



Torsion Treeless Saddles

My 11-year-old Morgan gelding Hollywood Hi Jinks (Jinks) has had a reasonably successful introduction to dressage last year. We affiliated with British Dressage in the early summer and we picked up points and one Novice level win with a score of 67%. Jinks enjoyed himself! However, Jinks is a very sensitive chap and doesn't hide his feelings when things are not quite right. It became apparent that the dressage saddle that had previously fitted was now pinching and causing a problem in Jink's back.

He became hollow, his stride length short and choppy and he was much more unsettled in his mouth. Our scores nose-dived! We tried various wide-fitting conventional saddles without seeing any significant improvement. Treeless saddles were talked about but as we knew no-one using them we were unsure if they would be relevant to Jinks and me. However we were then offered the opportunity to try out a Torsion saddle for a week long trial. Torsion UK kindly sent to us both a Deluxe (GP) saddle and Dressage calfskin arriving by courier in protective drums complete with a special pad and two lengths of girth. Because they are so flexible, they don't need to be fitted for the horse. They simply send the size suitable for the rider. We had fantastic support from Birgit at Torsion UK, answering our questions and giving us help to fit the saddle.

Then we got on board.

The horse immediately moved much better. He was not fighting, his paces were more elastic and transitions became smooth again. Great! To be frank it was initially not quite as easy for the rider. The seat is quite different from conventional saddles with a twist and it took some time to become comfortable and to feel in-tune with the horse. By the second and third day these problems had vanished. I felt comfortable and appreciated the added benefit of the horse being much more sensitive to the aids from the seat. On day 3 I entered Jinks for an unaffiliated test at Port Royal using the dressage saddle. This saddle places the rider in a very good, balanced position for flatwork. I felt secure and in control of myself and Jinks. The first test was not too hot but by the second Novice test we got our act together and came 3rd with 67%. The tree-less Torsion saddle is a real option.

The trial costs just £45 and your horse will be delighted!