I took lessons once to twice a week from then on.

Did you ride on an equestrian team (such as an Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) team) during middle or high school?
No, I did not.
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<td>Did you show as an individual (in other words, not as part of an equestrian team) during middle or high school?</td>
<td>Yes. um hmm.</td>
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<td>If yes for last question, tell me about your experience in those shows. In what level shows did you participate (for example, A or AA, unrated/local, breed, open, NRHA shows etc.), in what discipline, and how frequently?</td>
<td>Um, it was eventing, so it was the recognized events. Um, it's not so much big in the [city name redacted] area as it more in the [city name redacted], so it's the USEA - United States Eventing Association - recognized shows, and I showed novice. [and this was in eventing?] um hmm, [so that was all...you did all three...?] Yeah, all three, the dressage, stadium and cross country. [how often would you show?] Um, probably three to four shows a summer, the show season was in the summer.</td>
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<td>Are you currently riding on your university's equestrian team?</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
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<td>If yes, what discipline do you ride on your team? (western/English/both) and for how long?</td>
<td>I've been on the team since my freshman year, so this is my third year, and we ride hunt seat...I ride hunt seat.</td>
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<td>If you are not currently riding on your university's equestrian team but have in the past, why did you stop (for example, too much money, no time, lost interest, didn't like the format or quality or horses, other reason)?</td>
<td>Question skipped. n/a</td>
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<td>How would you categorize your university team compared to other teams in your zone or region?</td>
<td>Very competitive</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Somewhat competitive</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Neither competitive or non-competitive</td>
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<td>Somewhat non-competitive</td>
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<td>Non-competitive</td>
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<td>Well, this year we changed barns, I don’t know if you’re aware of that, um, we changed facilities, and when....during that transition, we became a little bit more competitive, um, so I’m stuck between very competitive and somewhat competitive just because I think we try to be very competitive, but we’re competing against teams that are maybe NCAA teams, and are funded by the school, so it’s just not possible for us to be as competitive as those teams....[maybe an unequal playing field a little bit?] yeah, um hmm, so I’d say for what we have, we try to be very competitive, but it’s just not the same playing field, like you said.</td>
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<td>What do you like the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, is it the camaraderie, being able to travel to shows, the actual riding or something else?</td>
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Um, I’d say it’s all of it. Riding is definitely my like de-stressor, so once I week I like to go and just get away from my nine roommates and…. [nine roommates?]

Yeah, so it’s one thing that’s mine, it’s only mine, none of them do it, I get away from them, and I always come back smiling. And then it’s nice to meet, you know, other friends, girls that have a common interest. For me, but also, we’re all different ages, which is fun, so you don’t usually meet older or younger people that easily. Um, I like traveling to shows. It’s fun to get away on the weekends and do something other than the typical college scene [so it’s really all of the above, then…] Yeah.

**What do you dislike the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, riding unfamiliar horses, politics, making an individual sport into a team sport, etc.**

Um, no, I'd say that I love that fact that it's now a team sport, um, it's expensive, um, definitely the expense, and uh it's time consuming, which isn't a bad thing but at the same time I'm pretty busy, so it's just…the barn’s half an hour away and it's…it just takes a lot of time.  [so it's a big time commitment and then it's expensive as well.] Yes. [I'm curious, how much do you have to pay to ride on the team?] Um, lessons are $310 a quarter [is that one lesson a week?], um, that’s one lesson a week… [an hour?] an hour, and there's, um, $45 for the team dues for the year, $30 for the IHSA dues for the whole year, and then each show, it depends on if you jump or not, between $100 and $200 for the entire weekend - that’s hotel and show fees and everything. [yeah, so that adds up, and on a college budget, that’s really expensive.]

**In what class(es) or event(s) do you compete?**

Um, novice, I've only have competed novice hunt seat equitation on the flat, but starting this weekend, I'm doing my first fences class, so I'm excited.  [oh, good luck!] Thanks!

**If there are too many riders for everyone to show or complete in a given event or class, who decides who shows for your team? For example, the coach, team captain(s), team vote, seniority, riders picking straws, etc.?**

Um, the coach, but the coach probably decides based on seniority, um, but they’re really good about if there’s not room for everybody, we’ll have some people show one day, so pretty much everybody gets to go and show at least one day, because most shows are two day events.  [so you have a show on Saturday and a show on Sunday?] Um hmm, and most…I would say, if you want to show, you’ll get to show at least one day, and that’s, you know, 10% of the people don’t get to show I would say. [this for the flat riders, right?] Um hmm, the flat riders, oh yeah, for jumping I guess it’s different. The coach decides on who they… I would say, it’s seniority mixed with who’s most competitive.

**Does your school have a show outfit that everyone wears (i.e., a standard show outfit), or do you pick your own outfit?**

We provide our own outfit, but there’s definitely guidelines.
Tell me about your show outfit. Describe all elements such as boots, spurs, hat, gloves, colors, amount of decoration, etc. Is it very form fitting?

Um hmm, um, let's start from the bottom up. You want, um, shined, tall boots, tall riding boots, black leather, um, you know, you kind of have some choice if you want them zip up or you want them pull up, but as long as they're black and they fit you. Um, pants, you need the tan breeches, like a greenish tan to a … whatever, um, they're supposed to fit you well. You know, some people last year didn't have the correct pants and had borrowed pants, we make it work. Um, then you wear a white or a light colored buttoned up shirt with a jacket, either navy, green, grey …anything but black, really…dark colored. [so dark colors?] Um hmm, dark colored jacket… [but not black?] Not black, black is a dressage oriented color, so you don't want black. Um, a collar, you can have your initials monogrammed on it, um, or not. You need a helmet, an approved helmet, black velvet is the best, um, black gloves, and, you know, it’s all supposed to fit you and look nice but, you know, people can borrow and make do.

What factors do you consider when choosing your show outfit? For example, horse color, body shape, equitation weakness that you want to de-emphasize, etc.

That would be a good idea if I did think about that! Um, for me, I don’t have, I don’t have my own jacket, I borrow a jacket, so it’s… for me, it’s more …I’m not really thinking about the horse color, I’m just finding something that’s going to fit me and at least look presentable. Um, as far as hiding something, I don’t know, I mean…, I just try to find something that fits. [I know in the English world, there’s not so much you can do, but when you get into the western world, they have a lot more leeway in what they can wear] Yeah, um hmm.

Did you have to get approval from the coaches before wearing this outfit?

No. Well, I’m sure that the coach would come up to us and say “What are you wearing”, but it’s not like we have to go and get like “Do I look ok?” But I’m sure they would tell you. [So if something was way out of line, not what they wanted, they would let you know?] Yeah.

If your university provides the show outfit, are you allowed to tailor it to fit your body, or are you limited in how you can modify the outfit? Can you provide examples?

Question skipped. n/a

If your university has a predetermined show outfit, are there certain items that you have to provide yourself, or do they provide all parts of the show outfit? Which items did you provide?

Question skipped. n/a

Are hairstyle and makeup important aspects of your appearance at shows? Do your teammates help each other with hair and makeup at shows and share tips and/or tricks?

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I just remembered I forgot to mention hair, um [well, here’s your chance!]

Makeup, I never thought it was a big deal until I heard one girl, um, she’s one of our pretty competitive riders, she’s really good, she did IEA, um, it came down, and she rides in a pretty high level, it came down to her and the last person, she ended up getting second because the judge said she didn’t look like she wanted it enough, she should have had pinker cheeks. So…you know, I guess now people, I mean not overboard at all, I probably wouldn’t wear much more makeup than I’m wearing right now, um, but, you know, I wear a little bit of mascara, maybe a little bit of blush, and I wear earrings. **[so something a little subtle but still to add some color...]** Yeah, very subtle, just to look like you’re alive. **[so what about hair?]** Hair, you want it…you put it in a hair net and then you tuck it under your helmet, so you’re not supposed to see your hair, you’re supposed to have a little bit like this over your ears, covering your ears, um, but you don’t want to see hair coming out of the back of your helmet. **[so neat, polished?]** Neat, polished. **[so do your teammates help each other and share tips and tricks...?]** Oh yeah, we have one girl who does everybody’s hair because she’s really good at it. You know, people help tie the numbers so it’s the right tightness, to they’re not pinching or too loose. We help each other a lot.

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<th>How do you feel when you are wearing your show outfit? Do you feel confident about your riding ability when wearing your show outfit? Are you physically and emotionally comfortable in your show outfit?</th>
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<td>Um, it depends on how cold it is that day [or how hot?] or how hot! Um, yeah, usually I feel confident in my outfit, I think it looks polished and I feel like I’m ready to go. um hmm.</td>
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<th>Do you ever feel self-conscious or uncomfortable about certain aspects of your body when wearing your show outfit? If yes, tell me what makes you uncomfortable.</th>
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<td>No, I don’t think so.</td>
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<th>Do you have the same feelings or worries when wearing your regular street clothes?</th>
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<td>Yeah, yeah, I don’t really usually think, I don’t think….but for me, my, I feel like I have big calves, and I feel like my boots kind of show that because I couldn’t fit into the regular size calf, I had to wear the full calf, so I look at all the girls in their little boots “mine aren’t that little!”, but now that’s one thing, I don’t think about it that much, but now that I’ve thought about it. <strong>[so just be glad for your muscular legs! I have the same problem.]</strong></td>
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<th>When you didn’t feel positive about your appearance in your show outfit, did it affect your confidence level and/or how you performed that day?</th>
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Oh yeah, I definitely feel like it would….um, just as far as being confident and having the posture, and that's a huge part of equitation. If you’re not confident, your shoulders are going to be slumped…. [so tell me a little bit about the posture then, what are we aiming for?] You don’t want to be too over erect and look unnatural, you want to look natural but tall, shoulders back…., but in a natural looking way [so not stiff?] yeah, not stiff… [but but still moving with the horse, but still having that long look?] Um hmm, and chin up, but…err, head back, chin straight, you don’t want to be looking down or slumping your shoulders or hunching your back.

Has your coach ever suggested that you lose or gain weight in order to be more competitive in your event? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?

Can I share another person’s story? [You can share whatever you want to.] Um, I’ve never had a coach say anything to me, but last year we had a different coach, I don’t think our coach now would say anything to us, but last year we had a coach, and we had a girl who was a little bit bigger, and we were riding, and she was trying to get her horse to move, so when you kick them, your kind of whole body just goes like that, and she said “[rider name redacted], don’t do that with your body”, and she said “it’s disgusting”. She said “You need to hit the treadmill.”, and I , I couldn’t believe that she said it, I really couldn’t. [was this in public?] It was in our lesson [so it was for everyone to hear?] um hmm, it was. Um, and actually a little bit after that, our coach—and this, I don’t know where I fall with her on this, but she enforced a BMI policy where needed to be under a certain BMI to ride and then under a certain BMI (body mass) to jump, and she said, you know, it was for the safety of our horses, which I understand, you don’t want to put, you know, somebody who might be slightly overweight on a pony, but it…. the way that she presented it could have been more professional. [so was it a reasonable BMI?] It was a reasonable BMI, it was like, what was it, I should know what it was, ….it was like 30, no, no, no, 35, 34, [well that’s pretty high] Yeah, so it was like the line between like overweight and obese, it wasn’t like the line between regular and overweight. [and it wasn’t the line between underweight and regular] Oh, no, no, no, it…[it was on the higher end..] it was on the higher end, so that’s what, you know, if it was like you had to be under 22, I would think “I’m not even under 22”, you know, I think it was reasonable, but just the way that she had written it…. I don’t know. [so this was the old coach last year...] the old coach [and not the new coach?] No. [so nothing to you, but this incident happened to someone else on the team?] um hmm.

Has your coach ever suggested that you increase or decrease your level of fitness? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?
Um, our old coach definitely would make, you know, comments to the whole team, not singling anybody out at shows, being like you know we need to work on overall being more tight, maybe we should have, um, a group uh where like all... we’ll all go to the [gym name redacted], you know, Sundays at 3 or whoever is free can go, and we set up a couple of times, but, you know, that I could understand I guess, but I never actually was able to go, I was just too busy, I don’t know if it actually even happened, but she would make comments like “we all got to get more tight, we all got to get more in shape to be, you know, a little more competitive”.

**Does your team have fitness or conditioning requirements or standards (either official or unofficial) in addition to riding related requirements? If so, what are they?**

This year, no. Last year she did have the BMI policy, and the thing of it is you had to be under a set BMI or if you passed a fitness test, which was under her. I don’t know what this fitness test entailed, but.....[so it wasn’t a standard test.?] No, it was like run, I don’t know, (unintelligible) I don’t know, pushups, I don’t know what it was... [so there was an opportunity that if you were...] uh hmm. [... still a fit rider and you just...] yeah. [...naturally carried...] yeah. [... some more weight , that you could still qualify] Yes, I'm not sure how...if that fitness test would have been doable, but I know that there was an opportunity...

**Do you think the riders on your team are supportive of each other, or are they critical of each other? What have you seen or experienced that makes you think this?**

I definitely think that for the majority, that 95% were really supportive, um, you know there is definitely that one person who likes to be the most competitive, but I wouldn’t say that anybody’s critical, it would be more... what do you call it....um, constructive criticism, um, about like “oh, [rider name redacted], you did really good” or like “You need to put your heels down a little bit more, and maybe you’ll move up in placings”, and, you know, I don’t think that’s a bad thing at all, the way you say it, you have to be careful, but....I had one girl, this was like my first show freshman year, and I was nervous, and when I get nervous I get stiff, and, you know, but I thought I did an ok job and I come out and she was like “Oh, were you like really nervous?”, and I was like “Was it that obvious?” you know, so I mean like that, you don’t want to ask somebody straight up, I think 95% of the time we’re all really...[so when people are offering the criticism, the constructive criticism, it’s kind of in a positive light, or with a light tone...] Oh yeah. [..not to cut you down?] No.

**What does your coach do (or not do) to encourage a supportive team environment? Can you describe any examples?**
I think our coaches support a really good team environment. Um, I really like our coaches this year. What do they do? We’re encouraged to come out and ride as much as we can, um, so that’s nice, you know, you go and you know the people in your lesson every week, but other than that, it can be hard to meet everybody else, so when they say “Oh, there’s horses that need ridden, come during this lesson and just ride”, and then you get to meet more people, it makes it easier to be more… supportive and more of a team when you know everybody. [so when you do your lesson, it’s the same people every week...] um hmm [...] coming, not like a drop in... no, they... [...] where people rotate in and out...] Yeah, they try to do it by levels so that everybody is getting to do..., you don’t have a beginner who’s learning how to trot and then somebody who wants to be jumping... [because that’s not productive] you can’t, yeah, so they do it by level, um, so, you know, my lesson is four other novice girls, so we all can do the same stuff, but yeah, it’s nice to be able to go when I have a free minute and ride another horse and just to at least get to socialize with some of the other girls, too. [so are there any cookouts or .... team gatherings or anything like that that you do?] Well, we have meetings, um, every other week, where it’s mostly business, but we chat, um, we go on a big trip every year to the Rolex, um, [Oh!] Yeah, it’s the big horse show in Kentucky, so that’s always just been purely fun. Um, we’ll have a... like little gatherings on the weekends, it just depends on who comes, you know, people who are like “I’m going out with my friends” or “I might come here”, but you know we’ll have pizza at someone’s house on a Thursday night, or...and it’s just whoever wants to come can come, I wouldn’t say those happen all that often, maybe once a quarter [well, everybody’s busy] Yeah, oh, we have a big banquet at the end of the year where we all dress up and have dinner and, so that’s fun...

How do you feel about having to ride unfamiliar horses in IHSA shows?
Does that add a lot of stress for you, or do you see this as a "challenge"?
It’s a challenge, it’s...it definitely takes out like the “who has the better horse” sort of thing, so that’s kind of nice, um, but it’s also a challenge, I mean it’s luck of the draw a lot of times, if somebody draws this real nice big horse, and then they can sit real easily on it, you’re probably going to get a better ribbon than some of these horses in the corner bucking and won’t even canter or won’t even walk, so... you know, I’ve just learned to not take it to heart if I don’t get a good draw because the next day, somebody else is going to get that horse and hopefully it’s not me. It happens to everybody. [when you got the one who’s just not playing, do they give you a reride or can you ask for a reride?] You can ask for a reride, I’ve seen people get rerides, not so much in the flat but more in jumping [when it’s just obvious the horse is not helping the cause..] like if someone has a lot of refusals, you know, that’s not their fault usually.
When you are riding equitation or horsemanship classes, do you ever think that the judges favor certain body types or have a preferred "look" and use this to decide placings? Have you personally seen evidence of this occurring? If so, can you describe what happened?

I think it depends on the judge, I think that... I have seen that before, or even if I haven't seen it, our old coach kind of gave us that mentality. “Oh, you’re blonde, you’re skinny”, you know,... [you’re blonde?...] ..."you’re going to do good”, yeah, I’ve heard her say that. Yeah, not that you can even really see your hair under your helmet. [yeah!] I mean that really depends on the judge. Um, I feel like our old coach sounds like a terrible person, she’s..., she really wasn’t, um, but...I don’t know, I’m not somebody who’s so competitive that I usually watch every class, and I’m like “Oh, that person...”, what like try and see if I thought they were placing, I’m kind of like “Oh, my team did good!”, clap, you know, so I can’t say for sure, but I’ve...probably some judges do do that. [so it’s kind of a judge by judge instance?] Yeah.

In your opinion, do you think that your coaches think that judges favor certain body types or looks in equitation classes? Have you seen or hear your coach say something that might indicate this?

[I think you’ve kind of already alluded to that because you were saying your previous coach kind of set that framework, right?] Yeah, um hmm. I’m trying to think about the new coach, I would say the old coach maybe, our new coach, I haven’t heard him say anything about that, because I’ve heard, you know, “everybody has a different body type”, I’ve seen our girls go in the ring and maybe they’re not the skinniest girl on the team and for them they ride really well, and I’ve heard [coach name redacted] be like “Oh man, like why didn’t she, why did she get sixth? She did really well.” So, I don’t think so. [so here again, it’s just, it’s on how the coach views things...] Yeah, that’s what he’s saying in front of us, I don’t think he’s putting on a show, I really don’t. Um, yeah, I’ve see him be like “Oh, she got gypped!” you know, even though...maybe...I don’t know... [so he would be as baffled by the placement as...].] Yeah, um hmm.

Do you think that judges pay attention to riders’ outfits and use this as part of their judging criteria? For example, as long as the riders’ outfit meets the rulebook standard, fits well and is in good condition, do you think what the rider is wearing influences the judge?
Uh hmm. I don’t know…because I mean my stuff, I have nice boots but they don’t fit me exactly correctly because of my calves, um, you know, they’re…they fit here but they’re a little bit big up here, and so in that sense, you know, I don’t know, I mean I’ve seen girls go into the ring with a black jacket, and I don’t know that it’s necessarily in the rulebook “don’t have black”, but it’s just like kind of a...[it’s more of a tradition thing then?] Yeah, a tradition, I don’t know if it was her riding, but I was in the same class with a girl on my team at the last show who had a black coat both days, and she didn’t place, and I….when I’m riding I don’t really, I’m not able to focus on anything else but me, but I kind of wonder, I don’t know, cause I know she’s ridden for a long time, but I wasn’t watching her ride, so I can’t really compare what she got to how she was riding, but I do know she was wearing a black jacket and she didn’t place...[but it may have been for other reasons other than the black jacket?] Yeah, yeah, because I wasn’t watching her ride, but…so I don’t know, it makes me wonder.

Are there male riders on your college or university equestrian team?

We do, we have one, um hmm.

If so, do you think that the male riders experience similar levels of scrutiny over their appearance or their show outfits?

I think they really have it a little easier, I don’t know. I mean it’s harder to... I don’t know actually, they wear... they wear like a tie, so it’s like different than we wear, but I’ve seen guys like “that doesn’t fit you very well” and they end up placing well, and often it’s because it’s harder for them, you know, it’s expensive, and I’m sure that the judges assume that people share. [well it might be harder for them to find things...] yeah, and to find things, and they can’t share if they’re the only guy, so I would think they’d be a little bit less lenient [ed. note: she means a little more lenient or a little less strict based on the connotation], I probably would be if I was a judge, I don’t know, just thinking about that, just having the experience that I can’t afford everything, and not everybody can, but..., and especially like custom stuff, custom boots, custom jacket. [yeah, mucho money]. Yeah, oh, yeah!
Appendix K

Transcript: Rider # 5
**Date:** November 10, 2011

**Interview transcript # 5:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<td><strong>What is your first name? You may use a pseudonym if you wish.</strong></td>
<td>[Rider name redacted, to be referred to as Rider # 5]</td>
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<td><strong>How old are you?</strong></td>
<td>I’m nineteen.</td>
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<td><strong>How did you get interested in horses and riding?</strong></td>
<td>Um, my mom showed when she was, oh gosh, when she was little, so it is kind of in my family. Um, I have a lot of relatives that also showed, yes, so I’ve been doing this for a long time.</td>
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<td><strong>Was riding an activity that your family was involved in? Were they supportive or critical of your riding?</strong></td>
<td>Very much, I came out of the womb on horseback! (laughs) But it’s, it’s, I actually, I’m very glad I do it. My mom, you know, showed growing up, and when I was born, it’s, I don’t know, it’s like a family activity. <strong>[it’s something you’ve always been around, right?]</strong> Yep, and I’m sure if I didn’t like it, that she would never have wanted me to do it, but I loved it the minute I started, so… <strong>[so she didn’t force you into it or anything, it was you just took to it…..]</strong> And she would ride and she would take me with her, and I, you know, grew to like it and then started, you know, taking… working with a trainer and taking my own lessons, and then would start competing on my own, you know, and pretty soon you know I was a full-fledged… showing the competition circuit.</td>
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<td><strong>Did you own (or own now) a horse?</strong></td>
<td>I do.</td>
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<td><strong>If yes, tell me how you got him/her, what he/she’s like, and do you have him/her with you in college now?</strong></td>
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Ok, um, I’ve had... a total of six, I think, yeah, and I have four at the moment, and those are like the ones that like I purchased and bought in my name. Um, when I was showing at the barn that I take lessons at, I would show some of their horses as well for them, um, but that obviously that wasn’t in IHSA, that’s like, that’s like your own competition thing, so when I was like growing up, I did that. The very first horse I got, I leased from, um, a open general stables, it wasn’t a competition stables, it wasn’t a showing stables [like a lesson barn stables?]
Yep, just like a lesson barn, and I leased him for a couple of months, and then I decided I wanted to go ahead and purchase him, and then I found out that, I was involved in 4-H at the time, that I found out that because I lived in [county name redacted] County and that 4-H group was based out of [county name redacted] County, that I would not be allowed to participate in their county fair, so... I had I had to back out of the sale at the last minute and, you know, find a [county name redacted] County 4-H group, and it ended up working out much better because the horse that I found I still have today, and he’s old, and he’s a pasture pet, and he’s the best pet that I’ve ever owned. [so he’s got a forever home, right?]
Yes, he will be a lawnmower for the rest of his life. His showing career is over.

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<th>Before college or university, how many years had you been riding?</th>
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<td>Um, competitively or at all? [everything] Ooo, um, I like did lead line when I was like five, so...[that counts, too] I’ve been riding for a really long time, so, you know, 14 years? [ok, so from five to nineteen then]</td>
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<td>How many times per week did you take lessons, and in what discipline were they (for example, western, hunt seat, jumping, reining, etc.)?</td>
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Before college, um, as far as discipline goes, it, it varied. Um, I showed mostly the breed circuits, so I would show Arabians, which means I would show all different seats, so it would depend on what horse I was riding that day for like what discipline I was riding. [So just give me an example, in Arabian, were you doing hunt seat, or were you doing saddle seat on him, or…?] And western [and western?] All three of the above. [All three?] Correct. [Did you do costume or anything like that?] Yes, I did costume, yeah, my saddle seat horse is also a costume horse, and the horse that I showed hunter is also a western horse. [oh, so it wasn’t one horse doing all four…] Oh no, no, no, no, gosh, poor horse. Um, but, it was, um, generally I would take lessons once a week. When you’re getting ready before competition season or after, and you, when they’re not at your house, so like my arena’s outside, so I would send the horse to the trainer in maybe in like February and March when they can’t be outside, and then, um, obviously when you’re paying for it to be there and you’re paying for the trainer, you go all the time. But that was later, like when I was pretty serious about showing, but like when I was growing up and learning, I took lessons once or twice a week. And it would vary. The very first horse I got, I taught it to do everything, so I rode it in absolutely everything. But as I got more competitive and I got more horses, you know, each horse would specialize, obviously. [All right, so you kind of started off doing a lot of the different seats, and then have continued to do that, depending on the capabilities of whatever horse you’re riding at the time.] Exactly, exactly. As I get older and get more advanced, obviously the horse I had was, you know, limiting in quality. You can’t have a horse that’s great at everything. [Oh no, no, no, that was what was blowing my mind when you were telling me you were doing all the seats!] Yeah, but he’s versatile enough that at the level when I was young, you know, I was (unintelligible), it was fun and I could teach him you know tricks, to hunter, and dressage movements, and you know basic things in everything. [So what I heard from that was, basically once or twice a week, except that when you were preparing or getting a horse ready for the season, and he went into training, then you would step up your training as well.] Yeah.

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<th>Did you ride on an equestrian team (such as an Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) team) during middle or high school?</th>
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<td>No, I did not, actually. I wish, I really wish I had, but I didn’t even know about high school teams until I had joined the collegiate team here at [university name redacted]. [So were there no teams in your particular part of the state?] Not that I was aware of. [So you were not aware of it?] Yeah, nah, I just had no idea.</td>
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<th>Did you show as an individual (in other words, not as part of an equestrian team) during middle or high school?</th>
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<td>Um hmm.</td>
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If yes for last question, tell me about your experience in those shows. In what level shows did you participate (for example, A or AA, unrated/local, breed, open, NRHA shows etc.), in what discipline, and how frequently?

Correct, um hmm, I showed, it would depend on the horse, obviously. The higher quality horses would go to... the Arabian Horse Association has, you know, USDF or USEF, whichever, you know, quality rated shows, and so the higher quality horses I had would go to the higher quality shows, the class A rated shows, but those obviously are more expensive so not everybody was going to those shows. But I also did 4-H, and I loved that, it was fun for me. And the very first horse that I ever got that I taught to do everything was my 4-H project, and that was fun, so... I mean I would go to fun shows, and open shows in 4-H, and then obviously the other horses that would be, you know, more competitive and more expensive show animals would go to the higher quality expensive shows. [so you had a wide variety of shows that you went to as a high school and middle school student.] Yeah.

Are you currently riding on your university's equestrian team?

I am.

If yes, what discipline do you ride on your team? (western/English/both) and for how long?

Um, I'm a second year, and I joined as a freshmen, so that's been like a year and quarter. And, I am on the western team here, so I show horsemanship and reining.

If you are not currently riding on your university's equestrian team but have in the past, why did you stop (for example, too much money, no time, lost interest, didn't like the format or quality or horses, other reason)?

Question skipped. N/A

How would you categorize your university team compared to other teams in your zone or region?

Very competitive
Somewhat competitive
Neither competitive or non-competitive
Somewhat non-competitive
Non-competitive
Compared to the others in...? [in the region or zone, yeah] 100% very competitive. That's actually why I chose to do the western team, as opposed to the English team here at [university name redacted]. Um, I am actually a better English rider, and I've trained longer as an English rider, but the western team is much more competitive here. But the English team this year is growing, and then that's really exciting - I have friends that are on the English team, and I'm so glad for them, but, um, when I came as a freshman, the western team had previous titles and was much more competitive. [do you think you would switch over or...?] I've actually kind of been thinking about doing both [that would be suicide!] Yeah, I would be so, it would be exhausting, and it would be very expensive, that's what I'm worried about, very, very expensive. But, actually the barn that the western team rides at, is ...the guy who coaches our team, his brother coaches the English team. The English team just moved to his brother's barn, so that's like why their team is, you know, working out and going out better, they're both really, really great guys, and they know everything about horses, so that's why both teams are becoming so competitive because we have excellent coaches.

What do you like the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, is it the camaraderie, being able to travel to shows, the actual riding or something else?

Um, I would have to say....that, that the team aspect, almost, because I have been, I've been showing all my life, and it's, it's such a natural part, you know, of what I'm doing, but it, it... college, it's different. It's not just about, you know, your personal goals and the personal way you want to win, it's, it's about your team now. And I played team sports in high school, and then I showed individually, and that was always pretty separate, but it's, it's, I really enjoy, enjoy.... there's a lot of competition when you're an individual, and I feel like there's almost like less when you're, when you're on a team. It's still competitive, but there's people, you, you... that are like on your side. I don't know how....[I think I know what you're getting at, it's about the camaraderie and the support system, I think] Right, the best part is like that team aspect that I got when playing high school sports was introduced into what I loved most, it wasn't just like all on me, it's wasn't all about, you know, how I do. Like if I had a bad day, now that's a bummer, but I really hope someone in some other division, you know, does well enough to pick up my slack, and so that's like.... [so maybe it takes some of the pressure off?] Yeah, I would agree with that, and I think it makes it more fun to be ....I don't know, to be, you know, a part of something else, it makes it more fun to be like “Oh yeah, I’m on the equestrian team”, not “I show horses”, so I think it's way more fun and almost like more of an accomplishment, you know, if you all do well, and.... [yeah, then everyone is really excited].... Yeah, yeah!
What do you dislike the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, riding unfamiliar horses, politics, making an individual sport into a team sport, etc.

Um, I would probably say my least favorite thing would, um, not be so much the unfamiliar horses, but the fact that there's no bond. You know, one of my favorite things about riding my horses is that you like get to know each other, and you can know... you know their personalities, that's one of the best parts for me, at least, you know, they're pets, and I don't do it as a business, I do it as a hobby, so I'm connected to them, and that's probably what I miss the most, you know, and I get some of that bond through the team aspect, because, you know, there's other people and that's, you know, where you get that, but you lose that with the animal because that... you're no longer a team, that's... you're not a team going out there to perform together, it's like an individual thing. And they tell you that when you show IHSA, that they're judging you. The judge is supposed to look at your riding ability, so if you have a poor behaving horse, and you are riding well and dealing with it well [in spite of the poor behavior...] Correct, then it should benefit you, versus someone who's having, you know, a horse that's fine and not doing anything wrong, you know, that should be taken into consideration. And I,... that would probably be my least favorite part, because my favorite part is, you know, the team bond with your horse.

In what class(es) or event(s) do you compete?
[You are western, so... and you said you were doing horsemanship and reining?] Correct... [so are you in the open level, or...?] I'm, actually, I'm in the advanced horsemanship right now. Um, I'm not competing in reining for IHSA, because the way like the points are broken down, I had to stay in this division because when we go to nationals, they need a point rider to be in that division, and if I were to point out and become in the open reining, then I couldn't compete show in advanced horsemanship. So I'm still training in reining and I'm still showing, you know, like outside, like at scrimmages and so on and so forth, but when they count for points, when you know they're rated shows that are within our season that count towards year end, then I don't show. [so if you are concerned about pointing out of advanced, I guess you rode that level last year?] Correct. [Ok, so this is your second year in advanced, and then you're right on the cusp of pointing out...] correct. [So you going to hold off on that until next year?] Yeah, because when you first join the team, you, like, fill out, um, a form, and it tells you where you should be placed based on, you know, your level of experience, and so on so forth, and to be an open, um, level rider, you need to have like, um,... I think it's a USEF rated national title, and now you have that, but not in western. It's an English seat, so it doesn't count for the western team. So that I'm an advanced rider, I have the experienced hours, and I have, you know, the level of time spent, but I don't have a national title in the western seat, which is fine with me, because I'm not as good at western, you know, so I wouldn't want to be open, .......but that's why. [So, in other words, for a beginning... not a beginner, but a new to the team rider, as a freshman, they would have to have some sort of a national title to even be considered in the open, that's what I'm hearing?] Correct. That's how, that's how it's like so great when people are doing the team, you can have people that have never ridden horses before [well, they're in the walk/trot...] Right, right, so you, like, the first thing you do when you come is fill out a form that says about all of your experience, and it's like, “ok, well this puts you in this category”, like, based on your previous experience, and then every time you show in an IHSA show, you get points, and when you go above 35, you move up into the next division. [Would the coach ever, say, put you in the category based on the form, and then after a couple of lessons with you, say “Oh no, you really need to be somewhere else.”?] I don't think that they can, you know, it's all about the form. Cause it's all about...that's the best part of IHSA is that, you know, a walk/trotter's first place counts just as much as an open reiner's first place. But they're very strict about that, because they wouldn't want someone to fake being a walk/trotter, do you know what I mean? [we call that sandbagging, I don't know if that's a term in the horse world , but...] So, um, you know, IHSA is very good about that, making sure there's a place for every level rider on the team.
If there are too many riders for everyone to show or complete in a given event or class, who decides who shows for your team? For example, the coach, team captain(s), team vote, seniority, riders picking straws, etc.?
Um, anyone can show that wants to, there's never, I mean, there's too many people... [so there's not a limit on how many riders you can have in the western classes?] No, um, though usually, I mean, if there's like 8 people in a class, you know, they'll split it, so they'll have, you know, two beginner classes, and they'll just randomly split it in half. Cause that's not very safe to have a whole bunch of horses going around at one time, and it's hard to judge. But I mean there's never, I'm sure if it were to get to an absurd amount, you know, that would be something to take into consideration. But also, you don't want a rider to point out before they're ready, so sometimes if you go to early shows, and there's not a lot of competition yet, people are still getting going, you'll get a lot of points maybe before you're ready. So it's not that, everyone doesn't show every single time, so usually you don't run into that, like me, because I'm so close to pointing out but they want me to stay for the end of season, I'm not showing at the beginning... [so the coaches are kind of managing the points accumulated through the season and then may strategically hold you out] Right, um hmm, based on if A) they don't want you to move up, B) if you don't want to move up or C) they want to, like, save you for later, you know, for the end of the year when we go to post season. Um, but there's one... they like fill out a form, and it's called a point rider in each division, and that's the rider that counts for points on our team. [for the team points?] Right, so it's not, you can't have like, you know, 20 people in beginner versus the other team's two and, you know, kill them because you had more people, which is.... you pick one person, and you pick the rider before you go in there, so that, you know, and we've had that happen...[do you know if you're the point rider for the team, or is that something the coaches keep to themselves?] Um, you don't, usually they don't, [they don't tell you?] It kind of psyches you out a little bit, but honestly when you see the point board, and you see like the points go up...[and you know where you placed, and you know you were the.... but that's after the fact]. Yeah, yes. [But in the western classes then, there's not a limit on how many individual riders can ride, cause I've heard from some of the hunt seat riders that particularly in the fences classes, that they're limited to two.] Yeah, I've heard that. The hunt seat team is very large this year, especially because they have moved to the new barn, that they just moved to, and this new barn has a very reputable name, like I said, it's our coach's brother. So I think that they have a massive team, and I think they're going to have to figure out how they're going to work that this year, but as I guess our team is not as big, that may be... [so that may be a team strategy, as opposed to an IHSA rule] yeah, I don't know about IHSA rules for English, but I know there aren't any rules per se for the western team. But if we had a team of 70 people, you know I'm sure there'd have to be some kind of rule that we would have to enact, that would kind of be crazy to have that many people to show.

Does your school have a show outfit that everyone wears (i.e., a standard show outfit), or do you pick your own outfit?
It depends on what division you’re showing in. Um, for the IHSA, you provide your own. But we often will do scrimmages against varsity sport schools, and varsity sport schools have, um, matching outfits, like they’ll wear the chaps and the hat and usually they’ll wear a button down shirt in their school colors with the school logo. Um, so when we do scrimmages, we do... our team chooses to buy those and have our thing embroidered, you know... [like a polo?] It’s a button down, and, um, ours are like we got from Banana Republic, we didn’t even get them from a western supply store, um, and we just had them professionally embroidered with our team’s logo on the pocket. Um, but the IHSA, as far as I know, last year, our coach had been telling us that they were trying to actually ban that from... um, having the teams have their logo on the shirt, because they thought that that carried weight...that they thought the class would be misjudged if someone saw the rider and goes “Oh, they’re from, you know, such and such a school” that’ll make me change, you know, [so that was in the scrimmages in where you’ve got the IHSA squads going up against the NCAA squads...] That’s just in IHSA, so like when we go to varsity scrimmages, it’s on our own, we just choose to do that. [Do any of the ISHA teams have matching uniforms with their team logos on them?] They do, but they can’t have their logo, because the IHSA was working on, or has created that rule, I haven’t been up to date on it since last year before I left for the summer, but that was their point was that they did not want the logos on everyone’s shirt. So right now, it’s just like traditional, you know, a show outfit where everyone’s different. It’s a show outfit you know with a show shirt, but they...people have been wanting to go to uniform, to look like a team, and that also helps, you know, because obviously in individual showing, what you’re wearing plays a very significant part in how you show, you know how you sit, how it makes you look, so if everyone’s wearing the same thing, that obviously would help, it helps even the playing field from my perspective. But I know that, I believe [university name redacted] wears matching black shirts, but they no longer have their logos on them, they just have plain button downs, because I believe the IHSA did make that rule, that they don’t want that, so that you know when the class is being judged, the judge can’t determine who’s from what school. So they can’t have any pre-connotations, or whatever...[so they want a situation where the riders have no visible markings or affiliation with a particular school when they’re in the ring, right?] right, and that I’m sure that it’s relatively obvious, you know, when your coach is standing on the rail, and all your friends are cheering for you that are in [university name redacted] jackets, you know what I mean, yeah, you get it, but I think their point is that they don’t want it to be, you know, blatant. [and I also think maybe the judge is thinking about a lot of different things, and he might not, he or she might not be paying attention to what’s going on on the periphery] Um hmm, yeah. [so what I could hear is that you... your team is still providing your own outfits..] Correct. [with the exception of this one-off scrimmage that you might have had against a varsity team...] Because
our coach is like pretty well known, we know other coaches from varsity schools, so because we want to and we think it's fun, we like to do that, so like last year, we went to [university name redacted] and this year we’re going to [university name redacted], and we choose like as individuals to buy, you know, button downs with our logos on it, you know, because we want to be up to the same standards. [but kind of corralling it back to the IHSA world then] we do our own outfits. [when you’re doing a straight IHSA, when you’re doing a straight show like that, then you’re responsible for your own outfit and you're all unique, right?]. um hmm.

Tell me about your show outfit. Describe all elements such as boots, spurs, hat, gloves, colors, amount of decoration, etc. Is it very form fitting?
Ok. Um, I wear black show pants and black chaps, um, and black boots, and you can like vary that when you're showing other horses, but, um, it's... the way the horse is colored plays into the color that you're wearing, it can always you know throw it off, so when you... [so black is pretty neutral, then?] Right, you don't know what horse you're going to ride, so you don't want to wear something like a crazy colored, nude colored chap because you don't know how that's going to look, so usually we stick to, um, black chaps, black show pants and black boots. I ride with spurs, but it depends on the horse, when you get your draw mount, I decide then if I want to ride with spurs, um, they're silver ball spurs, they're not rowelled... [they're not rowelled?] No, the IHSA made a rule that you're not allowed to... you have to wear ball spurs, no rowels are allowed. Um, as far as the show tops go, that's like where you get into your variation. Um, usually you'll have the bottom, and the decoration will be up from boob to shoulder [like framing your face, then?] Right, and the way your shoulders sit, and the bottom will be black. It doesn't have to be this way, but mine is black also, so it kind of continues the line, and then it, um, the white forms, you know, almost like a triangle like around your the shoulders like this [like a yoke?] Yeah! but it's like a shape that's supposed to be like flattering to the way you're positioned when you ride, and to the corner of the shoulder, and that part's white leather, as opposed to this part that's black and it's stretchy stuff, just black material, and, um, I have pink and green and clear crystals that, um, elaborate and show like a pattern, just like a little kind of leaf things with flowers in it, and it drapes like this, like follows the same line [so it follows the break between the white and the black] Right, right. [to emphasize...] Correct, and the decoration is on the white part, so it's like uh it's like a pretty drastic contrast, you know. It's black all up your legs, and it's black here, and then when you get to the top part of your body, the white leather comes and like makes that line and then that's where all of the glittery stuff is. [so it almost sounds like if you're thinking, you know, attracting your eye, it's like pulling your eye up?] Yeah, I would agree with that, and it's down part of my arm as well, um, there's... I have like cuffs on the end of my arms.. [Big cuffs?] Um, yeah.. [about two inches?] Yeah, I'd say that, um, and it kind of comes down, the decoration, down the side of my forearm, and it's just black from my elbow down, um, but I would say that it does draw upwards like this, and that's why, often times, you know, this line being black, black chaps makes it look... [so it's a very continuous line until this splash of color up around your face?] correct. [And hat?] Black hat. [any decoration on the hat?] Nope, a little silver buckle but it's .... [but it's the standard thing you would see on a western hat?] Correct, so yeah, your chaps usually match your hat, which match your show pants which match your boots. [so everything's fairly neutral for your outfit, mostly black except for this patch of white and then the bling coming in from the crystals ......] Correct, but, I guess, neutral...., most... a lot of show shirts are designed in that cut, that half up here, and I don't know if you've ever seen any or you know
anything... *I've seen all sorts of stuff...* oh, ok, so a lot of them have that, and it's very bright and very colorful and very “crystally” on the top, and so it's kind of a scene.... but it's, it would... no, no, I don’t want to say neutral, because it's not, it's very kind of obscene, it's very..... *Well, I guess the black part is very neutral, and they you’ve got this explosion around the chest and the face*. Right, yeah.

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<tr>
<th>What factors do you consider when choosing your show outfit? For example, horse color, body shape, equitation weakness that you want to de-emphasize, etc.</th>
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Um, the first thing that immediately came to mind is there are some shirts that are made where there’s decoration around like your midriff, like if your chaps were to come up, it would maybe be like a print per se, or maybe it would be more like a jacket where it would zip in the front and then it would end here, you would see where it ends. [so it would not tuck in then?] Correct. That’s one option, and the other option is that it would be a print and it would tuck in or maybe it would have like a rhinestone, you know down here. I think personally that detracts from the line and the way that you sit because not only does your leg need to be secure, but your seat and the way your body sits, you know, can determine your seat… the way your upper body sits determines your seat, so if this line looks clean up here, then I think that is much more flattering to the way the picture looks, because when you think about it, when you look at a rider, you want her ear, her shoulder, her elbow, her hip and her ankle to be in a straight line, so it needs to like go like this, and if it’s, you know, smooth lines and your chaps come up above, then it helps that line looking at, but if you have a jacket per se that, mine zips in the back, so like there’s a lot of bedazzling in the front and it comes all the way up, but some girls, you know, lately the trend is to have it zip it in the front and you like leave it you know undone to here….it’s not, it’s not as classic but it’s also not as flattering to your shape, in my opinion. But like a lot a pleasure riders that are not riding for, you know, horsemanship, for how they ride, will wear those, and that’s fine, but, you know, a print does the same thing, it just doesn’t look…the print to me doesn’t look as expensive, it doesn’t look as classy, um, and the jacket doesn’t look as neat and it doesn’t flatter the way you’re sitting and your form. [and so the jacket, I would think just because it’s a jacket, is not going to be as form fitting or as tight as maybe the shirt?] Yeah, I would agree with that, and, and… some are, and some, you know, do come round, but… where they end is unflattering because if you… [the place on the hip] Right, and it’s sitting, and it ends right where your leg’s going out, but whereas the chaps come up high, so that gives them more a continuous line, it doesn’t look like you’re sitting and then here’s your body. [so almost what I’m hearing is the chaps maybe lengthen your leg line, is that….over having a jacket/chap combo] Um hmm, and I’m sure there are people who prefer otherwise, but not….I don’t know, I’m sure there are some people’s bodies who look that way, but generally speaking, I would say most people would agree with that, if you’re showing just for, you know, the horsemanship aspect, you know, tucked in pants, chaps coming up makes the leg look longer.

Did you have to get approval from the coaches before wearing this outfit? Were they looking at fit, or color or just the overall picture or...
Yes. All of the above. What you’re wearing needs to be flattering to your body, so, you know, obviously like girls who have particular, I don’t know, girls who are like larger in the stomach area wouldn’t want to wear a print [no because that pulls the eye?] right, and so it needs to fit well and look classy and look expensive and look quality. [so they're kind of giving a critical eye to how that particular choice fits on that rider's body, how it fits, whether it’s achieving that look that they think is what they want to see, right?] Yes, and my coach is actually particularly picky and is known in the horse world outside [for being picky?] for being picky because she’s, um, very experienced. She knows what she likes and she knows what looks good, she’s very good with clothing, very good with clothing.

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<tr>
<td>If your university provides the show outfit, are you allowed to tailor it to fit your body, or are you limited in how you can modify the outfit? Can you provide examples?</td>
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<td>If your university has a predetermined show outfit, are there certain items that you have to provide yourself, or do they provide all parts of the show outfit? Which items did you provide?</td>
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<td>Are hairstyle and makeup important aspects of your appearance at shows? Do your teammates help each other with hair and makeup at shows and share tips and/or tricks?</td>
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Very much and yes. [very much and yes, ok] Very..., it is very important. We have this inside joke that we tell at our banquet every year that [coach’s name redacted] will always tell you to sit up straighter and put on more eye shadow, because it’s... it’s like it’s just like dance, you know, you want your makeup to be heavy to accentuate your facial features, if you’re way far away...[you want to see it from a distance] Right, exactly, exactly. And your hair should be very neat, and very clean and very out of the way, and, um, that goes along with the clothing, it just makes the overall picture look well. Cause you can sit and ride just as well as the next girl, but if she has an outfit on that looks better [the polish] and fits her better, she’s going to look like she’s riding better, so.... [so your hair, is it always up in the hat or is it loose?] It’s in a bun [it's always in a bun?]  Yep, but it’s, um, we pull it back tight, like slick, and you can make bangs up here so you wouldn’t see that in the hat, and then and twist it into a really small bun, but it...[so it’s like a low bun then sitting at the nape of your neck] and you put a hairnet around it so there’s no escaping hair, it’s like a very clean...[but the back of the hat is sitting right on top of the bun and the bun’s down at the nape of the neck] um hmm, but I mean that.... [what do you have if you have short hair like me?] Pin it with bobby pins up like this,...[just so it’s out of your face and nothing is flapping...] Right, because you think when you put your hat on, it would stick out and you don’t want that, you want it to look like a clean line and be able to see your ears and this side of your face so they can see where you’re looking and this line right here, so that’s... [chin line, like your neck line?] Right. But I don’t know, you said something about university provided clothing? [this is more for the people that have a standard outfit that they wear in the shows] Ok, cause I was going to say we provide clothing for people that don’t have it. [oh, well tell me about that then]. Um, like I..., I mean we do it like on a volunteer basis, we kind of like have collected things over the years of our team, that, you know, are just extras that we don’t use anymore. Like I have an older show shirt that I kept when I got my new one, it’s not quite as expensive, it’s older, you know , not quite as nice, but when someone needs to borrow it or if someone doesn’t have a shirt, they wear that. So, it’s not like...we get a lot of people that have never showed before...[so they have nothing to build on] Right, so between the combination of everybody, we always have enough stuff. We kind of like have a team closet that we just pull from [good name team closet]

How do you feel when you are wearing your show outfit? Do you feel confident about your riding ability when wearing your show outfit? Are you physically and emotionally comfortable in your show outfit?
Um, I think it makes me…, yes, I think it makes me confident, but because I really like it, and it was custom made to fit me so that I know that it complements me and that.. and the way that I ride. I look polished, and that gives me confidence to know that I look like I know what I’m doing. Um, as far as being particularly comfortable physically, NO!! If you think that I actually have boobs, and the girl that I bought it from… it wasn’t entirely finished when I bought it, and she had smaller boobs and not as wide of shoulders, so…. [so you feel squished in…] Right. The leather’s on your shoulders and then across here, so my shoulder motion is limited, and that’s fine, because when you’re actually up there, you don’t want your arms moving anyway [you don’t want to be flapping] no, but when I like go to get on, I can’t get my arms up all the way. I mean I love the shirt and it was very expensive, I gotta love it forever, but I can’t lift my arms and I can’t lift my arms… Sacrifices!! [so it’s not real comfortable because maybe it’s a little tighter or snug in a particular area] and it looks way better to be snug then not, [ok, so you’ll take the uncomfortable for a couple of minutes in the class, do you get out of it as soon as possible?] No I mean, it’s not like terrible, I just, it’s just that the leather part from here to here is, because my boobs are bigger.. [leather doesn’t have a whole of give or ease to it] Exactly, exactly, it’s like just tight like in the shoulders and the boob, like it’s not….

Do you ever feel self-conscious or uncomfortable about certain aspects of your body when wearing your show outfit? If yes, tell me what makes you uncomfortable.

No. [you say no because this particular one you really love, and it looks good on you?] yeah, and I’ve been doing this for so long and I’ve worn so many show clothes, and I’ve done, you know, shown individually, you have two classes back to back, and you have to change your outfit outside the ring. [so you’re like stripping publically?] yeah, I don’t, I’m not really… I have no shame. [ok, that’s fine, that’s like dancers when they change costumes in the wings, so yeah, you get over that pretty quickly (laughs)] Yeah.

Do you have the same feelings or worries when wearing your regular street clothes?

No. [No, you don’t have a problem with the show outfit, you don’t have a problem in your street clothes?] No, I mean sometimes when I wear, when I like wear really skimpy dresses or something, when I’m trying on a friend’s dress, I’m like “Ugh, this is short”, but I’m not, I never get that feeling from show clothes. [so you not overly concerned about anything then?] I mean I would be if I didn’t think, if I didn’t like it, if I didn’t think it looked nice, or…was I don’t know, was flattering, or if it didn’t fit well, then I would be, but I think it does [but yours fits well and you’re happy with the way you look when you’re in it] um hmm.

When you didn’t feel positive about your appearance in your show outfit, did it affect your confidence level and/or how you performed that day?
Absolutely. **[ok, so the confidence is a key thing in how you ride and perform?]** Yeah, I would definitely say so, I would definitely say so, and I think that when you look like a million bucks, you feel like a million bucks, and that 100% translates on your face, like especially when you’re riding saddle seat, and this happens in English too, like it’s all about, you know, the confidence and that air and expression and your facial expression and that translates to every single part of your body, and that just makes the whole picture looks better, so if you look sloppy, you feel sloppy **[and then you ride sloppy]** Right.

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<th>Has your coach ever suggested that you lose or gain weight in order to be more competitive in your event? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation? How does the coach guide you?</th>
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<td>Um, yes, but I don’t think… I don’t think, we were all kind of discussing this and all decided that we like had wanted to last year before post season. I don’t think it was my coach that really directly suggested that, but she…we like did team workouts together, like some of the girls got together and worked out on certain days, and she let us use her gym membership thing and like helped us set it up and would come with us every now and then, but I don’t think that she, I don’t think it was her, … I don’t remember whose it was, but there was never a point… there was one girl who had a particular problem with part of her weight, and she, um, she wore a body shaper, which is like, you know, you know what I mean…, and it helped tremendously, there’s no getting around it, it made it look a lot better, and, but she, she wasn’t…, she was close enough with us, she had been on the team enough that I think that, it was, it was ok. <strong>[you felt comfortable talking about it?]</strong> Yeah, yeah, and I think…and she, she used to joke all the time about her body shaper, about like putting her body shaper on and it was like really funny, um, but I don’t think there’s ever been a point where it was like… <strong>[the coach saying this?]</strong> yeah. <strong>[so this was kind of just a discussion among yourselves that “hey, it might be a good idea”?]</strong> yeah.</td>
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<th>Has your coach ever suggested that you increase or decrease your level of fitness? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation? How does the coach guide you?</th>
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I don’t think so… the only comment that was ever made, I mean about… was about that time last year, about, you know, working out and trying to… [heading into nationals?] right, right, and especially [rider’s name redacted] had known that was not flattering, and she was a very little and very fit girl, she just happened to have, I don’t know if even worked out for her, she was just, the way her body functioned… every inch of fat that she looked at went to right that spot, and so I think she just, it was kind of like, mutual, they both knew, and she wasn’t easily offended, and I don’t know that if it had been anybody else, I don’t know how it would have…, I don’t know how it would have been handled, and I don’t know if the coach would have said anything, nor do I know if our coach brought it up to [rider’s name redacted], this girl, um, but I … it was just known, we just kind of assumed it. And I think when you’re a rider, you know, you know, you can tell, and you want to improve, you want to improve yourself, and if it doesn’t bother you, then it doesn’t bother anyone else. If you’re like “yeah, well, you know, it doesn’t bother me” than that’s fine, but we wanted to be the best we could for each other and for nationals, and we wanted to fix it, so….

Does your team have fitness or conditioning requirements or standards (either official or unofficial) in addition to riding related requirements? If so, what are they?

No. [except for maybe this temporary time leading up to nationals..] Yeah. […where you kind of stepped it up?]. Yeah, we actually had decided that, you know, together that we wanted not only, you know, we wanted to be healthier but we wanted, you know, to do the team stuff, so we thought “Oh, that'll be perfect!” we’ll force each other to work out, you know, power in numbers and stuff, and but I don’t think that, um…. there’s never been like an understood level of, you know, you need to be certain fit, but I guess we’ve, I’ve never encountered a situation where someone is not fit enough to …[already?] look good riding. yeah, yeah.

Do you think the riders on your team are supportive of each other, or are they critical of each other? What have you seen or experienced that makes you think this?

I think they’re 100% supportive of each other. 100%. I’ve never, um, I don’t know, there’s been, there’s always some disappointment, um, when you get closer to post season when they pick the team riders, but there’s never…, I don’t know, there’s never, I don’t know, there’s never any like bitterness, I don’t think, because you’re just like all bummed you don’t get to go, but that’s ok because you know…. [it’s like you’re upset for yourself but you’re happy for your team] right [ you’re happy for your friends] right [but there’s none of this “grr”] Right, exactly, you’re like disappointed, but you’re not mad at them because they’re going, it’s like “man!”, you know.

What does your coach do (or not do) to encourage a supportive team environment? Can you describe any examples?

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Um, they like us to watch each other show, like they like us to watch each other’s classes. Um, and, you know, we cheer. He’ll say all the time, he’ll say “cheer for the horse you like” or “cheer, come on guys, get loud”. Um, then he’ll say “we’re from [university name redacted], you’re a bunch of quiets or something” and give us a hard time, but, um, I mean we don’t have any mandatory like things or anything... [ok, are there any social things like dinners at their house...? oh yeah! [or cookouts..] we do that all the time. [or dinner, nights out on the town where you’re going and doing an activity together or anything like that?] We just actually had, um, we’re friends with the [university name redacted] team from [state name redacted], um, so we just actually recently held our own scrimmage, and the [university name redacted] team came down, and, um, they came down, and we had our scrimmage, and we had a cookout at our coaches’ house afterwards and went to a haunted house. [went to a haunted house, that’s new!] It was really cool.

How do you feel about having to ride unfamiliar horses in IHSA shows? Does that add a lot of stress for you, or do you see this as a “challenge”? That 100% adds a lot of stress to me, but I think it’s a... I think it’s a personal thing...[because you miss that connection with your horse?] Right, and I’ve been doing it so long with horses that I know, and I think that it’s not that way for others, I don’t think it’s as stressful for others, you know, they’re kind of just like doing it, but that is like such a big deal to me, especially because the breed of horses that I ride are so personable, and they’re so emotional... [the Arabians?] yeah, you know, they’re very hot and emotional, so when I’m on and I don’t know the horse, that does bother me, but I think that’s a personal thing, that’s more of a challenge for me personally.

When you are riding equitation or horsemanship classes, do you ever think that the judges favor certain body types or have a preferred "look" and use this to decide placings? Have you personally seen evidence of this occurring? If so, can you describe what happened?
Preferred look..., what do you..., what do you mean by preferred look?  
[I think we've already established that the desired look is kind of that long line through the legs, right?] I guess horsemanship, the definition of a horsemanship class is the way you look, like maybe, maybe, um, not only how you ride, but how your body moves and how it sits, so I think, I think a big contribution to that is your body, you know. Some people that are abnormally tall or abnormally short wouldn’t look as... wouldn’t look as balanced on a horse, so the overall picture wouldn’t look as good, but I mean I don’t think, I don’t know that...beyond that..., I don’t know..., yeah, yes, I think looks obviously affect that, because that’s the point, that’s what they’re looking for.  
[so in an equitation class, that is kind of the point...] yeah  
[as opposed to maybe a reining class where it’s more of a performance thing, “hey do the pattern”] Right, but also that takes much more into affect in the IHSA, but, um, the point is that they’re also supposed to be judging the rider, like how well you... the rider can get the horse to do what you want, cause the rider doesn’t know this horse and especially, you know, the judge can't judge the performance of the horse if one rider gets a better horse than the other, but maybe the other horse, I mean the rider that was on the poorer horse is the better rider, you know, like the judges... that’s the difficult thing about IHSA, that they’re supposed to be able to take into account.....[take the horse out of the equation and be looking at the rider...] um hmm, so like “wow, you know, that horse really didn’t want to collect up for that rider, and she did a good job getting it the best she could...that was impressive”.

In your opinion, do you think that your coaches think that judges favor certain body types or looks in equitation classes? Have you seen or hear your coach say something that might indicate this?  
Question skipped by accident.

Do you think that judges pay attention to riders' outfits and use this as part of their judging criteria? For example, as long as the riders' outfit meets the rulebook standard, fits well and is in good condition, do you think what the rider is wearing influences the judge?
Um, yes. Yes, I... yeah...I definitely do, but I think only to the point where … it makes..., it’s all about, you know, the overall picture, like a judge, the judge can see two riders come in and pick apart, say “ok, I like that girl’s lower leg better, but I like that girl’s upper body, I like that girl’s hand, it’s a lot softer”, but, you know, if that girl has well fit... well fitting, nice looking outfit that makes her look good, it makes the way she’s sitting and makes the way she’s riding look better, it makes the whole thing look better. And if some girl comes in, you know, who’s riding well, but is in the ugliest shirt you’ve ever seen, that negatively affects the way you’re looking at it. Now obviously if, you know, a girl’s riding great and she’s in an ugly shirt and then a girl’s in a pretty shirt and is awful, you know, that’s not ... clothing is secondary. [so the riding will be the deciding factor at that point] right, of course, of course, but when, but when, but when you’re, when you’re nitpicking and you’re looking at two, and you’re thinking “which rider do I like better, what picture do I like better?”, you know, the one that looks nice, the nice outfit will make her look like a better rider, make the picture look better. [so what I’m hearing, is if you have two or three riders of comparable riding skill, it may be swayed by the overall picture that is presented by the outfit] um hmm. 100% [and how the rider is in the outfit] um hmm.

Are there male riders on your college or university equestrian team?

Yes.

If so, do you think that the male riders experience similar levels of scrutiny over their appearance or their show outfits?
I think it is actually, we’ve discussed this, we’ve talked about it, I think he’s at an extreme disadvantage because...the way our show clothes fit really complement our bodies and really show the way we ride, you know, they’re tight fitting and they make, they make the way we sit up there, you know, look elegant. [so they’re showing your line?] Right, and it does not, I don’t think that does that with boys, you know, you don’t look at a boy and say like “wow, what a pretty picture, what a pretty rider”, like they’re doing such a good job, you know, you don’t get that, you don’t get that accentuation, you don’t get that, that, you know, shiny, gleamy shirt that catches your eye, you know, they just look plain. um,...

[is that because they don’t have all the glitz and the crystals?] Yeah, um, you know, of course, you know... [are their shirts as form fitting as the women’s are, or are they a little boxier?] They’re just, just a button down, just a plain button down. [just a plain button down shirt...so they’re almost hiding their body line, or could be hiding their body line in the shirt, then?] I guess..., [maybe, maybe not?] yeah, ...I don’t know I would agree with word hiding, but I think that they... I don’t know, it guess I never thought about it. The point is for us to look all accentuated and upright, but I guess male horsemanship isn’t supposed to be as accentuated and upright, but I think it’s more attractive to see a female, like, ride... it looks better, it’s more attracting, you’re more attracted to that, you know, the form fitting and the glittery outfit. But in the case of this male, um, he is the coaches’ son, he’s an excellent rider, he’s very, very good, um, and it’s doesn’t, I don’t think it hinders...... [it doesn’t hold him back] No, but I mean, I think that, you know, when it gets down to nitpicking, you have fantastic riders, and this is my personal opinion, like I don’t think that any judge would, I don’t know that any judge would agree with this, but in my personal opinion, I think that a judge would be more attracted to, you know, a really attractive outfit that catches your eye and makes the rider look pretty versus the plain shirt, a plain boy. [so part of it may be as a competition to just attract the judge’s attention...] Right, right, right.. [of which the bedazzled crystallated look.. ] the bedazzles aren’t at your thick part or they’re not at your feet where they’re not supposed to move, it’s all about attracting attention at the right places. And I think that... [so you think they guys might actually be at a disadvantage in that whole aspect, then...] Yeah, I would say so, but I think I’ve never, I’ve never like seen.....a significant amount of the judges I think we show under actually happen to be male, and I don’t, um, I’ve never seen...I’ve never seen a class where I said “wow, that [name redacted] didn’t place as well as he should have and I think it’s because he’s a boy.” But I, we’ve like discussed before I think he’s at a disadvantage, you know, I wouldn’t look, I would be more attracted to the pretty outfits, but I guess if you have one boy with ten girls, you going to be like “oh look, it’s a boy!”, you know, but I, I...it’s all about, you know, who attracts the judge’s eye at the moment you look right, you look good. [and hopefully you’re grabbing his eye when everything’s in place, and you’re not having a bad moment on the horse] and this is when it
gets to a high enough level to where your level of expertise is all, is all good, and then the things like the outfit, the way you look, those things really matter. But when, but when, you know, you’re in intermediate and the beginner level, you don’t need an expensive, high quality shirt, because they’re looking for the fundamentals of good riding. But when you’re in the advanced division and open division and everyone’s got good fundamentals… [you’re looking for something to set yourself apart] Right, right, and when you’re a boy, I think that you don’t look “pretty”, it’s just not as cool.
Appendix L

Transcript: Rider # 6
Date: November 15, 2011

Interview transcript # 6:

What is your first name? You may use a pseudonym if you wish.
[Rider’s name redacted, to be referred to as Rider # 6]

How old are you?
I’m twenty.

How did you get interested in horses and riding?
Ever since I was a little girl, I’ve always loved horses, and when I was six we moved out to the country and I always told my mom “I wanted a horse, I wanted a horse”, so, they… we actually rescued my first horse, he was, um, abandoned in an empty lot, and so we took him in, and he was my horse, I could do anything with him. So ever since I was just a little kid, I just loved them so when I got here, I really wanted to continue to ride, and I didn’t show a whole lot when I was younger, it’s a lot of money and things like that, so …but here I really wanted to keep doing it…so I wanted to stay around horses and keeping involved in it. [So, the rescue, I’m just curious, was this through an organization or you just found them somewhere?] No, it was our vet, he treated the horses that lived next door, and he noticed like every time he had been out there, there was nobody at the house and there was…, that it was empty…[so they were abandoned?] He just left them and there was no grass or anything, it was just a dirt lot so, … [poor babies!] They just called and said we could take them if they wanted them, so we decided to rehabilitate them and everything. [Oh, good, so you did a good dead, you saved a soul!]

Was riding an activity that your family was involved in? Were they supportive or critical of your riding?
Um, my mom rode for fun, but it was never a competitive thing. My neighbor, she’s actually, she’s almost ten years older than I am, but she rode competitively, so I went to shows and stuff with her when I was a lot younger, and I really wanted to do it, and so…, but they couldn’t support me financially all the way, because I mean it’s a lot of money…[it’s really expensive] so, they… I did what I could, and like little 4-H projects and small shows and things like that, but they always tried to…whatever I wanted to do, they would help me out, and now they help me out a lot, so….

Did you own (or own now) a horse?
Currently I have two. [so you still have the rescue?] No, he passed away, um, we had him for twelve years, and he was... the vet estimated based on his teeth and everything, that's how they judge their age, that he was around 40 when he passed away [oh!] and I had him for twelve years, so he was, he was an older horse. He lived a very long life, but.. [a very long life!]...so he was a great starter horse, and he was really sweet, you could do anything with him. I used to crawl underneath his belly and everything, and he never moved, he never did anything, so... [he was probably so thankful to have someone who was taking care of him] so he could live happy and....[so he's passed away and so you have two now?] We have two right now.

If yes, tell me how you got him/her, what he/she's like, and do you have him/her with you in college now?

I’m actually from [state redacted], so my horses are still in [state redacted] with my parents, um, we actually bought them from a ranch in Montana, they’re Missouri Fox Trotters [oohh!]. When we bought them, they were untrained. Um, my horse [horse’s name redacted], he was a year old, so we couldn’t even start him under saddle yet, and [horse’s name redacted] was my mom’s horse, and she was two, so we trained them ourselves and saddle broke them ourselves and did everything, and they were... [and do they gait?] yes [...] [I mean they have that unique gait?] Um hmm, they’re really good at it. Um, my horse is a little bit better than hers, he is a little bit, he’s a little bit more cooperative. She’s got the standard mare attitude (laughs) [oh yeah!] She’s very temperamental, but my horse, he’s a sweetheart, he’s like a little puppy. Um, the way that we trained him, we used natural horsemanship [um hmm, like Parelli?] Um hmm, that’s who we used actually, is Parelli and all of his stuff. So, when we did it, like the way that we trained him, he kind of just follows you around, and if I walk and he’s behind me, like if I stop he stops. It’s just like that, and when I’m in the stall cleaning, like he drapes his head right over your arm like he always wants to be right there and he licks your hand... [so he’s a huge puppy dog!] He’s a giant puppy dog, yeah! [but unfortunately he’s still down in [state name redacted] probably wondering where you are] I was just there this weekend so I went out there and was riding him and playing with him and stuff... [was he glad to see you?] um hmm, it was...he always runs up to the fence, and it’s really cool.

Before college or university, how many years had you been riding?

I started riding when I was seven, so before college, it comes....about eleven years.

How many times per week did you take lessons, and in what discipline were they (for example, western, hunt seat, jumping, reining, etc.)?

I always rode western, I’ve ridden English like once or twice just trying it, but I’ve always ridden western. Um, I took lessons, maybe for a year, and it was once a week when I was a lot younger and then I was just kind of... [on your own?] ...on my own.
Did you ride on an equestrian team (such as an Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) team) during middle or high school?

No. Horses aren’t as big in that area of [state name redacted] where I’m from. If you go up towards [city name redacted] …[so you’re not around [city name redacted] and that whole area then?] No, it’s huge up there, but where I’m at, a lot of people thought I was crazy. [so is that farther south?] It’s farther south, it’s about half an hour south of [city name redacted], like right on the [name redacted], so it’s more beach style and stuff like that, so… [and hot!] Extremely hot!

Did you show as an individual (in other words, not as part of an equestrian team) during middle or high school?

Yes. Just a couple of small shows.

If yes for last question, tell me about your experience in those shows. In what level shows did you participate (for example, A or AA, unrated/local, breed, open, NRHA shows etc.), in what discipline, and how frequently?

I was always western pleasure, um, I did halter and things like that. Um, I did it probably like three or four times a year or so, um, usually just small local unrated shows. Um, just little things, 4-H type, I did a couple of 4-H shows.

Are you currently riding on your university’s equestrian team?

Yes.

If yes, what discipline do you ride on your team? (western/English/both) and for how long?

Western. Um, this is my second full year, so [and we’re about a quarter into the second year, so..] um hmm [so the show season has pretty much just started this year] We’ve only had two shows this year so far.

If you are not currently riding on your university’s equestrian team but have in the past, why did you stop (for example, too much money, no time, lost interest, didn’t like the format or quality or horses, other reason)?

Question skipped, n/a.

How would you categorize your university team compared to other teams in your zone or region?

Very competitive
Somewhat competitive
Neither competitive or non-competitive
Somewhat non-competitive
Non-competitive

Very! [you’re over here on the very competitive…] Very! Very competitive. [you’re convinced!] Yes.

What do you like the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, is it the camaraderie, being able to travel to shows, the actual riding or something else?
It’s kind of a combination of a lot of things. I like being around people that like the same things that I do, and we all, we all get along, it’s kind of a little family, and so even if we don’t see each other every day during the week or whatever, we still can kind of just jump right back into it. It’s a big stress reliever for me, because school is like so stressful with work and just classes, so going out to the barn, even if it’s just for my hour lesson or whatever, it’s completely, you...all you can worry about is what you’re doing and I’m not, even if my coach yells at me for something, it’s fine because it’s just...[it’s so different from your normal..] it’s so different from my normal thing that I know he’s making me better, and I like feeling that I’m getting better and seeing that I’m getting better, and so it’s just...I love the whole experience of that, so...

What do you dislike the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, riding unfamiliar horses, politics, making an individual sport into a team sport, etc.

I guess, when we go to shows, you never know what you’re going to get, and so...[so the luck of the draw on the horse...?] It’s kind of the luck of the draw, and I got lucky in the first show and I got really bad luck in the second show. So this point when I came off and I placed, but when I came off, my coach was just laughing, because she’s like “that horse shouldn’t have even been in my class” because he needed Spurs or a crop, and they wouldn’t give me anything and ..[but you still placed!] I still placed, and the judge came up after, and he was like “it wasn’t your fault”, he’s like “that’s why that I still placed you”, he’s like “because when you got him going and he was actually loping around” he was like “you looked fine and you handled him fine”, but he didn’t want to go, he tried to bite other horses and kick other horses, and it wasn’t one of ours, it was one of the other schools that we were at. So, it was, it was really rough, it was just, there was nothing I could do, I tried everything, my coach just laughed and she was like “I can’t even be mad at you”, she’s like "you still placed", she’s like “it’s just...it wasn’t your fault”, so it’s just...that’s really frustrating because you’re out there, and you want to do really well, and it’s....you want to do well for your team and for yourself...[but sometimes you almost feel a little handicapped because it’s...] yeah, because there’s only so much you can do sometimes, and sometimes it’s your fault and sometimes it’s not, so...[can you ask for a reride if it’s a case of the horse is just not cooperating?] A coach can ask for a reride. We actually had that at our first show, um, one of our horses, well one of...it wasn’t our horses, but it was somebody that we were on, um, he kicked up, he basically bucked and she almost flew off, so our coach asked for a reride because it was just...[it was bad?] It was bad, so it, it is possible to ask for a reride if it gets really bad. Mine was the last class of the day, and it was just everybody wanted to be done, and since I placed in general, it was just “let’s just be done”. [Yeah, I understand that feeling too, the shows are long!] Yes.

In what class(es) or event(s) do you compete?
I am intermediate. [you are intermediate horsemanship.] um hmm. [do you do any reining at all?] umm, I practice reining... [but you don't compete?] but because I'm not open yet, I can't compete. [ok, so assuming that if you get to the open level, then you will probably compete] yes. [so right now, just intermediate horsemanship] in IHSA.

If there are too many riders for everyone to show or complete in a given event or class, who decides who shows for your team? For example, the coach, team captain(s), team vote, seniority, riders picking straws, etc.? Coaches. [it's the coaches?] It's the coaches. Um, usually before we even go to a show, about two weeks or so in advance, we get about two weeks in advance, they look at everybody's points and they decide “ok, you have this many, you don't need to show this time, unless you really, really want to”. Or they'll say “Wait, I don't want to you show this time, show next time”. So it's kind of based on how many points you have individually, because they also have to pick point riders that ride for the team, and like their points count like on who's going to win the show, so it's usually our coaches making that kind of decision unless you feel like you really, really want to ride even though they tell you that you don't need to, so... [so you have some input, but they are kind of looking at your points and looking at the season and kind of managing that.] Um hmm, yes.

Does your school have a show outfit that everyone wears (i.e., a standard show outfit), or do you pick your own outfit? We provide our own outfit, um, but we have to... with our shirts, um, [coach’s name redacted], our coach, she has to ok them first. Um, they're bla...standard color, base color needs to be black. you can have anything else on it, mine’s got a little bit of black, but more other stuff on it, so she just...they have to be approved by her first, and then we all have to have black chaps, black hat, black pants, black boots, and.... [so black is kind of your predominate theme, and then you can have any accent color?] You can have some accent color on the shirt and stuff.

Tell me about your show outfit. Describe all elements such as boots, spurs, hat, gloves, colors, amount of decoration, etc. Is it very form fitting?
Um, the shirts are very thin, and they’re very, very tight. [they’re very thin?]
They’re very thin, they’re not thick style shirts, and they want it to be thin
because it clings to your body better, and then they can see the way like if your
back is straight, if it’s curved, if your shoulders are up, if they’re down, because
when...if a shirt is thicker, it’s harder to see your body position, and in
horsemanship, they judge you so much on your body position and how you look
in things like that, so they want it to be where they can literally pick out every
little thing on your body. So, the shirts are really thin for that reason. [is it like
lycra or spandex?] Yes, it’s like a spandex type thing, um. It’s exactly like that,
so that’s what the shirts are like, and then they can be any color, mine’s like
blue and white and black or something. Um, the chaps, um, usually, unless
you’re extremely lucky, your chaps have to be custom fitted. Um, I bought
chaps, had to get them custom fitted, just because they have to be long enough
and they have to fit tight enough and everything. They have to be super tight, it
usually takes two to three people to get you into your chaps. You have to suck
it up and people are like pulling and zipping, and it’s rough, but it’s ok, you only
wear them for a little while and then you take them back off, so, and then you
have to have a sparkly belt, you have to draw attention here and up and
everything. Um, hat is custom fitted to your head, that’s... everything is very
customized, I guess. [and so I guess the picture that I’m getting is kind of a
black look all the way up to... mid torso] um hmm [or something like that
and very tight to the body] very tight to the body [and...very custom.] Yes,
everything is very customized, and....[and so the fit]... The makeup is very
costumey. [the fit is one of the key aspects] the fit is very key. [good, I’ve
got this mental picture now!]

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<td>What factors do you consider when choosing your show outfit? For example, horse color, body shape, equitation weakness that you want to de-emphasize, etc.</td>
<td>Your weaknesses are one. Um, if you have a problem..., my lower back curves in a little bit, so it’s..., I mean I try to like straighten it out, but with nerves I like kind of arch it a little bit, so she doesn’t want anything that’s going to draw attention to that. She wants all of the focus up here, so you’re not looking there. Um, and that’s with everybody, with anything, if their shoulders drop, she wants more focus here and less up here. [so whatever it takes to draw the eye away...] away... [from the problem area] from where your problem is. Um, and it could just be a little problem, but it’s just... you never know, the judge will pick you apart for anything, so.... Usually that’s how it works, it’s kind of... and then it’s we have just a base color of black that you have to go off of, so....</td>
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<td>Did you have to get approval from the coaches before wearing this outfit?</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
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<td>If your university provides the show outfit, are you allowed to tailor it to fit your body, or are you limited in how you can modify the outfit? Can you provide examples?</td>
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If your university has a predetermined show outfit, are there certain items that you have to provide yourself, or do they provide all parts of the show outfit? Which items did you provide?

Are hairstyle and makeup important aspects of your appearance at shows? Do your teammates help each other with hair and makeup at shows and share tips and/or tricks?

Very, very much so. Um hmm, we do help each other, um usually because like I can do somebody else’s hair, but I can’t do my own hair, so it’s kind of how it works. Um, it has to be really…tight bun, low to the base of the neck, has to have a hairnet around it. Um, everything’s got to be bobby pinned in, it can’t fall out, it’s got to stay…[no little frizzies or anything?] No, like when you put your hat on, she doesn’t want to see any hair like from here forward, all of your hair should be either in your hat or right here at the bun at the base of your head. Um, everybody helps each other. Same thing with the makeup. The makeup is very costumey, it’s kind of… it’s kind of like when you see like the little girl cheerleading teams and stuff…[theatrical] yes, overly dramatic, that’s what it’s like, and our coach will walk by and she’ll tell us “Nope, it’s not enough, put on more”, and she says “I want to be able to stand, you know, 500 feet away and tell what color eye shadow you’re wearing”, so it’s got to be really thick and really dramatic, and it has to have like really dramatic looks…. [Up close it’s really horrendous, but when…] yes […]you’re sitting in the stands or….] When you’re sitting far away, it looks ok. Up close, it looks terrible, but we all help each other with it and try and like figure out a way to look less ridiculous, but still have the right amount on, so…[well, it’s all about having the face from the distance so that you’re not becoming this blob…] Right.

How do you feel when you are wearing your show outfit? Do you feel confident about your riding ability when wearing your show outfit? Are you physically and emotionally comfortable in your show outfit?
I feel pretty confident in it, um, it's a little uncomfortable, for the pants come up really high. [physically uncomfortable...] physically I'm comfortable but I feel fine in it, like mentally and emotionally, I fine confident when I'm in it. I feel, sometimes I feel better in that, than just going and riding in a regular t shirt, because I feel like... I'm more aware of my body in that, because of the fact that you have to be with as tight as it is, you have to be more aware of like how you're sitting, so...[oh yeah, if it's tight here and you slump a little bit, you've got that reinforcement that you're...] Yeah, so it's like if I start to fall this way, I can feel it and you have to go this way, but then like with as tight as my shirt is, if I start to arch, it will pull, so I can feel it, so it's kind of... [Oh, interesting...] It makes you more aware of what's going on... [so it's like the show outfit is sending you reinforcement about your body position] Yes. You even have shoulder... there's shoulder pads built into the shirt, so if your shoulder starts to slip, like you can feel it, because you can feel the separation between the pad and your shoulder, so... [Oh, how neat!] It makes you very aware of like what's your body, what your body is doing. [Oh neat, I never knew that!]

Do you ever feel self-conscious or uncomfortable about certain aspects of your body when wearing your show outfit? If yes, tell me what makes you uncomfortable.

Um, I don’t know, it kind of draws, it definitely draws attention to everything, so I mean, it's a little, it's a little weird, you can see everything on your body, there's no hiding it. If you’re not wearing chaps, your pants are super tight, and your shirt is super tight, so it’s like everything can be seen, nothing is really hidden, so... [so if you've got a little pudge here or a little pudge there, .....] you'll see it! [..it's going to be seen.] you'll see it. [it's all out there, right?] Um hmm, so it's just you kind of have to ignore it and think nobody's going to notice it, so... [well everybody's got on the same thing....] everybody's got on the same thing!

Do you have the same feelings or worries when wearing your regular street clothes?

No. [You’re rolling your eyes, so that’s not an issue at all for you right?] No. I don’t know, I just, I feel more con... I guess in that way, it’s just kind of like you can choose, if you don’t feel good one day, if you feel like “hey, I feel heavier today” it’s like you can hide it, and you can’t hide it in that [ed note: “that” refers to show outfit]

When you didn’t feel positive about your appearance in your show outfit, did it affect your confidence level and/or how you performed that day?
Um, I don’t think so, I guess if my ability is like ever affected, it’s because I’m nervous, so that kind of changes everything... [you get nervous?] Sometimes yes, sometimes no, it just kind of depends. Um, at the last show, I wasn’t nervous at all. At the first one, I was really, really nervous, and I didn’t do as well because I was more...I was so worried about everything, keeping everything perfect that I ended up messing up because I wasn’t focused, I was just so nervous, so, but I don’t think it’s just the clothing, I think it’s just, I don’t know, the atmosphere, or some things... some things just make me more nervous than others.

Has your coach ever suggested that you lose or gain weight in order to be more competitive in your event? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?

Not me, but it’s funny you asked that, because last night at practice, um, one of the girls, and she’s super, super skinny, um, he told her “you need to stop losing weight” because she’s dropping a pants size like every two months.. [oh, so she’s getting too thin] She’s getting too thin, and he’s worried about her health, not her riding, he’s like “you need to stop losing”, he’s like “you need to gain weight”, like...[so he might be concerned about some eating disorders or something like that] I think he’s concerned about something else, because he didn’t say it out in general, it was, we were in our tack room, we were kind of just putting stuff away and he was talking to her, so I was just standing over there because I was putting my saddle back... [so it was kind of private conversation, not like in the middle of the lesson?] Right. So he was just like made a comment to her because he’s just noticed like it’s slowly like getting..., she’s losing more and more weight, and she’s thin and tiny, she doesn’t need to lose weight, so I think....but it’s never... in order to show you have to lose weight or gain weight or anything, so... [so it’s more out of concern for her health...] Right. [..as opposed to being competitive or not competitive] Right.

Has your coach ever suggested that you increase or decrease your level of fitness? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?

Um, as far as the fitness goes, they kind of do that, um, if they think that our legs are too weak, we have to ride, like stand while we ride, and then.... [oh, so they build it into the lesson, then?] they build it into the lesson where if they’re..., if they just think your legs aren’t strong enough, like that lesson that you’re not using your legs enough, they’ll tell you that you have to stand in the saddle, and that requires, like it’s all here, ..and you have to just...and they’ll make you ride like that for a while, and I think that’s how, they’re trying to make it so that your legs are stronger, so you can hold on tighter and just stay tighter and use your legs more, so they build it into the lesson, it’s not.... [so it’s not like “you need to go to the gym and do leg presses or anything like that”] No, they just kind of build it in to our lessons and stuff.
Does your team have fitness or conditioning requirements or standards (either official or unofficial) in addition to riding related requirements? If so, what are they?

Nope. Not that I know of (laughing).

Do you think the riders on your team are supportive of each other, or are they critical of each other? What have you seen or experienced that makes you think this?

Overall, I think we’re pretty supportive, and …I would say we’re pretty supportive. There are times where people like make a comment that, you know, “that could have gone better” or, you know, something could have gone differently, but we try really to support each other. Sometimes we kind of question like our coaches in a way, because there’s, there’s this new girl on our team and she’s never ridden a horse before ever, and so she showed in this show, and she didn’t place twice, so it really discouraged her, so it’s like sometimes we just feel like maybe she shouldn’t have showed because she wasn’t ready yet, and it’s… that kind of affects the morale and everything, and she gets upset because everybody else has a ribbon and she doesn’t have a ribbon and things like that, so …but like we told her, you know, whenever there’s somebody in the ring, we always stand on the side, like there’s somebody like at every side, and everybody will say something like when you’re there. They’ll either tell you “you’re doing great” or, you know, “straighten up a little bit, pull your leg back a little bit.” They try to… [so it’s a kind of mixture of “yeah, yeah, yeah” and a little coaching from the rail?] It’s a little bit of both. Like they try to like make sure they keep you, everybody, cause you want to do well and everybody wants you to do well, so it’s supporting while being critical at the same time, but critical in a way to help you, not to hurt you. [so a positive spin on the critical, in other words, it’s for improvement, not to cut someone down or anything?] Right.

What does your coach do (or not do) to encourage a supportive team environment? Can you describe any examples?
Um, to encourage it, they've done a lot of …we just had a fun show, um, a team from [state name redacted] want to come in and scrimmage us, so they came there and they, we had this big cookout and they cooked it at their house, and we all went over to their house and got together, and we always have this big get together at the end of the year at their house, and there's a pile of food and things like that [so there's a lot of social things that they...?] A lot of social things to try and keep us unified as a team, um, we meet twice a month and it's really to try and keep in touch with her instead of just, you know, “we'll see you at the show in three months” or whenever the next show is, so we always meet and talk to each other. We have officers and everything, and they kind of leave the running of the team, as far as that stuff goes, up to us, so, um, any fundraisers and all that, it's fundraiser chair, it's anything that...when it comes, we have to do community service, we have community service chair, so they kind of leave that part of it up to us as far as how much we're going to do and what we're going to do.

How do you feel about having to ride unfamiliar horses in IHSA shows? Does that add a lot of stress for you, or do you see this as a "challenge"?
A little bit of both. It’s a good challenge because you want to see just what...how much you’ve learned and what you can handle. Um, it’s hard when… it’s “ok mount your horse”, and you can’t touch it before that time, you’re not even allowed to touch it on the face…before you like before you can get on [oh, so no bonding before you get on] None whatsoever, you can’t even like touch the horse on the face, you have to, when they say you can get on, then you…five minutes later you’re in the ring showing, they don’t want you to be able to form an attachment or figure out anything, so it’s kind of hard…[can you watch the horse, if the horse has a go in a previous class, can you watch him?]. Um hmm, you can always watch, that’s the best way and like ask people, you know, “what do I need to do?” and “what shouldn’t I do?” Um, because we’re a smaller region...., our show like when we have our home show, we use all of our own horses because we have like 60. [so you don’t have to bring in any then?] Nobody brings in any. Um, usually when we go to other shows, we bring six of ours and then they use theirs. So we usually, usually we bring all of our reining horses, because our coach is a big time reiner, so he has like his own barn of reiners, so we usually bring our own for that. [so you’re bringing in good quality horses, then?] Um hmm. [at least for the reiners]. But there are always, there are crappy horses at our barn, too, and that’s, they would put, like last night, it was the night to draw bad horses because… [everybody had a bad horse?] Everybody had a bad horse, and my horse wanted to bite somebody and kick them, and my friend’s horse wanted to go too fast and she didn’t want to listen, and the other horse, he’s fat and lazy, he didn’t want to do anything, so just the night to deal with...it’s...you...[but that builds your skill, though, because I mean when you learn to deal with all of that] because you might have a draw like that, and there’s nothing you can do, so they want...we have horses at our barn that we just don’t like, but that’s why, because you need to be able to build your skill on it, so... [they’re not the push button horses, you have to actually learn how to ride them] but when you get a push button horse, you love that lesson. Those are the lessons you work on your body, those...unlike the lessons like last night, it was working on how to handle the horse and not caring what you look like at that point.

When you are riding equitation or horsemanship classes, do you ever think that the judges favor certain body types or have a preferred "look" and use this to decide placings? Have you personally seen evidence of this occurring? If so, can you describe what happened?
I have seen evidence, it was at one of the shows last year, it was something we noticed about half way through the classes and there were like 15 classes in the first show, and this judge, it was a judge we hadn’t had before, and anytime there was a boy in the class, the boy got first, whether he rode the best or not but he always got first, so it was just kind of, I don’t know like we’ve gone to another show, um, I think it was semifinals, he’s…it was a coach from [state name redacted] so we didn’t get first at all [a coach from [state name redacted] or a judge from [state name redacted]?] A judge from [state name redacted], we didn’t get first at all, not even once, and one of the coaches from the other team came up to my coach and said “your girls should have gotten first”, and there just…there’s nothing we could do, sometimes they just form opinions and that’s just what it is and you can’t change it, so … it happens sometimes, and there’s just nothing we can do and then there are certain…, we had a judge just in our last show, she took points off, because when we ride, we hook our middle…, like we hook our finger through the reins, that’s how we were taught.. [to separate the two reins?] to separate the two, um, she doesn’t like that, so we all got points counted off because that’s how we ride. She wants you to hold it this way, so we all got points counted off, so it’s just kind of, it’s their personal preference, and so… You never know [you never know exactly what they’re looking for?] Right, it just kind of happens, and there’s nothing you can do.

In your opinion, do you think that your coaches think that judges favor certain body types or looks in equitation classes? Have you seen or hear your coach say something that might indicate this?

Yes. Based on…, they’ve said this before, sometimes they’ll choose a point rider not on skill but based on what they think the judge is going to look for, so even if they think that….like their son’s on our team, even if they think that “Yes, he may ride better” in horsemanship, than this other girl that’s an open rider, they’ll pick the girl because the judge will be looking at her more, because she’s a girl or because of something that she does differently than he does, so it’s…they are very involved in the horse world… [they kind of know from, I guess, from previous experience what certain judges tend to pin…] They know a lot of the judges, they’re very involved in the horse world, they’ve been in the horse world forever, so they kind of know the judges and what they’re going to look for, so they try to base even our point riders on what they think the judge is going to look for and also ability level, if they don’t think the person is going to perform well, they won’t pick them, but it’s also a lot on if they think that two people are equal, they’ll pick the one that the judge is going to look at more. [Oh, interesting, well that takes a lot of …experience to be able to do that] They know a lot… [that background knowledge] They know everyone, it’s kind of crazy. We go places and everybody knows who they are, and so, it’s kind of crazy though.
Do you think that judges pay attention to riders' outfits and use this as part of their judging criteria? For example, as long as the riders' outfit meets the rulebook standard, fits well and is in good condition, do you think what the rider is wearing influences the judge?

It depends on the judge, um, we had a mock show, it was just a fake show, like we had a judge come in. The good thing about that is like they'll tell you things that you did wrong [so like a critique, then?] it was like, basically like a critique, that she was a AQHA judge, and, um, so she told us and there were some people she was just like “I didn’t like your outfit”. She said “it detracted away from this, I didn’t like it”, so.. but then there are other judges, like when we had a real show and at the end they’ll just come up and he’s like “I don’t care what you wore”, he’s like “you met, you know, black chaps, black boots, black hat” [so you met the standard?] “you met the standard, I judge on riding”, and they’ll say that because they’ll...some people focus on the attire and some people, just as long as you meet it, they don’t care, so...[so that’s kind of, I guess, a judge by judge thing, it just depends on who the judge is] Um hmm. Typically, judges that are women focus more on the attire, and judges that are men focus more on how you ride. [Oh!] So, it’s... [that’s interesting! Is that just from personal observation?] Just from observation, and then our coaches tell us that the... if there’s a woman, if there’s a woman judge, they’re really like check your appearance before you go in there, they’ll make sure there’s no dirt on your chaps, there’s no dirt on your boots, there’s no dirt on your hat because they know they’ll look at that, where a guy judge they’ll just make sure that everything is where it is supposed to be and then he’s going to focus more on whether if your legs are in the right spot, if your back is straight. [he’s looking at the actual technical aspects of riding...] Right. [...] as opposed to the pretty picture and the packaging, right?] Correct. [Interesting.]

Are there male riders on your college or university equestrian team?

Two. There are two, um, their son [rider's name redacted], and... there's another kid, he’s a beginner, his name is [rider’s name redacted].

If so, do you think that the male riders experience similar levels of scrutiny over their appearance or their show outfits?
They do, um, [rider’s name redacted] doesn’t show a lot, he’s… he just takes classes at more than one university, but he doesn’t show a lot, but every time he gets out there, [coach’s name redacted] will always, you know, check his ties and then check their shirts, and they can wear brown, whereas the rest of us have to wear black, but they can wear brown, um, because they’re guys, and it’s like more acceptable for a guy to wear brown… than a girl. [so the black thing, is that, is that the coaches’ decision to have everybody uniform…] It’s a… coaches’ decision to have everybody uniform…[is it like pretty much standard around all the teams, that you’re going to wear black?] It’s pretty much standard, but our coach likes enforces it, where some of the other schools are “well, if you want to wear brown, you can wear brown”, but they would prefer that the girls wear black, so, um, their son, he wears brown. He doesn’t pick out his own ties or anything, his mom buys them. He got really mad because she bought him like a pink one and a leopard striped one, or… and he’s like “I’m not going to wear that!” and she’s like “Yes, you are because that’s…they want these stylish ties now”, and so it was kind of funny because it was “no, you’re going to wear this”, and she did it with [rider’s name redacted] too because [rider name redacted] was like “I’m not wearing that tie”, it was like purple, he was like “I’m not going to wear a purple tie” and she’s like “well, then you’re going to change your shirt and wear some other tie”. [Now what kind of tie is this, because I’m picturing, um, a button down shirt with a collar, is it like a dress tie…?] it is a button down shirt…, […] or is it like a bolo tie?] It’s like, it looks like a really long like handkerchief, and it’s tied, there’s just one knot and it has like, it comes down like this. It’s kind of weird. [so is it inside the collar?] it’s inside the collar, and then when it comes out, they tie it like right here [and the tails are hanging down] and the tails hang down. [Ok, ok, I’ve got the picture now.] So, and they just come in different colors and styles and things like that. [So for your team then, the guys can wear brown, the girls have to be in black, that seems to be like a coach mandate, but it’s pretty standard for the women to be wearing the black.] Usually, I mean we’ve seen a couple of girls from the other schools wear brown, but usually, it’s… unless I feel like she would make an exception if you already owned a whole bunch of brown clothing, then… or brown chaps and stuff because it’s a lot money to go buy it. [to make you, to keep you from having to go buy a whole new thing if you’ve got something that will work alright] because most people come in without having everything, so it’s just “buy black.” [but in terms of the way everything is fitting, because I know you mentioned earlier that the women’s tops are very, very tight, do the guys have the same thing?] They’re not as tight, um, it just has to be the standard button down and the tie, um, the chaps are still really tight, um, …..it’s just not, I don’t know, it’s not quite the same, there’s just more focus on the girl I guess, I mean because there’s more girls than boys that show. [and that’s true, there’s like 50 girls to one boy or something!] So there’s not quite as much emphasis on their outfits,
they have a little bit more flexibility.
Appendix M

Transcript: Rider # 7
**Date:** November 18, 2011

**Interview transcript # 7:**

**What is your first name? You may use a pseudonym if you wish.**

[Rider's name redacted, to be referred to as Rider # 7]

**How old are you?**

I’m twenty-one years old.

**How did you get interested in horses and riding?**

Um, I’ve been riding horses since I was six years old, so, um, my mom always loved horses, and so she like kind of pushed it on me, and then me and my sister started taking lessons, and we just picked up on it and have been doing it ever since. [pretty typical]. Yeah.

**Was riding an activity that your family was involved in? Were they supportive or critical of your riding?**

Um, my mom, was never really involved in it when she was little, but she really liked horses, and then me and my sister are really involved in it, and they’re very supportive. [so she got her horsey fix through you!] Yeah, exactly, kind of.

**Did you own (or own now) a horse?**

Um, I did own one, I sold him when I came to college.

**If yes, tell me how you got him/her, what he/she's like, and do you have him/her with you in college now?**

Well, do you want me to start with my most recent horse? [yeah, that’s fine]

Ok, my most recent horse was a, um, a Dutch Warmblood, [oh!] and he was a liver chestnut with four white socks and a big white blaze [pretty!] yeah, his show name was [name redacted] and I called him [name redacted], and he was really funny, he was adorable and just like such a personality, and I did the junior hunters on him. [Cool, a Dutch Warmblood, yeah!] He was great.

**Before college or university, how many years had you been riding?**

Um, before college, so….like twelve years. [so you started when you were five and through nineteen] yeah.

**How many times per week did you take lessons, and in what discipline were they (for example, western, hunt seat, jumping, reining, etc.)?**

Um, I did the hunter jumpers, and I took lessons probably three or four times a week, but I rode like every day, so…. I mean, not like jumping lessons three or four times a week, but… [some would be flat] yeah, yeah, some would be flat. [so three or four times a week flat and jumping] …and jumping, but I rode every single day except for Mondays, I got the day off.

**Did you ride on an equestrian team (such as an Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) team) during middle or high school?**

No, I did not. They don’t have that in [state name redacted]. [They don’t?] They don’t know what they’re missing!] I know!
**Did you show as an individual (in other words, not as part of an equestrian team) during middle or high school?**

Yes, I did, I showed a lot.

**If yes for last question, tell me about your experience in those shows. In what level shows did you participate (for example, A or AA, unrated/local, breed, open, NRHA shows etc.), in what discipline, and how frequently?**

Ok, um, well, let’s see, where do I want to be, probably like my most intense showing years, I moved to… well I started off in the children’s hunters, and I showed a lot, and I qualified for like zone finals and stuff like that, and I did that for my small, medium pony, my large pony and my horse in the children’s hunters. And then I, um, moved on to this horse [horse name redacted], and I uh moved barns to [barn name deleted] which is where George Morris is [Oh!], and I did junior hunters there, I trained with [trainer’s name redacted], and then me and her both leased a jumper, so then we both like got to show him a little bit, I did some of the jumpers and I went to like Lake Placid and all those big A horse shows, and then I moved to [trainer name redacted], who’s big on the A circuit, and I did the junior hunters with her, and I’ve been to like Wellington and stuff like that, I did a lot of A shows, and you know, I probably showed, quite frequently, not every weekend, but quite frequently, not so much in the winter time, unless we were in Florida. I showed like four or five times in Florida, and then, um, now, I get called for opportunities…[trainer name redacted] she will like call me… [so you like catch ride?] Yeah, I catch ride a little bit, and I’ll get to go down to Florida like during spring break and I show, like I’ve shown the last three years down there, um, and then I got to shown at Capital Challenge in Maryland, horse and ponies like last year, that was a cool catch ride, and then during the summer, I ride with her and stuff. [ok, so your experience is definitely on the top end, then] yeah [a lot of A circuit stuff] yeah. Very fortunate. [very fortunate…] Yeah [..especially with the catch riding part] Yeah, exactly.

**Are you currently riding on your university's equestrian team?**

Yes I am.

**If yes, what discipline do you ride on your team? (western/English/both) and for how long?**

Um, I’ve been on the team for… this is my fourth year, and it’s equitation mostly. [but it’s the hunt seat team, right?] Yeah, the hunt seat team, yeah.

**If you are not currently riding on your university’s equestrian team but have in the past, why did you stop (for example, too much money, no time, lost interest, didn’t like the format or quality or horses, other reason)?**

Question skipped, n/a.
### How would you categorize your university team compared to other teams in your zone or region?

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Ok, um, I think this year we’re very competitive. We’ve recently switched barns, and I think like the past three years we’ve been somewhat competitive, but not top tier, but we actually won our horse show last weekend, so... [yeah!] …we’re becoming very competitive. *[was this the one at [university name redacted]]?* Yeah, we won on Saturday, and we were I think third on Sunday, yeah. [good! Ok, so for the last couple of years somewhat competitive, but this year there’s been a change...*] Yeah. […you had the change in the barn, and so you think it’s very competitive now] Yeah, we just switched regions, too, like last year, so.. *[oh I didn’t know that now]* yeah, our regions changed around, so we ...we aren’t competing against [college name redacted] this year, we didn’t last year either, but we, um, acquired [university name redacted] and [university name redacted], and they’re pretty competitive, so, um, I would say like this year, we’re becoming very competitive. *[and so do they change, do they change regions like that frequently?]* no. […or was this kind of a long time...?] I think this was kind of to try to even if out, and to try to get like spacing better, and to try to get some more noncompetitive and competitive teams together and kind of make the region smaller, because like, our...my first two years, the regions were really competet....., like we had a really competitive region, and it was like [university name redacted] was like four hours away from three schools or something, so they just changed it so we’re more centralized.

### What do you like the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, is it the camaraderie, being able to travel to shows, the actual riding or something else?

Um, well, I made a lot of great friends on the team, I absolutely love it, it’s been a great way to meet people, and also, um, I really like the shows, those are my favorite. I’m kind of competitive, so I really like that. Um, but I also really like the lessons and like the atmosphere and the camaraderie. I think it’s just a great experience because I’ve never really been on a team per se, you know, so I think it’s been a great experience. *[it probably is a big contrast to what you experienced coming in]* Yeah, it is.

### What do you dislike the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, riding unfamiliar horses, politics, making an individual sport into a team sport, etc.


Well, it was a really hard transition coming from riding like those horses on the A
circuit to riding these types of horses, so I kind of dislike that a little bit, and I
dislike the fact that I can’t ride as much as I would like to. And that I …like
don’t really, that it’s more of like… it’s hard to explain, like, a lesson is more so
that like you are prepared to show instead of like…. [improving yourself]…
actually learning how to ride more so, um, but I mean, but I don’t really say
there’s anything terribly that I dislike about it. [so you kind of, you had an
adjustment coming in…] yeah […] because it’s a different thing…] Right. […]
and then, but have you… you’ve gotten accustomed to that or?] yeah, I
mean I think I’ve been… I’ve transitioned pretty well.

In what class(es) or event(s) do you compete?
I do the open hunt seat equitation on the flat and the open hunt seat over fence.

If there are too many riders for everyone to show or complete in a given
event or class, who decides who shows for your team? For example, the
coach, team captain(s), team vote, seniority, riders picking straws, etc.?
Um, the coaches actually pick who gets to show and like on a particular day if
there’s too many riders that sign up, um, and they usually do it based on like
how your lessons have been going, your commitment to the team, um, basically
like to show that you’re really interested in riding, and your, um, performance
basically at like the last show… or throughout lessons if we haven’t had a show.
[so they take a lot of factors into consideration?] yeah, they do, it’s not just
like…. oh, and seniority a little bit, and maybe like if somebody’s five points away
from pointing up and going to regionals, then they’ll let that person show so they
get an opportunity then to point up and go to regionals over somebody who this
may be their first time over fences or something. [so would they every have a
situation like in that five points away from pointing up where they wouldn’t
want them to show because they would want to hold them back for
postseason?] That is a strategy that people do, because, um… we haven’t
really implemented that yet, but like [university name redacted]’s team, they’re
really competitive as a team, so they have one of their riders who doesn’t show
all the time, so that she stays in novice that if they get to go to nationals, so she
can be their novice rider at nationals or something and she’ll like basically beat
everybody because she’s so good, or she’ll,… she like won’t point up at the end
of the year. [so there… some strategy is involved in terms of managing
points…] Right. […] within the season?] Yeah.

Does your school have a show outfit that everyone wears (i.e., a standard
show outfit), or do you pick your own outfit?
Um, well we’re supposed to wear a generic uniform, so to speak, white shirt and a navy blazer, show coat and like breeches of tan color and tall boots, black, but we’re not really allowed to have like a team outfit, so to speak, that’s kind of illegal in IHSA I think, because you’re not supposed to know which team you are from. [Right, but you’re responsible for providing all the elements] yeah, but, um, we’ve actually started a team like donation closet kind of where people can pick and choose through other peoples’ clothes if they are like donated to that, and so people don’t have to go out and buy if they’re just beginning riding. [because it’s a big hit in the wallet!] yeah, exactly, it is.

Tell me about your show outfit. Describe all elements such as boots, spurs, hat, gloves, colors, amount of decoration, etc. Is it very form fitting?

Um, ok, so my breeches, do you want like….? [you can have brand names, I mean, anything ] Ok, my breeches are Ariat breeches, that’s like pretty typical or Tailored Sportsmans, and they’re kind of tight fitting because when they’re tight fitting, they look better when you’re riding than when they’re really loose. Um, and then I wear a white show shirt, which is not really patterned or, it’s pretty plain. [And do you have the separate ratcatcher collar or do you have..?] Um, I actually have the button collar [the new one?] the new button collar right now, I like those a lot better, they’re easier. And then I have a navy show coat that I wear, it’s pretty boring, um, black gloves and I wear a Charles Owens helmet, which is just black and it has a grey stripe down the middle, but um…let me see, I’m trying to think, last weekend I wore kind of like a lighter blue jacket, and it had like navy piping around it, so, I got kind of bored in my navy jacket, so I wore the other one. [And tall boots?] Tall books, black tall boots, they’re customs with zippers. [Are they field boots or are they dress boots?] Um, field boots. [They’re the ones with the laces?] Yeah, they have laces, and they have zippers at the back.

What factors do you consider when choosing your show outfit? For example, horse color, body shape, equitation weakness that you want to de-emphasize, etc.
Um, well since I’m kind of short, you don’t want something like a big drowning jacket out, so like my clothes are a little bit, not tight fitting, but they’re like tighter fitting. Like my pants, I like them like to be fitted instead of like loose, because it makes me look like taller and longer and a little skinnier. Um, and my jacket usually, like I said if I get bored, I’ll just pick another one, because I have a… it’s just a dark….it’s just a little bit lighter blue, or else I have a gray jacket, um…. [Do you ever wear the gray one?] I have sometimes, but not really, because the.. [Navy blue is what they want to see] …the navy’s like the look, kind of the thing. Um, I also have a lucky belt that I always wear, it’s just black, it’s not really anything special, but I always have that belt… [But it is special, it’s your lucky belt]. Yeah, I mean, yeah, it is my lucky belt, and I always have earrings in, like I always have my, um, my like diamond-ish earrings, I always wear those. [Are they pretty subtle, or are they blingy?] . No, they’re pretty subtle, they’re just like from Claire’s or something, little, and I always have on this one pair of socks that my trainer bought for me. [So lucky socks, lucky belt!] And then… [the earrings] I can’t do without it, and I always have on my watch, that’s about it. [That’s interesting, but you don’t ever see the watch because it’s under the gloves, right?] Yeah, it’s usually under the gloves.

Did you have to get approval from the coaches before wearing this outfit?

Um, well we did have a mock show where everybody dressed up in their outfits so that we could see if people who are less experienced maybe don’t have the right kind of breeches or are too loose fitting or whatnot, so we did do that, and like if you didn’t know, she would go, like the coaches would look at it and they would approve it, but it wasn’t necessarily like you have to get things approved, you have to be like approved in order to wear it to the show. [So they’re reviewing it just to make sure that it’s looking good on you..] um, hmm […] and it’s fitting the guidelines] yeah , yeah well we did guidelines like for people who went out and bought things, we did guidelines for them so they could go out and buy the correct things, and if they didn’t know what to buy, then we would help them. We did like a team tack shop day. [Oh you did, so where did you go?] [store name redacted] The closest one. [Good store].

If your university provides the show outfit, are you allowed to tailor it to fit your body, or are you limited in how you can modify the outfit? Can you provide examples?

Question skipped. N/A

If your university has a predetermined show outfit, are there certain items that you have to provide yourself, or do they provide all parts of the show outfit? Which items did you provide?

Question skipped. N/A

Are hairstyle and makeup important aspects of your appearance at shows? Do your teammates help each other with hair and makeup at shows and share tips and/or tricks?

N/A
Um, I wouldn’t say that makeup isn’t important, I think that’s more important for the western, it’s more the appearance, but, um, like I personally obsess with my hair, and it has to look a certain way, so I make sure that it is perfect and, um, for a lot of the people, we do each other’s hair during the horse show to make sure that it looks presentable and that it’s up and all tucked in. [For you, what is perfect hair?] Um, it covers my ears to my earrings… [So it comes all the way down to the earrings?]….like my hair covers and then there’s, the hairnet’s over it, and it’s just up like tucked up underneath like that in my helmet. And no like whispsies, and I don’t really like my ears showing, so I don’t like there’s a gap in my hair [so the only part of your ear that you have showing is from the earrings down!] is like from the earrings down! Sounds really silly, I know…..yeah. [I don’t know, it sounds like hunter hair maybe… pulled down a little further!] Yeah!

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<tr>
<td>How do you feel when you are wearing your show outfit? Do you feel confident about your riding ability when wearing your show outfit? Are you physically and emotionally comfortable in your show outfit?</td>
<td>Um, yeah, I would say I’m pretty confident when I’m wearing it. I don’t know, I like my show outfit, I wish I could wear it more, it’s just really comfortable. [So if you had your choice, you would put it on and go to class in it?] Yeah, like why not?… I like my breeches. I don’t mind it.</td>
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<td>Do you ever feel self-conscious or uncomfortable about certain aspects of your body when wearing your show outfit? If yes, tell me what makes you uncomfortable.</td>
<td>No. Not at all.</td>
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<td>Do you have the same feelings or worries when wearing your regular street clothes?</td>
<td>No. Not really. [pretty confident all the way around] Yeah.</td>
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<td>When you didn’t feel positive about your appearance in your show outfit, did it affect your confidence level and/or how you performed that day?</td>
<td>Um , I would say it would because …like I’m trying to think of an example, um, I was on a couple of medications that made me like gain weight, and when I put on my show clothes and I was a little bit bigger than I normally am, it made me feel self-conscious about… [So they didn’t feel right?] like the tight fitting breeches, yeah, it doesn’t like feel right, so, but I wouldn’t say it like really affects my riding ability, but it does make you feel self-conscious, and then especially in the equitation on the flat, you think like “oh, did the judge not pick me because that girl had longer legs and was skinnier.”, that kind of thing.</td>
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<td>Has your coach ever suggested that you lose or gain weight in order to be more competitive in your event? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?</td>
<td>Not this year. [Not this year, ok] um, but they do encourage fitness, such as we’ll do like team workouts or something to improve your strength in order to become a better rider.</td>
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Has your coach ever suggested that you increase or decrease your level of fitness? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?

Yeah, and we talked about it, and we thought it would be a fun idea to do a team workout, because [name redacted] is our faculty advisor for our team, and he’s in charge of like sports clubs, and he’s really involved in that, so we thought we could do something fun.

Does your team have fitness or conditioning requirements or standards (either official or unofficial) in addition to riding related requirements? If so, what are they?

We don’t really have requirements or standards, but, um, it’s encouraged. [and do you see your team headed more towards that?] Yes. [and is that a kind of a trend to make that more of a focus?] Yeah, I would say so, I mean because I know like my sister rides on the [university name redacted] equestrian team, and they have team workouts like, I don’t know, every morning at like 6am. [and [university name redacted] is NCAA?] Yeah, they’re NCAA, but I think that like in order to improve competitiveness, you have to be fit, so..

Do you think the riders on your team are supportive of each other, or are they critical of each other? What have you seen or experienced that makes you think this?

Um, I think everyone’s really supportive of each other, like whenever anybody gets off, has a good or a bad ride, people are always there with encouraging words, or saying like “oh, congratulations” or “it’s ok, don’t worry, like you’ll do better next time” or, you know, some people talk about their rides, such as like the horse that they picked, maybe it’s not, it wasn’t the best draw for them, and there might be some like, um, constructive criticism if it’s asked for, but the team is mostly there for support and the coaches are there for the criticism.

What does your coach do (or not do) to encourage a supportive team environment? Can you describe any examples?

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Hmm, ok, I’m trying to think, well, whenever anyone wins, it’s always, we always have a chant across, and he starts it, and he always says [cheer redacted] and we say [cheer redacted], so… [original chant!] Original! Yeah, everyone else’s is not that original either, so that’s ok! Um, and, we always have like a team meeting at the end of the horse show, um, and he’s usually pretty supportive, you know, he always says how proud he is of us, and, you know, like if we didn’t do great, “it’s ok guys, like we’re in it to improve, we’re going to be working out a lot of things that I saw today, we’ll get better and we’ll get there”, so it’s usually always pretty encouraging. [so he’s acting like a cheerleader, and then he’s kind of, he’s really evaluating how you guys are performing at a show and then trying to figure out how to address that] um hmm, what we can do better, and especially with the different judges, you know, they look for different things, so sometimes, um, he’ll say things like “ok this judge looked more for this, so maybe we can work on like maybe your body position”, your straight back or arched back and things like that.

How do you feel about having to ride unfamiliar horses in IHSA shows? Does that add a lot of stress for you, or do you see this as a "challenge"?
Um, well at first it was kind of stressful, it was kind of nerve wracking, but I really enjoy it now, it’s kind of cool to like be able to get on different horses and just go in the ring and show. Sometimes I wish that we had more warm up jumps when the horses are a little.... [are you allowed any?] No... [that’s what I thought]...we don’t get any, we just get... [you get on the horse, adjust your stirrups and go, right?] um hmm, and get in the ring and go jump around. Um, I’m more confident on the flat I would say, like I don’t get as nervous, but, um, cause it’s just like flatting to me is something, it’s something that like every horse can really do, um, but I do get nervous when they try to like make you test them, and, you know, these horses aren’t superstars, they don’t know how to like counter canter sometimes and things like that, so when they ask you to counter canter it’s like “oh I hope my horse does this! I guess we’ll find out”...[we will find out!] ...but, um, I think it’s like, I think it’s a challenge, and I enjoy it, especially when we go to horse shows that have like nicer horses, so I think... [so coming from your background, was the quality of horse a big issue for you when you started or?] umm...[because I would not think they are of the same level of what you were riding] A little bit, well I mean a lot of bit, at first it was really, really hard, it was really hard to adjust, it was really hard, but, um, like for my trainer, I worked for her, and I rode all different horses all the time. Like I would work for her in the summer time and so I would just get like ten horses a day to ride and just go ride all day [so you had a wide variety in that?]....yeah, I had a wide variety in that, and then also she broke her arm one summer, so, you know, I got to like school all the horses, and like prepare them and jump them a lot, so I mean I had a lot of experience jumping like strange horses and just getting on and doing it, um, but I would say it was a challenge, the quality of horses is a little bit difficult because, you know, I would try to do things these horses didn’t know, and then I would get frustrated. [I can understand that, definitely] Yeah.

When you are riding equitation or horsemanship classes, do you ever think that the judges favor certain body types or have a preferred "look" and use this to decide placings? Have you personally seen evidence of this occurring? If so, can you describe what happened?
Um, I would say that just a typical look in equitation is long legs, skinnier body type, tall people I think, I mean if you look at somebody on a horse, I think judges favor that a little bit in equitation, but, um, at like the open level, it’s kind of interesting because they do a little bit more testing so they can see who can actually perform on the flat. [so when you say testing, is that when they pull you in a line and then pull you out and ask you to go do this or that?] Yeah, they’ll be like these four riders show three changes of lead on the quarter line, um, and they have to perform that. So when they do things like that, you can pick out the riders versus the people who look good on the horses, and I think that, um, that helps a lot in splitting it. [do all the riders get a chance to do an individual test like that?] It depends, um, like sometimes it will be like sit trot, drop your stirrups, um, and then from there, they’ll decide their top four riders, who will do like a little bit of testing and then, um, they’ll do like a more difficult test, and there’s the IHSA handbook that has like eleven different tests in it. [and you know as a rider what the eleven are…] Right. […]so you have supposedly prepared for all of them.] Right, and like they’ll do like ok change direction, or they’ll do turn like on the haunches at the walk, and some people stop or keep walking, and like you’re supposed to keep walking, so if you stop, then it kind of shows your understanding of different things. But I would say that in the lower levels, sometimes it’s hard to distinguish between somebody who can really, who’s like riding and someone who kind of looks a little bit better on the horse…[like perched on the horse?] Yeah, and I think that some judges do favor like I said the longer legs and skinnier body type.

| In your opinion, do you think that your coaches think that judges favor certain body types or looks in equitation classes? Have you seen or hear your coach say something that might indicate this? |
Well, sometimes when you’re watching and you see all the tall girls getting pinned, in the top four or the top three, they’ll be like, they’ll say something like “ok, I think the judge is looking for a taller body type, so you need to elongate yourself and like try to look taller...” [like stretch?] Yeah, stretch, try to look taller, um, so I think that there’s definitely some of that. [but they’re doing, they’re making those statements based on what they see...] on the placings [on what the judge is pinning then?] Yeah, yeah, what the judge is pinning. [and you said earlier that there is some variation between what judges..., is it kind of a personal preference in the judge, what they like, or..?] It’s kind of subjective, yeah. [it seems like I’m hearing that...] I would say it’s very subjective and a little bit political because even though they’re not supposed to know what team you’re on, sometimes you can see what riders are being coached by what coaches, like on the sidelines or.... [do you think they’re paying attention to that, do you think they’re...?] Yeah, sometimes I do. [it seems like they would be too busy looking at everything to pay attention to what’s going on around the ring.] I mean, I think sometimes they do, or they’ll like recognize people because we’ll have, you know, a judge one year and judge the next year [they’ve seen you before, right].. they’ve seen each other, seen everybody before. Um, but I would say it’s more subjective, it’s kind of what they prefer.

Do you think that judges pay attention to riders' outfits and use this as part of their judging criteria? For example, as long as the riders' outfit meets the rulebook standard, fits well and is in good condition, do you think what the rider is wearing influences the judge?
I think so, I mean I think that if you shine your boots and you have shiny boots versus somebody who has dirty boots, then you’re going to look better, you’re going to be more presentable, I think that presentation is not a huge part, but if you have a rider that is a good rider and another rider who’s equally as good and one’s more, um, like more presentable, I would say they would pin the more presentable one. [so it’s kind of the deciding factor, then…] Yeah. […]if you’ve got two comparable riders and you’re going back and forth, then, then the one that has put the effort into the spit polish…] Yeah, and also I think that if you are like polished and look nice, I think the judge is more, um, will look at you more, and they’ll like overlook the people who aren’t so spectacular so to speak, because I mean in a class with like 12 people and you’re riding around, sometimes you get lost in the…on the rail or something. [so it’s really do anything you can to get the judge to look at you?] Yeah, and I think that, like I know, like my one friend, she has a black jacket with like this white piping on the collar, and I think that looks really sharp, I think like they’ll definitely look at you and be like “oh, look at that outfit”, you know, it’s kind of like an eye catcher or something, or if like… like I have this spray for my boots that makes it like really shiny, so they’ll be like “oh, those boots are really shiny” [is it like silicone or something?] Um, I don’t know exactly what it is, but like I polish them and then it’s kind of a finishing spray and it makes them look like pretty shiny, so I think the judges are definitely more like “look at them”, or like if you have breeches that fit you well, and are in a nicer material, I think you can definitely tell the difference, yeah.

| Are there male riders on your college or university equestrian team? |
| Yes, there is one. |
| If so, do you think that the male riders experience similar levels of scrutiny over their appearance or their show outfits? |
| Yeah, I mean I think that they still have to look presentable and nice. They wear ties, so maybe they’re a little bit, they have to wear like a tie, so it’s a little bit more…. I don’t know how hard it is to tie a tie, but… I don’t know how to do it, but I think that they definitely have to look the part as well. [I guess in the hunt seat world, so much of the stuff is the same between the guys and the girls..] Yeah. |
Appendix N

Transcript: Rider # 8
Date: November 21, 2011

Interview transcript # 8:

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<th>Answer</th>
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<td>What is your first name? You may use a pseudonym if you wish.</td>
<td>[Rider’s name redacted, to be referred to as Rider # 8]</td>
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<td>How old are you?</td>
<td>I’m twenty years old.</td>
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<td>How did you get interested in horses and riding?</td>
<td>Oh, I’ve loved horses since the day I was born, pretty much. My mom had horses as a child, and I always had her hand me down Breyer model horses, and I played with them and I scuffed them up and she wasn’t happy about that, I was in love with them. And I started riding at age six, and I did that in weekly lessons for a while, and I did a lot of little summer camp things, and then, I started, um, I actually got involved in musical theatre at age…in fourth grade and fifth grade and, um, that took up the majority of my time, so horses were kind of put on the back burner, but I was still going to horse camp like once a week every summer, and then my freshman year of high school, I decided horses were where it was at, and, um, we actually bought my first horse then, and I’ve owned horses ever since. [musical theater!] Yes, I sing! Yeah. [that’s fun, too]</td>
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<td>Was riding an activity that your family was involved in? Were they supportive or critical of your riding?</td>
<td>My family was incredibly supportive of my riding, especially since my mom had an interest in it. Um, she’s one of three sisters, and they all loved horses, so even my extended family, everyone would listen to my long horse stories, and I just kind of became obsessed, and….um… They were really supportive, and I really appreciate the fact that they actually bought me the horse, and they paid for that board, because it is such a great expense, but they kind of saw it as, …um, you know, I always got straight A’s, and I was a very good student and a very respectful child, and that was my way of earning responsibility. Um, I wasn’t ever bored. I never, there was never the excuse like “I’m bored”, my mom said “well, you go to the barn”, and, um, so it taught me a lot about, you know, becoming an adult and the responsibility, having to care for an animal. [yeah, it’s a big responsibility] um hmm. So they saw it as… they were very, very, um, helpful in cultivating my love for the animals by paying for it, but they also used it as a teaching mechanism for me to become an adult, but my mom especially would go and ride with me or she loved, she loved spending time with my horse. [so you had a neat activity you could do with her]. I did, yeah, um hmm.</td>
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<td>Did you own (or own now) a horse?</td>
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I do, I've owned three horses, actually four. Um, I only own one right now. They've come and gone, you kind of get rid of one and then you have to bring a new one in. Um, my current horse I've owned for... it will be four years in March I believe, maybe five.

If yes, tell me how you got him/her, what he/she’s like, and do you have him/her with you in college now?
Um, he… I got him in my… soph… junior year of high school, and he came in on trade. He came in as a trial horse, I leased him for three months. Um, the horse I had before him was a horrible animal that hated his life and his job, and he actually scared… he went on stall rest because he sprained a tendon, and he made me kind of hate horses for a while actually, and I didn’t think was going to continue, so I told myself “no matter what you do, don’t go for the first horse you find”. Of course… [that’s what happened!]… we did, and, um, but we were very careful this time, we leased him for three months. Um, he was all shaggy when he came in, he’s a little bit small for me. I’ve like 5’8” and he’s only 15.3 hands, so he’s a smaller horse, but, um, he’s a little paint, he’s really interesting looking, gorgeous if you trim him up and you get him clean, he’s mostly white, so he’s …[so he’s got a nice pattern on his coat..?] Yeah, and he’s real flashy, um, and he just had the cutest personality in the whole world, he was essentially a big dog. I got him about the same time my dog passed away, so he ended up kind of replacing her for me. He comes when he’s called, he’s like, he just became a member of the family, and it got to the point where, you know, I loved riding so much more because of him, and I loved the companionship of that. I figured it out, and I actually spent more time with him in my high school years than I think with humans….um… [that’s ok!] It’s kind of healthy, I guess, but, um, he’s a, he because a really big part of who I am, and then my freshman year was hard because he was at home and we… my parents were continuing to pay board, he wasn’t being worked, he wasn’t getting out very much because it was a big boarding facility, and, um, we actually had to start paying people to ride him, which was really hard for my family, and we had to kind of think about making some hard decisions because it just wasn’t working out. My sophomore year though, last year, I was very fortunate. We actually brought him to [city name redacted], and he was at the barn where my team trained, and that was wonderful, but I ended up going out there basically like six days a week, which was more than I ever did in high school, I had this weird like obsession where I would like get home from classes and go straight to the barn, which was wonderful, I improved a lot as a rider, and, um, I was skinnier than I had ever been because I was working out so much, but, um, that was rough, and then we brought him back this summer and, you know, the economy is not… it’s not a good time to own a horse, really is the issue, and transporting back and forth between [city name redacted] and [city name redacted] is just really expensive. The board here is incredibly more expensive than it is at home [really?] um hmm, and, um, I don’t live … I live in like the suburbs of [city name redacted] and it’s not a very prolific horse country [so you’re kind of out in the rural area, is it…?]….no, it’s definitely suburbia, but it’s… I don’t know if you’re familiar with [city name redacted], it’s right around there… [no]… it’s a really big suburb of [city name redacted], but it’s just not a very big horse county, is the thing, so…. He’s actually at a barn right now that’s more of like a…. backyard, it’s a private barn. I found it through a mutual friend
of this woman, and, um, he’s out like all the time, so I don’t have to worry
anymore about having people come in and ride him cause he’s getting at least
the ability to run [so he’s on pasture board, then?] um hmm, he can come into
his stall. He’s one of…. four horses currently there, so he lives the glory life
right now, he’s so happy. [he’s got the lazy life!] Yeah, he is.

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<th>Before college or university, how many years had you been riding?</th>
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<td>Um. [you said you started when you were seven?] It’s... yeah, I started</td>
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<td>when I six, but it was kind of off and on, because when you’re younger, it’s hard</td>
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<td>to get I mean continually going out there every week is hard, so I’d say from</td>
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<td>freshman year of high school on, I was riding four to five times a week at least.</td>
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<td>But before that, it was you know kind of …[yeah, off and on] yeah.</td>
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<p>| How many times per week did you take lessons, and in what discipline |</p>
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<th>were they (for example, western, hunt seat, jumping, reining, etc.)?</th>
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<td>[so from freshman year then, were you taking lessons every day or how</td>
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<td>many times, how many lessons did you have a week?] I would take one a</td>
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<td>week, um, and that only lasted until about my senior year of high school when I</td>
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<td>took...yes, I took probably like three, well, no, I did it my senior year too, but</td>
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<td>once a week. [so basically once a week, and what seat were they in, what</td>
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<td>discipline?] Um, hunter/jumper is..., mainly jumpers. My trainer at home was</td>
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<td>not certified, which ended up being a big problem that we ran into later as I</td>
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<td>became more educated as to the other disciplines of horsemanship and, um,</td>
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<td>which is why I eventually just stopped taking lessons while I was still at that</td>
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<td>facility. [um hmm, because you felt that the quality of the instruction was</td>
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<td>not...] yeah. [...] what it should be or?] It was just a lot of outmaneuvering</td>
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<td>the horse and overpowering them, and she was like....her philosophy was “he’s</td>
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<td>not behaving, let’s put a heavier bit on him, let’s put another martingale on him”,</td>
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<td>and my horse just didn’t respond to that well at all. It got to the point where I</td>
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<td>like, of course, they were great jumper people, they loved jumpers, and I don’t</td>
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<td>because it feels out of control, I had no like understanding of the horse’s</td>
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<td>movement, I was basically just hanging on, or like fighting with them, and my</td>
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<td>horse then, he loves to jump, but he just would just like fly through a course, I</td>
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<td>had no idea what I was doing, and it got to the point where I kind of would just</td>
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<td>like sit there while he was galloping and tell her “I don’t know how to stop him,</td>
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<td>so I’m kind of done with this.” But yeah …[sounds like a scary ride!] yeah, but</td>
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<td>it was more jumpers than anything else. And, you know...</td>
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<p>| Did you ride on an equestrian team (such as an Interscholastic Equestrian |</p>
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<th>Association (IEA) team) during middle or high school?</th>
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<td>Uh uh. I didn’t even know they existed. They don’t have them in my area. [I’ve</td>
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<td>heard that from other people, too]</td>
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<p>| Did you show as an individual (in other words, not as part of an equestrian |</p>
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<th>team) during middle or high school?</th>
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I did. Um, did a couple of local shows, I'm not a very competitive person, so it was never a big draw for me, and it's a lot of work, especially when you bring your own show, especially if he's white, to get him ready for a show, um, he didn't place so well some times in the under saddle classes just because a lot of judges are particular about the classic equestrian look, and riding an all-white paint is...[just doesn't fit their idea]...not really, he's the cutest animal in the world, so I don't know what they were thinking but he was a big... the spectators were always big fans, but the judges...he did well in a couple of jumper courses and just locally and only in the summer every once in a while.

If yes for last question, tell me about your experience in those shows. In what level shows did you participate (for example, A or AA, unrated/local, breed, open, NRHA shows etc.), in what discipline, and how frequently?

[So basically local shows?] Um hmm. And it was beginner jumper...[open shows?] Yeah, like, um, they were at our community park that they host them, the show ring, yeah I... it wasn't very often, just like three times a summer or something. [just a fun thing to do, it wasn't like you were out chasing points or anything] No, no, no.

Are you currently riding on your university's equestrian team?
I am.

If yes, what discipline do you ride on your team? (western/English/both) and for how long?
It's the hunt seat discipline, um, I've been riding on it since my freshman year here... three years.

If you are not currently riding on your university's equestrian team but have in the past, why did you stop (for example, too much money, no time, lost interest, didn't like the format or quality or horses, other reason)?
Question skipped, n/a.

How would you categorize your university team compared to other teams in your zone or region?
Very competitive
Somewhat competitive
Neither competitive or non-competitive
Somewhat non-competitive
Non-competitive

Somewhat competitive.

What do you like the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, is it the camaraderie, being able to travel to shows, the actual riding or something else?
Um, the camaraderie of the team is really a cool thing to be involved with because having been riding alone for so many years, it’s nice to have teammates and, um, that spirit of like “let’s do this together”. Um, I’ve definitely made some of my closest friends in college from the team. Um, it can both ways though because you do end up spending a lot of time with those people, and the equestrian world has it’s, um, you know, materialism, and just…things can get kind of catty in that world, so even though I’m made a lot of friendships, I’ve encountered a lot of, um, adversity, I guess you could say. But, um, I do love that aspect of it, and it gives you an instant connection with the people you’re with, you’re all there for the same reason, same purpose. Um, I love showing in the IHSA because it really does level the playing field. Um, I know personally, I’m not going to pursue horses as, um… or the industry in any way outside of college, except for owning them. Um, I like to compete a little bit, it’s fun for me to gauge where I am in relation to other people, and I’d say that the IHSA is probably the most competitive I’ve ever been in my life, um, cause I do… it feels like constant individual improvement and a way to look at that over the years, because I started in a lower level, and I’ve placed out of two, and that’s a cool thing to be able to say, um..., but..., yeah, I think it’s a really great way to be involved in showing, especially for those of us who know that this will probably be one of the only opportunities we have in life to compete, um, in kind of like a rated show thing, so…what was the fourth part of that, sorry? [oh, just the camaraderie, being able to travel to shows, riding in lessons or something else] The lessons have been, um, incredibly beneficial for me, too because I… um, it’s fun to take a team... like a lesson with your teammates, and I like the hunt seat discipline very much, and I think it makes, it’s very cerebral sometimes in the horsemanship concepts, and I love learning about that stuff, so that’s been really helpful for me as a rider, and I’ve progressed tremendously from where I came, so….

What do you dislike the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, riding unfamiliar horses, politics, making an individual sport into a team sport, etc.
I do like that part about it, um, and the… I love riding horses I’ve never been on, that was a big thing I did back home was when my trainer would get in a horse that was new, she’d say “hey, want to jump on him?” and I loved it, it actually teaches you so much more as a rider to be able to, you know, adjust what you’re doing to suit that animal, and it gives you so much experience with different…, because every horse has a different movement, and, you know, [and personality] exactly, and those of us who can’t afford $100,000 horses are going to encounter a broad spectrum of horses over horse ownership, so like it’s important to be able to ride those kinds of things. Can it be very frustrating at times? Yes. At the last show, I had two days of really terrible draws, I picked the two worst horses in the ring, well the one, my class actually was the determining factor that that horse should be pulled, right after they had judged my class and placed it, and I didn’t place, and I was like “awesome, thank you” because that’s, you know… [oh, so they pulled the horse after...] after my class […] out of the rotation of mounts for the classes after yours?] Yes, because they realized that mine was the final straw, they were like “oh that was a terrible ride, she’s not doing anything wrong, let’s pull him.”, but after they judged it and I was like “thanks so much, I’m glad I could help somebody else”, you know, but…so that part can be kind of iffy, and the politics in this last…I’m starting to discover the more I become involved in this that there definitely are a lot of politics in it, and, um, that part’s never fun for anything, but you’ll encounter that in anything I think [yeah, I think that almost anything...] Yeah. [… has its own little world of politics] For sure, and, you know, it’s a little disappointing when you do realize those things are at play, especially because when you think you are going into the most, you know, level playing field, and you find out this judge has given a clinic and this rider show… has shown in their classes before, and they know each other personally and “oh, they placed first, I wonder why?” you know, like…and after a while “ok, well, thanks” because you…it kind of sometimes makes you feel like a nobody in it because I’m not exposed to that part of the equestrian world, but I like to think I’m every bit as much capable as those people, so…but other than that, it’s a pretty positive experience overall I’d say. [I think what… you just have to go in there doing the best you can, and how it’s judged is how it’s judged.] And take it with a grain of salt, honestly, you just…there are times when a lot of my teammates get really upset about bad draws with horses and stuff, and, you know, you just have to …. [it is what it is] It is what it is, it really is, and we’ll have that…you win some and you lose some, and it’s very true in IHSA, very true.

In what class(es) or event(s) do you compete?
I am a novice hunter on the flat and fences.

If there are too many riders for everyone to show or complete in a given event or class, who decides who shows for your team? For example, the coach, team captain(s), team vote, seniority, riders picking straws, etc.?
Um, it’s normally the… our head coach and our assistant coach, and I’m actually the [officer position redacted], so they come to me when they have concerns about, you know, some iffy members that maybe are not as experienced, like this year, we had a HUGE influx of people who were brand new to riding, and they were very enthusiastic, which we encouraged, but …[but very green] …very, very green, and it honestly would have been either frightening or a waste of their money to put them in classes this early on because we start so much other later than the other schools we compete against, but we really only had three lessons before our first show…[oh, yeah] and a lot of these riders were just not there, so… the coaches did come to me and say like “Do you know this rider, let’s find a way to let her down easily”, you know, and just explain the situation and it’s probably not… they’re not ready to show yet, so, but it’s mostly the coaches and the assistant coach because they have a better understanding of each rider’s capabilities.

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<th>Does your school have a show outfit that everyone wears (i.e., a standard show outfit), or do you pick your own outfit?</th>
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<td>You provide your own, but it has to adhere to certain… [guidelines?] guidelines, yes.</td>
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Tell me about your show outfit. Describe all elements such as boots, spurs, hat, gloves, colors, amount of decoration, etc. Is it very form fitting?
It's involved... [it's involved?] ...it's not ....budget friendly by any means. Um, we wear either... the best pant, I guess, would be Tailored Sportsmans, um, riding breeches, and they're very, very expensive. I didn't even know that breeches existed that were that expensive, that like people rode in before I came here. Mine were always like, um, ribbed, like, just like schooling breeches... [the ribbed pull ons?] Yeah, and they worked fine for many years, and I showed in them, too, but whatever. Um, so I bought Ariats, which are actually... they're still very acceptable, but they're about half the price of the Tailored Sportsmans, and that's much better for me, especially since the barn is a dirty place, like, and if I'm actually going to wear those pants outside of showing.... [oh, so you're wearing the same to school in and to show in?] No, no, I don't, but some people do, and I don't understand how they keep them clean, because... the pants...I mean, I walk out, and I literally have poop on my pants, so I don't know what they're doing, but, um.... The shirts, I guess the "style" right now, the style changes over time, and it's ridiculous because really, it's... ...the unfortunate part is it does play a lot into the judging. Um, I guess the best helmet would be like Charles Owen, or... mine is a GPA. IRH is also acceptable, but those aren't quite as flashy as the other helmets, so, um ...and the jackets, I guess, ...white shirts are in now without the monogram... [oh, really?] Oh no, no monogram anymore! Um, a lot of girls wear...[a pattern in the fabric...] uh uh [...] pretty much white, or very [subtle] minute and subtle, yeah. Navy jackets are in, mine's not in, it's fine, mine's grey, I love my jacket, I think it's beautiful, so I....I came to school, and I realized there were all these guidelines, and at first, I was really nervous about it, and then I realized like “this is just silly”, you know, you can definitely look the part in off brand clothes or in .....what it comes down to is your riding, so as long as you look presentable, it really doesn't matter, like I've owned my boots for six years, and I bought them on sale at a place that was going out of business, they're Ariats as well, and, um, we had a girl on our team who got custom $800 boots, and I was like “what?”, that's more than a month of board here in [city name redacted], that's like almost three months of board at home, why, I don't understand, mine were like $150, so we ride in the tall boots, black. You can carry a crop, black leather gloves, um, earrings are in. Big shiny, stud earrings, I guess. Um, and a hairnet under your helmet, and ....an equitation belt, especially if you're jumping because that will actually show, and ...that's kind of about it, I think. [Earrings, that's a new one. Are they small or are they kind of flashy?] No, they're pretty flashy, um... [so that's like the one bit of bling you're allowed in the hunt seat outfit?] Yeah, I think it's become a trend, honestly, because it's like, you see...especially schools like... I hate to be stereotypical, but like [university name redacted] has a certain look about it, to the university itself, and the girls all tend to dress the same outside of riding, and then in riding, it's like a very clear cut trend that emerges over the years, and like the earrings, they're all kind of the same look, it's like, the good one, ....the
really (unintelligible) ones are like a ball that has multiple gems in it, they’re pretty big though, and they wear them, which I would think like distract from the riding, but everyone seems to be wearing them. [Oh well!] To each his own! [Oh well!] [how does it fit then? It fits fairly tight to the body, or..?] Yes. Well, the coat is very... an important fit, um, because.... that’s also tricky, because you have to make it look very tailored, but you also need to be able to move. Um, a lot of the girls are finding this year that this arm movement, to release the horse, the shoulders don’t move in the back, it’s not broad enough back here to allow for it, and it actually really can restrict your... riding abilities, um, but yes, it should not be baggy anywhere and very form fitting.

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<th>What factors do you consider when choosing your show outfit? For example, horse color, body shape, equitation weakness that you want to de-emphasize, etc.</th>
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<td>There’s really not a lot of room for disguising things unfortunately [at least not in the hunt seat world apparently] not in IHSA because I know in a lot of other disciplines, people will like put sticky things on the inside of their boots or something or like, they’re actually cheating...[yeah, that’s cheating!] ... to make themselves look better, but in IHSA, you definitely can’t do that. You don’t the horse’s color before you’re going in...[so you can’t work with that?] ...Your dress is just pretty typically the classic, equestrian look, kind of basic, like... [which I’m hearing is the navy jacket, and now the white shirts, the tan or greenish tan breeches... ] Um hmm, lighter breeches seem to be...[lighter ones seem to be the...?] Lighter tan, like... not so much olive... [not the greenish color anymore?] They’re tending to slide away from that. [ok, that’s fine, it’s all trends] Yeah.</td>
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<th>Did you have to get approval from the coaches before wearing this outfit?</th>
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<td>Um, we didn’t have an actual like “here is my outfit, yes or no” approval, but when you’re there ... a lot of it comes from your teammates looking you over and saying like “Uh, you might want to try getting a new shirt for the next time”. Um, it has a lot to do with the fit. So, we had, actually one of our coaches went out to the tack store, and she scheduled a couple of times when people could come out and try on clothes if they needed to buy new stuff, so that she could help them pick, which was very helpful for the more inexperienced girls. [ok, so she was there kind of giving you advice or criticism on how it looked and...]...Right, but as long as you’re adhering to the general rules, like the coaches can’t really force you to wear anything else.... [so they can’t force you to go and buy the $250 Tailored Sportsmans]....No, and they certainly don’t expect you to, there’s a lot of different options within that very broad spectrum of pricing, but, um, that’s like the classic look, you want to try to get as close to that as possible.</td>
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<th>If your university provides the show outfit, are you allowed to tailor it to fit your body, or are you limited in how you can modify the outfit? Can you provide examples?</th>
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<td>Question</td>
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<td>If your university has a predetermined show outfit, are there certain items that you have to provide yourself, or do they provide all parts of the show outfit? Which items did you provide?</td>
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<td>Are hairstyle and makeup important aspects of your appearance at shows? Do your teammates help each other with hair and makeup at shows and share tips and/or tricks?</td>
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<td>How do you feel when you are wearing your show outfit? Do you feel confident about your riding ability when wearing your show outfit? Are you physically and emotionally comfortable in your show outfit?</td>
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Um, it kind of all depends on the day honestly, it’s like any outfit you wear really, um, if you’re feeling good that day and healthy, you tend to walk a little taller, you tend to, you know, kind of put your head up, if you look the part, sometimes you can feel the part. Other times, especially getting up for a horse show in the morning, I’m not a morning person and, you know, I was feeling sick this past show, I definitely was more slouchy, and then you feel kind of out of place in your clothes because you don’t feel like riding that day in general, but, for the most part, on a day when you’re feeling good about yourself and your health, you really do tend to, you know, wear the clothes well, kind of strut them, and they are…I tend to pick, when I’m not wearing yoga clothes, um, I tend to wear clothes that are very equitationesque, like I love the equitation styles, so I pick clothes in every day outfits that look that way because I think it.. it makes you have better posture honestly, because you are, you know, you’re kind of proper, and it’s very presentable, so I think it makes you feel confident a lot of times when you wear those clothes.

Do you ever feel self-conscious or uncomfortable about certain aspects of your body when wearing your show outfit? If yes, tell me what makes you uncomfortable.

I don’t, um, I’ve actually been very fortunate in that I’m tall and I don’t put on weight as easily as other girls, which , ..but I do , I mean, college is actually , freshman year I gained weight like everyone else, but…[did you do the “fifteen”?] No, I…but my junior and senior year of high school I was… I’ve never been chubby, but like I was softer than I’d been in years past, and getting out of the dorms and eating my own food, I eat a very healthy Mediterranean diet, and I shed weight like nobody’s business, and I’ve been very lean from then on, which I’m very thankful for, and I actually think that the equitation clothes look really good on my body, so I tend to actually feel really comfortable in them. I think it’s very unfortunate though that this sport is based so much on image because I know a lot of girls who’ve struggled with that and their weight. It makes them feel very uncomfortable because it is very tight fitting, and it…it’s probably not…you know, pointing out, it’s pointing out areas that they didn’t want to be quite as exposed, but, um, you know, if you have… my old coach used to call it the “eq bod”, which is thin, but not like gauntly, but thin, tall, long…[so not emaciated, but still healthy but thin and tall] …long…[and long]…on the horse, you have to have a long line down the horse and the clothes tend to really accent that, if you already have that body type. [so long line from head all the way down to heels?] um hmm, and straight, like the leg should give a …a taller person tends to look better on a horse, if you’re just judging by the aesthetics of it, so, you know, I don’t ever really feel self-conscious in it. Actually, being involved in this sport has boosted the way I, …my confidence in the way I look because I tended to place just because of my body type, which I think is unfair and sad, but it gave me a confidence boost.
Do you have the same feelings or worries when wearing your regular street clothes?

Um, ...[I think you mentioned you tend to pick out clothes that are kind of mirror the equestrian outfit, do you have a preference for tailored clothing?] Um hmm, I do, and it didn’t exist in high school, but then having more exposure to it at world and college, um, because in high school, I used to dress, I still dressed very bohemian and hippyish, but, um, then I started looking, um, I got really interested in like high fashion, editorial kind of things, and I would browse through it, and I saw a lot of it is a reflection of the equestrian....[well, and that’s very, very popular right now] It is, and it has been for a couple of years, and I really like how it...it accents all of the pretty parts of the human body, I think, like it gives you a defined waist, it’s very, um, leggy, which is nice for those of us who are tall because now the clothes actually... I like that things have gotten taller, they hit at the natural waistline instead of close to the hips... [oh you mean the waistlines on the pants, instead of being really low, they’ve been rising] Right, yeah, we went from hip huggers to higher waisted things, which are much...I think are much more flattering on the body, which is what, I think that is what the equitation style is all about, is finding a very flattering human figure, and it tends to accent...it looks very professional and crisp, and I actually sometimes wish I had places to go that weren’t just college campus because sometimes I’ve like overdressed for class because it’s...I think it’s fun to look that way, so I definitely get a lot of confidence from the clothes I wear.

When you didn’t feel positive about your appearance in your show outfit, did it affect your confidence level and/or how you performed that day?
Um hmm. Um, at the beginning of my freshman year when I first become involved in it, and I was very intimidated and didn’t have many friends on the team yet, and I was young, and I had never shown like that before, and I wasn’t really...not being competitive, I..., um, I was kind of wary to start showing, and my mom was actually the one who said “you know, you’re wasting opportunities here, you should (unintelligible) and go to the first couple of shows. And I didn’t want to ask my parents to buy that kind of stuff for me, I thought it was excessive and materialistic, and owning a horse in general, like I don’t think they...they definitely don’t owe that to me, but it means I don’t have the means to buy that stuff, so, um...my first involvement with it, I actually felt like the poor kid almost, which is sad to say, um, some of the those girls don’t own horses, so I mean, I have money in other places, but that’s just not as important to me, so I actually felt a little like “judged” by people because my boots weren’t clean, I wore them all are around the barn before I went to the show so I..., like they weren’t shiny, but they shone up perfectly in time for the show. I don’t have an equitation belt, I don’t have the expensive pants, my coat isn’t expensive, and it’s the off color, it’s..., you know, my helmet that I was riding in, I actually....one girl said “no, no, no, you can borrow mine, you’re not going to wear that”, my first show helmet, and I felt really you know almost hurt by that because those were my things, and now someone’s telling me like “oh, you can’t wear that, you’re going to look silly” [it’s not good enough, in other words] Yeah, and I was like well, you know, that says nothing about who I am as a rider or as a person, it’s just the clothes I own, and, um, so I... for my first couple of shows, I was actually very intimidated by that, and like this doesn’t exist anymore, and I think our team has evolved to be a generally more accepting atmosphere, but like a couple of the older girls who would make remarks about like... my favorite gloves to wear were, they almost looked like motocross gloves, they had breathable like knuckle holes and like neoprene, and I had been wearing them, I had worn them to the point where they fit like a glove, they honestly had become one with my hand, and they were great to ride in, and they were leather, so they, you know, "leather gloves, ok, check", and she was like “what are those, you can borrow my gloves”, and I was like “I don’t want to borrow your gloves....” [I like my gloves!] “…they’re black gloves, they’re fine!” So... the more involved I became in it though, I didn’t let it affect me as much, but at first I think I was a little intimidated by that.

Has your coach ever suggested that you lose or gain weight in order to be more competitive in your event? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?
Not me personally, but, um, two other teammates of mine, I know our past coach had had to ....address that with a couple of the girls. Um, it’s really unfortunately because they could be every bit as comparable of a... as good of a rider as another person, but if you’re overweight, you’re probably not going to place as well as a girl who is thinner, and, um, that’s what really stinks about the equestrian world, but it’s also... from the athletic perspective, you know, they’re placing girls who look more athletic. It’s an easier job for the horse to carry someone who is of appropriate weight, and so it’s an, it’s an awkward and really hard subject to breech, but it’s unfortunately important, and it’s a very big aspect of what we do. Um, actually as [officer position redacted], I was hoping to bring in a workshop later in the year through student organizations that talks about positive body image in the equestrian world, because I know last year that was a really big factor on our team, and the way it came up, our coach sat down and she said to the girls like...I thought she handled it very tactfully, and she said, you know, this is an uncomfortable conversation for me, but unfortunately it’s one that we have to have, and she basically just told them that that’s the nature of this sport, and she offered support and ways to, um, maybe get involved with team workouts or, um, people they could go to that would help her find their equestrian look, um. Yeah, that’s kind of..., it was dealt with tactfully, um, but it did have to be addressed, yeah.

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<th>Has your coach ever suggested that you increase or decrease your level of fitness? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?</th>
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<td>[You mentioned team workouts?] Team workouts were encouraged. Um, in general our coach last year especially was a huge advocate for getting to the gym outside of riding. Um, a lot of girls can't afford to and or don't have the time to be riding once a day, and in order to be good in riding, you have to be strong... really, really strong. Um, my legs were pitiful at the beginning, I had no idea how strong they could be until I started showing like this, and, you know, I’ve found I can get on the elliptical now, and like level 12 is nothing at times, like I just...my legs are like stronger than ever, and...but it’s why I became good at riding, so putting in the time outside of riding has always been encouraged. It definitely helps improve riding ability.</td>
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<th>Does your team have fitness or conditioning requirements or standards (either official or unofficial) in addition to riding related requirements? If so, what are they?</th>
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No. We don’t really. Um, I’m hoping to… our team is at a transition point right now, I inherited a very iffy situation as the incoming [officer position redacted], um, because we were transferring barns and facilities and coaching. Um, I hope to arrange something like that, where that is, um,…. The system I’m trying to devise is a… some of our girls chart their involvement, um, at the barn and outside of it, and they can get points for how active they’ve been, um, and those points contribute to your standing on the team, and they give you bonus points that you’ll be, um, able to receive like a gift at the end of the year if you’ve reached a certain goal, and it’s kind of like…, my mom calls it, my mom was making fun of it, but she called it the big sticker chart for college kids because…[but it is!] … it’s really important and if you want to, um, improve it’s really important that you put that time in, especially the freshman. Like… the food that you’re eating here is a lot of carbohydrates, and if you’re not working out afterward, that’s going to have a very dire affect on your body, like and you’re not going to be happy with the way you look, and it’s not going to help you place well. So it’s important to get to the gym, so I’m hoping that we implement something like that. It will never be mandatory, though. You can’t ask that, um, of an extracurricular sport. You know, if this was a varsity team, if we were NCAA sponsored, it would be absolutely mandatory, but we’re not, so,… it’s encouraged, always encouraged.

Do you think the riders on your team are supportive of each other, or are they critical of each other? What have you seen or experienced that makes you think this?
I think we’re generally supportive, um, like I said, the atmosphere has changed drastically because we lost a lot of our seniors last year, which I was initially very upset about because those were my closest friends on the team. But I came to... in their absence, came to realize that they were some of the more critical people, and they were some of the people that even though they were friends with each other, they were cattier and like they talked about each other...[oh that gets bad] Yeah, and that’s not ever a fun thing to be involved in a team, so now we tend to be very, very supportive of each other, and it’s bringing people that I didn’t think I would be close with much closer, and, um, it makes showing so much more fun when you know those people genuinely care that you do well, and you’re hugging each other and like it’s not just “hey, good job”, it’s actually “we’re really excited for you, great job, we’re happy for you as a person” and, you know, that’s really nice to be a part of. [so it sounds like the culture of the team is evolving a little bit.] It is, because before..., it was just....it wasn’t a very positive atmosphere I guess is the thing, and, um, a lot of it stemmed from competition within...the team. You know, everyone was vying for the same spots. But now, it’s more of a like “well, you didn’t get it, but it’s ok” because like we at least care about you, whereas before it was like “HA, I won!” like it was more in your face and...[more of a self-centered approach]. Um hmm. We had one girl especially who always talked about how much she had improved this year, and we were all sitting there like “ok, like so have we, you don’t see us...” . She brought it up into every conversation, and she’d make you feel like you were... like you don’t count and the work you’ve put in isn’t... you can never be quite as great as her. [so in other words, for her, it was all about “me”] Me, me, me, all the time, and that’s just not...especially when you’re more of a team leader and you’re like that. [that’s not a team thing, uh uh] No.

What does your coach do (or not do) to encourage a supportive team environment? Can you describe any examples?
Um, our current coach is very competitive. I don’t necessarily think that, um …competition is the best thing to encourage because …well, we’re in a difficult situation at [university name redacted] because we’re not NCAA sponsored and we compete against people that are. [university name redacted] and [university name redacted]…and even [university name redacted] receives a lot more funding from the school than we do, we are entirely club sport. That’s really hard, um, so you can be as competitive as you want. Unfortunately at the end of the day, you’re riding a lesser quality of animal, you’re in lesser quality tack, your instruction is ….maybe not…they’re not getting a salary from the school, so it’s…..[it’s the whole apples and oranges thing] It really is. Um, but they encourage us to be…what is it, sorry, what’s the question about…fitness? [what do they do to encourage a supportive team environment?] Supportive, oh I don’t know how I got on that tangent, um…our coaches this year are very fun, and, um ….like joyful, and they make a lot of jokes, and that makes it a lot… friendlier and, um ….I don’t know exactly what it is, but they’re definitely better at encouraging like sportsmanship then before and being a team, I don’t know, it’s kind of hard….[so it’s not anything, any one thing that you can point out but you definitely feel that they’re cultivating the environment…] They are because… […] I don’t want to put words into your mouth, but that’s kind of what I’m hearing] No, yeah, that is, that’s a much more articulate way of saying that. Yeah, I can’t really explain exactly what it is, but…it just an atmosphere of ….it’s weird though because they want to win so badly, but at the same time, it’s like if you don’t win, they never blame it on you I guess is the thing, it’s always another…unless it will be constructive criticism if anything, or it will be just situational whereas like “well you got a really crappy draw, don’t beat yourself up about it, it’s a shame”, and that’s better than hearing that you’re not trying or you’re not good enough or something, so maybe that’s part of it.

How do you feel about having to ride unfamiliar horses in IHSA shows? Does that add a lot of stress for you, or do you see this as a “challenge”??
It adds some stress when you…if you’re watching the schooling of a particular horse and it’s not going well, and you know you drew that one… [ugh!] …the horse I drew on this Sunday of our last show, if I had had, you know, five minutes beforehand to putz around on it and figure out how it moved and how I could make it look better, I know I would have at least placed, um, because…and the unfortunate part is too, they judge it as they would any other show, so your…..their first impression of you when you walk into the ring is pretty much what they’re going off of. My first impression was “Ut, the horse picked up the wrong lead”. Little did the judge know it’s because the horse was a psychopath, and I really didn’t have… like the horse was pulled right after that, so I figured out what made it tick and I fixed it the second way, so I was proud of myself for that, but of course, they didn’t take that into consideration, it was just the wrong lead from the beginning, so when you, when you’re watching that happening, when you’re watching a horse be a psycho, and you’re like “oh I have to get on that and show it in like three classes, it’s going to be great” it does tend to make you anxious and a little, you know, nervous, um, but it’s just kind of the… it’s how it goes. I’m lucky that I had so many experiences with lesser value horses I guess that were kind of wild. I rode…, I mean I can sit a buck and a rear like nobody’s business… [a little untrained, then?] For sure, because that’s like the area I was raised in, and, um, I’m happy for that, because I don’t get scared on the horse, I do on the ground. If they’re….I’ve seen… the monster horse I mentioned before used to like rear at my face, so that still tends to freak me out, but like if I’m on a horse that’s acting… misbehaving, I don’t get scared. [so you know how to ride through that, then?] I do, but it is frustrating when that happens because…. [well especially in a show and in a class and you know… yeah] Especially if again if you’re sitting there and you know that went poorly and it’s not really your fault, but that’s the way it is, and you’re just waiting for them not to call your number, that really stinks, but…which will happen, but what can you do? And then I what, I win sometimes, so I don’t even know.

When you are riding equitation or horsemanship classes, do you ever think that the judges favor certain body types or have a preferred "look" and use this to decide placings? Have you personally seen evidence of this occurring? If so, can you describe what happened?
Definitely, um, I think I did touch on that a lot, and pretty consistently. Um, if a heavier girl is in the ring and a skinnier girl, and they’re both riding at about the same level, the skinnier girl pretty much will take it every time. The one thing that’s a little bit abstract about judging that I’ve never really been able to, um, harness, I guess, is that sometimes …my coach last year would just tell me “you have to look snobbier”, like “you have to look… like you own it.” [so it’s like an attitude thing?] It has a lot to do with your attitude I’m finding, and there’s a big strategy to like placement in the ring, to catching the judge’s eye, and you know then I went…I guess I’m just kind of… I’m not that at all, so, um, that’s hard for me. I would go in the ring, and I would be putting on like my acting face and I would be going like (demonstrating facial expressions) “ah, ah, ah”. I would come out, and she would like “no, you need to be more aggressive than that about your attitude”. I was like “what does that mean? How do you do that in riding? I don’t know. Do you want me to put my nose up the ceiling like…?” But they really do, if you watch these riders, it’s this look of like “I own this ring”, like “every other rider in here is below my level” like, and it’s something you can actually see, and that’s the hard part, that always places well, confidence and like a sense of ownership about your positioning and your riding ability always places well … [interesting]… and so that’s something that I’ve never really been able to like replicate, I guess, in my riding, but…and then there’s the obvious, the body type, yeah. [so maybe you need to be an actress on the horse and pull on all that musical theatre experience] That’s the thing, it’s like they tell me “you can act, I don’t know why you can’t be snobbier”, it’s like you’re asking me to be like a bad person, like I don’t know how that translates to riding…[think of it as a character or a role!]… I guess, I think it’s….. My mom told me once too when my coach said that, “I think you just need to smile more, you just need to look like you enjoy it more.” I was like “Mom, that’s not…” You’d think that, but that’s not even it. But at this last show, we actually had one girl who won her class, she did her entire course beaming, just like so over-enthused that she was riding, which is so rare in the IHSA, where like the normal facial expression is very stern and very focused [focused and intense] um hmm, and she was just like having a blast out there, and she won! It became… it was a jump off, too, [oh!] like they did a test, and she won over the other girl because of her presentation, and that was a weird presentation for IHSA because normally not like the most jovial wins, but she did, so.. [oh, maybe she’ll start a trend!] I guess so! I’d be better at that one than being, you know, a witch up there. (laughing)

In your opinion, do you think that your coaches think that judges favor certain body types or looks in equitation classes? Have you seen or hear your coach say something that might indicate this?
Yeah. Um, they’re aware of it. This year we haven’t had the talk yet. [the talk?] About body types. [Ah] I’m sure it will have to come up at some point, um, but our coach last year especially was very aware of it, and it’s …judging, if it’s consistent judging, it has a very discernible pattern to it, and you can actually look at a class and based on…like other placings that preceded it, you can pretty much point out who they’ll pick to be first, second and third. [so as you go through the sequence of classes in the show, and the same judge is doing all of them, you can kind of see what he’s pinning?] What they value most…. [and see how…] …and how people are comparatively….at model, and, you know, some judges aren’t as bothered by body type as others, but there are certain ones that…it’s just kind of how it goes, it’s something they value more than maybe being tight to the saddle or something, so I think the coaches…the coaches are very aware of all of the judging patterns so…by being there and observing it, so that has to be something that they…. [so they’re aware that judge A likes this and judge B likes something else…] Um hmm. […and can kind of adjust to that…] Yeah, and body type tends to tie into that for some people. [for some of the judges?] Um hmm.

Do you think that judges pay attention to riders’ outfits and use this as part of their judging criteria? For example, as long as the riders’ outfit meets the rulebook standard, fits well and is in good condition, do you think what the rider is wearing influences the judge?

No, I don’t. [you don’t.] My teammates will probably disagree. [but you have your gray coat, and you don’t feel like that that’s…] No. […bothered you?] No, I don’t, and, um, it’s all too like… people obsessively shine their boots, and I really do wear my boots out of the stall, I get a wet rag and I brush them off, and if I’m lucky and there’s shoe polish laying around, I might touch it. Honestly, and then someone like rags off the dust, and …[that’s after you get mounted, right?] Yes, and so I honestly like …it’s a preoccupation I think that people have with …[like a compulsion?] …the brand. Yeah, and the “look” of everything, and what it comes down to is, you’re going by the judge at like speed, so it’s not like they’re sitting going like “Oh, those Tailored Sportsman breeches are incredibly, you know, appropriate for this event!”, they see a blue coat and olive pants go by, you know…. [so they kind of see an overall picture…] Right. […as opposed to focusing on specific…] Yeah. The people in “the world” are very focused on brand name and the actual look of each individual object, when I think it’s really more as a whole….that they look at.

Are there male riders on your college or university equestrian team?

We have one.

If so, do you think that the male riders experience similar levels of scrutiny over their appearance or their show outfits?
I don’t know so much for their outfits, um, with boys being kind of scarce in IHSA, I think it’s more about, um ….male riders are a very interesting thing, because they cover a lot of ground. It’s either very hunchy, and people like that … [posture wise?] um hmm, or it’s very, very rigid, and people love that, other people, or it’s a combination of both and it’s really, um, I guess it’s just that men have like more exaggerated features like they’re just bigger by build, um, but those tend to be more obvious in a man, and so it think more than anything it’s how they carry themselves more than what they’re wearing. Um, it…really the only difference is they wear a tie. Um, but other than that, they’re held to the same appearance. I think the difference lies in their posture and the way they ride, because they’re so variable between…among male riders. [so you think maybe the emphasis there is the way they’re sitting and the actual equitation, the way they’re sitting on the horse and the way they’re riding as opposed to the clothes?] Yeah, because it tends to be very, um, I don’t know what it is about watching a boy, it’s like easier to see he flaws there or something and maybe it’s because their shoulders are broader and they move more or something, but like I think the judge looks more for the way that they handle that, but also I don’t think…this is awkward, but I don’t think the male body was made to sit in a hunt seat saddle like a women’s, you know what I mean, so that has a lot to do with the way they ride, I think, it’s just a completely different build and so adjusting to that and seeing how they can fit the classic equestrian look, it’s impressive, so I think that’s what they look for more than anything else.
Appendix O

Transcript: Rider # 9
Date: December 2, 2011

Interview transcript # 9:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What is your first name? You may use a pseudonym if you wish.</strong></td>
<td>[Rider’s name redacted, to be referred to as Rider # 9]</td>
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<td><strong>How old are you?</strong></td>
<td>Nineteen.</td>
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<td><strong>How did you get interested in horses and riding?</strong></td>
<td>Um, my family has horses, and we’re in the horse industry, so it’s just kind of something I grew up with.</td>
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<td><strong>Was riding an activity that your family was involved in? Were they supportive or critical of your riding?</strong></td>
<td>Yes. Supportive.</td>
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<td><strong>Did you own (or own now) a horse?</strong></td>
<td>Yes, I own a horse.</td>
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<td><strong>If yes, tell me how you got him/her, what he/she’s like, and do you have him/her with you in college now?</strong></td>
<td>Um, I had her here last year, but um I got her from my uncle who breeds, um, quarter horses, so she’s 9 years...she’s a 9 year old quarter horse now, I’ve had her for 6 years at least, so... [and not here at college?] No, back home... [so back at home with the family. Does she miss you?] Yeah, I don’t know. [but you miss her...] I think she likes just hanging out, not having to work too hard! [kind of a pasture pet right now?] Yep.</td>
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<td><strong>Before college or university, how many years had you been riding?</strong></td>
<td>Um, pretty much since I could sit up, so...17, 18 years. [so from the time you could sit up, so probably less than a year old then, right?] Yeah. [wow!]</td>
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<td><strong>How many times per week did you take lessons, and in what discipline were they (for example, western, hunt seat, jumping, reining, etc.)?</strong></td>
<td>Um, probably 4 to 5 times a week, depending on the time of the year. And, um, it was English and western lessons. [so you did both...] Um hm. [...]and depending on the time of year, was that you increased them if you were getting ready for a competition?] Yeah, in the summer I took, would take a lesson probably like almost every day, and in the winter, I played sports and stuff, so it wasn't as often. [it was hunt seat, English?] Um hmm.</td>
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<td><strong>Did you ride on an equestrian team (such as an Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) team) during middle or high school?</strong></td>
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Um, I rode on a high school equestrian team in [location redacted]. We have a...there’s a just a league, [name redacted], and I rode on that um, my high school’s equestrian team. [so something similar to IEA...] yeah. [...]but not the same organization?] Um hmm. [and it was just for that part of the state or...?] Um hmm. [...because I haven’t heard of this] Yeah, it’s... there’s... it’s in [location redacted]. I don’t think it’s... I think [state name redacted] has kind of a similar thing, but um as far as [state name redacted], I think that’s the only area that has that kind of a thing.

Did you show as an individual (in other words, not as part of an equestrian team) during middle or high school?

Yes.

If yes for last question, tell me about your experience in those shows. In what level shows did you participate (for example, A or AA, unrated/local, breed, open, NRHA shows etc.), in what discipline, and how frequently?

Um, they were just unrated open local shows and, um, I did the all-around, so I did everything, English, western, jumping, a little bit of reining.

Are you currently riding on your university's equestrian team?

Yes.

If yes, what discipline do you ride on your team? (western/English/both) and for how long?

Um, western horsemanship, and I’ve been doing it for two years.

If you are not currently riding on your university's equestrian team but have in the past, why did you stop (for example, too much money, no time, lost interest, didn’t like the format or quality or horses, other reason)?

Question skipped, n/a.

How would you categorize your university team compared to other teams in your zone or region?

Very competitive  
Somewhat competitive  
Neither competitive or non-competitive  
Somewhat non-competitive  
Non-competitive

I’d say very competitive.

What do you like the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, is it the camaraderie, being able to travel to shows, the actual riding or something else?

Well, I like those aspects, I’ve made a lot of good friends through the team, and I also like that it’s a way to continue riding in college with like...relatively inexpensively, just kind of, it’s something that is fun for me, a relaxing break from.... [a relaxing break from school, yeah]
What do you dislike the most about riding on your college or university equestrian team? For example, riding unfamiliar horses, politics, making an individual sport into a team sport, etc.

Yeah, I mean sometimes like the horses you have to ride are like not as nice as my horse, um, but I mean I feel like that’s part of just like learning to be a better rider. And as far… like the team aspect, like I’m the [officer position redacted] this year, so I’ve kind of run into like problems with getting people to like do what they’re supposed to do….so I mean that’s kind of unpleasant sometimes, but for the most part, it’s a pretty pleasant experience. [ok, so what you’re referring to then is kind of the administrative side, you know, if you were not in that position then, you would say everything is ok, right?] Yeah. [ok, yeah, chasing after people is no fun sometimes]

In what class(es) or event(s) do you compete?

I’m in the intermediate horsemanship right now, but I’ve going to move up like to novice. [so you’re going to point out this year?] Um hmm. [Ok, good!]

If there are too many riders for everyone to show or complete in a given event or class, who decides who shows for your team? For example, the coach, team captain(s), team vote, seniority, riders picking straws, etc.?

The coaches decide all that.

Does your school have a show outfit that everyone wears (i.e., a standard show outfit), or do you pick your own outfit?

Um, you provide your own outfit you wear, but our coach, one of our coaches [coach name redacted], she has to approve everything, and she has pretty strict rules about what she likes and what she doesn’t like. [so she has pretty high standards?] um hmm.

Tell me about your show outfit. Describe all elements such as boots, spurs, hat, gloves, colors, amount of decoration, etc. Is it very form fitting?

Um, right now I have, um, black chaps, and I wear black jeans under that, black chaps, black boots, and black hat, and then my shirt is, um, black and then it has like gold and silver kind of designs and, um, Swarovski crystals and a really like stiff high collar. [so it is a very high collar?] Yeah, and, um, I guess like the designs are kind of like, um, like diamond shaped like I don’t know cutouts like leather… [oh ok…], it’s like gold and silver and then like just kind of crystals on it. [so is the leather appliquéd on top of the shirt?] Yeah, it’s an appliqué, and it’s just like a black base… [and the shirt, it is kind of a stretchy material or…?] No….it’s not stretchy, it’s more of like a jacket. It fits like a… [oh does it tuck in or does it sit on top?] You, like you…I wear it both ways…[oh you do?] …like sometimes I tuck it in, sometimes I wear it more like a jacket, it’s not stretchy. [and so the fit, is it, how does it fit?] It fits pretty like close to….[close to the body?] Yeah.
**What factors do you consider when choosing your show outfit?** For example, horse color, body shape, equitation weakness that you want to de-emphasize, etc.

| Yeah, well definitely horse color, like my horse, well she’s gray, so like most things look good, but when I was riding a sorrel horse, like you avoided like red and stuff like that…[because it would clash?] Yeah, and then, um, … I like, I like more… I like blue a lot, so like some of the stuff I had before was blue, and, um, I just… like fashions, like some stuff goes in and out of fashion. Like I don’t know I used to like have a vest type thing, but like vests aren’t really in right now.. [so the vest with the slinky underneath?] Yeah. And so, um, I don’t know I’m kind of looking for something new now, but I have, I’ve had a lot of blue stuff and black and white stuff, so that’s just kind of what I like. [I bet all of that looked good on a gray.] yeah. |

**Did you have to get approval from the coaches before wearing this outfit?**

| Yep. Yep. [do you know what they’re looking for, when they’re signing off or saying yes or no, are they looking at fit or style or?] Yeah, definitely fit is really important, like especially… like in your chaps, like, um, the coach wants them to be tighter and like everything just needs to be like well fitting, your shirt is not like too loose, even with the boys, like she makes them get their shirt tailored so it’s not like billowing out in the back. |

**If your university provides the show outfit, are you allowed to tailor it to fit your body, or are you limited in how you can modify the outfit? Can you provide examples?**

| Question skipped. N/A |

**If your university has a predetermined show outfit, are there certain items that you have to provide yourself, or do they provide all parts of the show outfit? Which items did you provide?**

| Question skipped. N/A |

**Are hairstyle and makeup important aspects of your appearance at shows? Do your teammates help each other with hair and makeup at shows and share tips and/or tricks?**

| Um, yeah, like, um …we all put our hair back in a bun and then, um, use like a hairnet to kind of make like a really round nice bun, we all… we usually, like I’m pretty good at it, so I’ll do a lot of people’s hair at shows, especially people who are new and don’t really… can’t really do it themselves. [yeah, yeah, well it’s kind of hard to work at the back of your head] …so and then makeup too like I mean like we go for like a heavier look, probably like a lot more than I wear on a daily basis, so…and we help each other out and like play “beauty shop”…[play beauty shop!] …for the shows. [that’s a fun way of putting it!] |

**How do you feel when you are wearing your show outfit? Do you feel confident about your riding ability when wearing your show outfit? Are you physically and emotionally comfortable in your show outfit?**
Yeah, I feel like it makes like…I like my outfit a lot, so I feel like if I look good, you feel good. It makes you more confident about your riding abilities, and just makes you like overall just do well. I just…I feel like when you like what you're wearing, I mean it reflects in your attitude and stuff. [and so is it comfortable to wear?] Yeah, I mean it’s like… I guess it’s like a little like stiffer than like what I normally ride in, but I feel like that keeps like your posture good and it kind of just gives you like the extra like…like this is like, how you feel when you’re showing, like it’s a special thing for that. [so some reinforcement then?] Yeah.

Do you ever feel self-conscious or uncomfortable about certain aspects of your body when wearing your show outfit? If yes, tell me what makes you uncomfortable.

I don’t really think so. I’m pretty comfortable in the clothes.

Do you have the same feelings or worries when wearing your regular street clothes?

[are you pretty comfortable in your clothes at all times?] Yeah.

When you didn’t feel positive about your appearance in your show outfit, did it affect your confidence level and/or how you performed that day?

Question skipped in error.

Has your coach ever suggested that you lose or gain weight in order to be more competitive in your event? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?

No, like they’ve…they’ve always said like I had a good body for riding, so it’s never, that’s never like been an issue. It has for some people on the team, but…like, there are definitely people they’ve like kind of said, like kind of hinted at [hinted at?] that that was an issue. Like if they wanted to be better, they need to lose weight to look better… [so they have, I guess, a…] like a picture […] an ideal and the closer you get to that ideal, the better they think, I mean the more competitive you’ll be, is that what I’m hearing?] Um hmm.

Has your coach ever suggested that you increase or decrease your level of fitness? If so, do you remember what was said and how you reacted to the conversation?

I mean, that they…we… I don’t think they’ve ever said that, but like we do stuff in lessons to try and get like more strength and stuff like that, so I don’t know, they have never said it, but we do things… [so they are kind of doing that training…] yes. […] that physical training, that physical conditioning in your lesson then, right?] Um hmm.

Does your team have fitness or conditioning requirements or standards (either official or unofficial) in addition to riding related requirements? If so, what are they?
You have to take like at least a lesson a week, but if you want to... if you want to like do post season stuff and be selected for shows and stuff like that, you have to probably you have to do more than that. So, it's, I guess, it's not really an official, but if you want to do better, you have to work harder and do more. [so it's more of a self-directed, you have to get yourself to the gym and work out and make sure that your body strength and your core are built up and all that...] um hmm [...but it's not like you have to do this 3 or 4 times a week or as a group or anything like that?] No.

Do you think the riders on your team are supportive of each other, or are they critical of each other? What have you seen or experienced that makes you think this?

I think for the most part everyone’s pretty supportive, there... I mean there’s a large like difference between like the open riders and the beginner riders, so like... [You mean in terms of level of skill?] Yeah, so people, so like people are... can be like constructively critical, but it's never like... rude, like just people being like “oh, I think she’s terrible”, it’s more like saying something to be helpful just because you know more, you have more experience than someone else. [So do the open riders, do they try to mentor the younger riders or the less experienced riders or?] I'd say so, and our coaches like during lessons will sometimes pair up like a more experienced rider with a more novice rider just to... because there’s one... [So the novice can have something to look at...] yeah. [...and see what should be done?] ...and then there’s only one person teaching lessons for like maybe like 8 people, so you... they can’t like be their focus the entire time, so they have to have someone to model or like ask questions, also, it’s just another helpful level.

What does your coach do (or not do) to encourage a supportive team environment? Can you describe any examples?

Um, well they have they I think they really try to encourage the team aspect of it, when we go to shows, they like us to wear, to wear like certain things, especially for like post season they like everybody to look the same even... like when you’re just sitting around like we’ll have like a shirt that we’re wearing, besides our show outfit. [oh, so not your show outfit but something like a jacket...] or like a you know button down [...or warm up or something?] and jeans or like... and we do like dinners and like just fun things, like we go play laser tag or just like bonding or just like a team dinner or stuff like that. [So it sounds like they really do try to encourage team activities?] Um hmm.

How do you feel about having to ride unfamiliar horses in IHSA shows? Does that add a lot of stress for you, or do you see this as a "challenge"?
I think… I like… I think of it as a challenge, like I like the challenge, like now it’s my second year, so I’m getting to know like the horses and it’s like when I draw them, it’s like I have more familiarity with them, so it’s more of a challenge and just a fun way, and I think it makes you a better rider to learn to ride other horses like quickly. [So I guess that means the other horses in your training barn, right?] Um hhm. [You still, when you go to a show, and you’re having to ride the other barn’s horses, you’re still totally unfamiliar with them, right?] Um hhm. [Do you feel like, do you have more anxiety when you’re doing that?] I mean a little bit, but I don’t….I rode a lot of horses like different horses like when I was younger too like besides my own, so it’s not….[it’s not scary to you] It doesn’t really scare me, yeah.

When you are riding equitation or horsemanship classes, do you ever think that the judges favor certain body types or have a preferred "look" and use this to decide placings? Have you personally seen evidence of this occurring? If so, can you describe what happened?

Yeah, I definitely feel like people who are thinner get like get favored over heavier set people, especially girls. [oh, you think there’s a difference in the gender?] Yeah, I think, well I mean, with boys I don’t think it’s as big of a deal, but for like girls, like if you have two people that are probably the similar abilities, like the one who looks better as far as like thinness is probably going to do better. [do you think if you had two riders that were of unequal ability that they would still be using that, you know, to make a decision or would they be looking solely at judging riding ability?] I think like… I think they probably still use that as a deciding…just like when you have a class, it’s probably sometimes it can be up to like 15 people, and the judge a lot of times just makes a lot of decisions based on like first…like… [First impressions?] …first impressions, and like I feel like it’s probably more of a subconscious thing maybe, but I definitely feel like if you’re heavier, like it really like negatively affects how well you do, which I mean, it’s like…I feel bad, but it’s like the way…[the way it is?] Yeah.

In your opinion, do you think that your coaches think that judges favor certain body types or looks in equitation classes? Have you seen or hear your coach say something that might indicate this?
Yeah. Yeah, well the first year I was here, they were...um, there was a girl on our team who was kind of like heavier and then she rode for the team at semis and she didn’t do that well, so they picked another girl to ride for Nationals for the team, which partially I think was like, you know, she was like heavier, and she like didn’t do as well, ...so they wanted to see if they could get like better... [so when you say “didn’t do as well” in terms that she didn’t place as well, it wasn’t like she went in there and had a really bad ride...?] Yeah. [... is that kind of... ?] Well, I didn’t see her ride, but I don’t...she didn’t place well, so I just know they picked someone else then to, so...[That could have been either based on the way the placings went or that she might just have had a really crappy ride?] Yeah, so I don’t know, but again I don’t know exactly what’s the best cause, but that’s my feeling about it.

**Do you think that judges pay attention to riders' outfits and use this as part of their judging criteria? For example, as long as the riders' outfit meets the rulebook standard, fits well and is in good condition, do you think what the rider is wearing influences the judge?**

Yeah. Yeah, um, I just feel like if you ...there’s a lot of like little things about your outfit, like if you look ...if your fit...if the fit fits well and like your hat, if it...you don’t want your hat to be really crisp looking and like the... [You do or don’t?] You do, so you don’t want like if your hat looks a little flat or something, or your outfit is kind of a little out of style or something, I feel like it...it does...it gives you that... push like maybe like ....I don't feel like it's a big like "wow, like she’s...her outfit's not like the greatest one, so I'm not going to place it", but it's like a small difference, it could be a small difference between first or second or something like that, just...it’s like the more polished look I feel like gives the judge a better impression of you. [more polished, and that would be driven by current and in style clothes and the way it fits and like the hat you mentioned, whether it’s... crisp looking...that’s a funny way to describe a hat, but that... attention to detail, is that?] That’s a good way, like attention to detail, like I just feel like that gives a good impression, this person knows what they’re doing, is putting their best like effort and appearance forward.

**Are there male riders on your college or university equestrian team?**

Uh, yes.

**If so, do you think that the male riders experience similar levels of scrutiny over their appearance or their show outfits?**
No. Their outfits are a lot simpler than the girls’ outfits, and, um, I guess like their styles don’t change, like they wear just like a plain button down shirt, like I guess maybe some colors come… are more in and out of style, but usually like white, blue, black, like red all pretty much are always in style and sometimes you’ll see different colors like pink or orange but like… [so some real trendy colors?] Uh huh, but I guess the only real thing with like boys is like the fit, like you don’t want your shirt to be like too big, so it’s kind of baggy but… [so they’re just taking a regular shirt and then making sure that it’s fitting close enough to the body…] in the back especially… [...in the back especially?] uh huh. [Is that so the wind doesn’t…?] Yeah, so you don’t get that big like ball… [the sail look?] …but I guess it’s just it like a lot less, so… they don’t have…I guess it’s not as trend dependent as girls. [How often do you think the trends change? Every year’s there’s something new and improved or does it last a couple of years?] I like I guess it’s like a new thing every year, but if you buy something one year, it’s not going to look out of style…[horribly out of style the next year?] Yeah. It, it…things stay good for a few years…. [so conceivably you could buy something your freshman year and you could probably still will wear it as a senior?] Yeah, depending…as long as you buy something that’s not super trendy…[super outlandish then?] …so I mean there’s classic looking things that stay in style for a while. [and so that’s still fine, that classic look as opposed to the trendy stuff that goes in and out, right?] Um hmm.