

# ANDERSON BEAN BOOT COMPANY

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## Anderson Bean Boots: Celebrating 11 years with NRHA

Since 2005, Anderson Bean Boot Company boots has stomped the dirt at hundreds of arenas around the United States and across the Western riding industry. The comfortable but durable nature of the boot makes it the top choice for professional horsemen and women, and weekend riders alike. What truly sets an Anderson Bean boot apart from others? Company owner Trainor Evans lets reiners in on the finer art of making a boot for a competitive rider. When the National Reining Horse Association (NRHA) partnered with Anderson Bean, both acknowledged the mutually beneficial aspects of having quality, American made boots back an American association. Throughout the years, the NRHA's professional horsemen, youth and non pro competitors not only embraced Anderson Bean, they also actively worked to improve their first choice in boots to perfect the product.

### BUILT TOUGH

Anderson Bean Boots are put together at a factory in Mercedes, Texas, using a design that was proven to provide support to Western riders. However, reiners are not just any old rider.

“We do not make boots that are for dress; we have always gone for utilitarian that are attractive to the eye,” says Evans. “Our goal is to make the strongest boot we can but have it be light enough for daily use. Certain things lend themselves to putting your foot in a stirrup, like a stacked heel, a steel shank.”

Many competitors may own one, two, three or more pairs of boots. But what really goes into the perfect pair of riding boots? Evans says it starts with quality leather.

“Anderson Bean Boots are hand-lasted with a leather insole and a leather heel. Then, we ensure the boot will hold up to riding in the stirrup by adding a steel shank to support the arch,” Evans says.

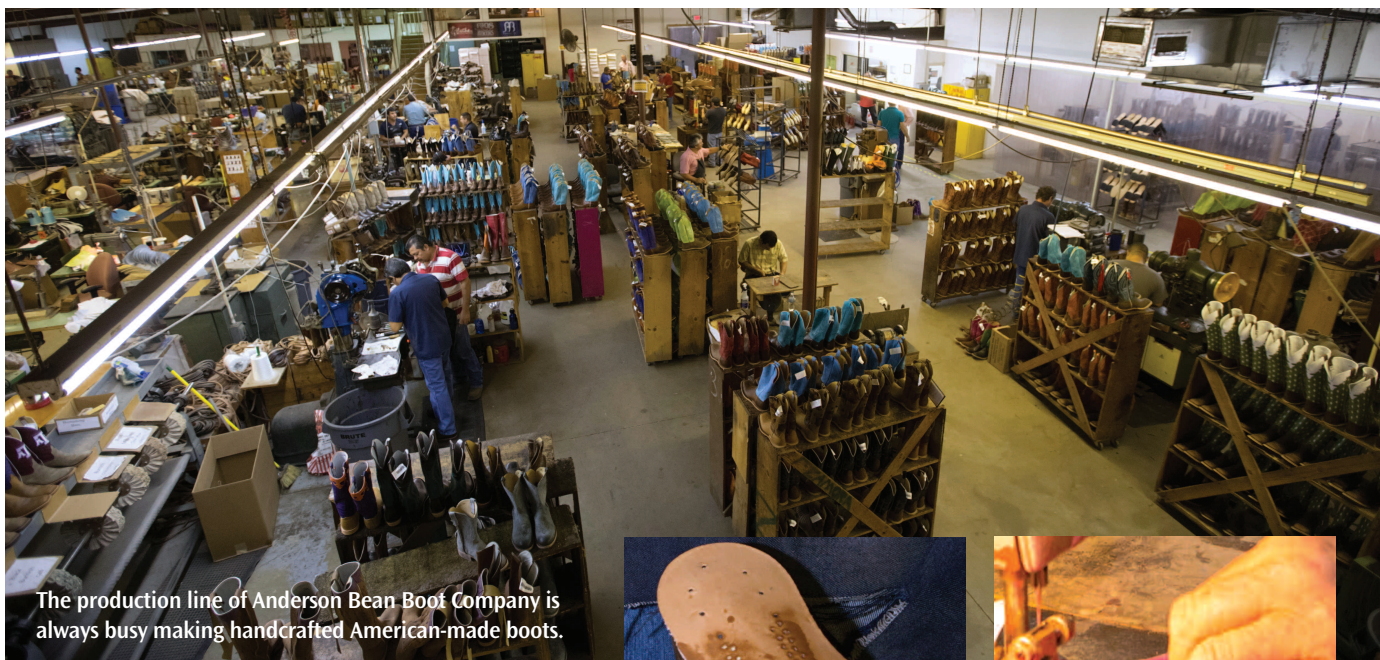
The boot's heel is built with a longer base so that the base will hit the edge of the stirrup before your instep runs into the stirrup, ensuring the foot does not slide through. The heel sticks out behind the back of the boot, featuring what is referred to as a “spur ledge” where a rider's spur can rest. This aids in keeping spurs from sliding down the heel when cueing the horse.

On the opposite end of the boot is the toe, which fashion dictates be square in today's reining horse industry.

“We use a military-type synthetic box toe so that if the horse steps on your toe, you can reach in and bump the toe back out and it won't damage the boot. Most boots are made with a solid box toe that can crush. Our goal is to have a boot that can go back to work,” says Evans.

To top off the foot, Anderson Bean sews on a double vamp, adding thickness to pad a rider's foot from the spur strapped across the arch. This also helps keep the spur strap from excessively wearing the vamp. For safety, the throat, or area where the foot slides into the boot, is soft enough to allow a rider to slide out if hung up.

All of this is put together with stitching and wooden pegs, thus ensuring no nails can tear socks or break through leather. Evans says that while the company's tried and true method of pegging and sealing soles works for most riders, those working in and out of the fine-grain footing in reining arenas brought a small problem to his attention.



The production line of Anderson Bean Boot Company is always busy making handcrafted American-made boots.

"We found that the fine arena dirt was getting between the arch and the sole in that area where the wooden sole pegs are located," he says. "Number one, we started going to a full welt with the boots, changed some glues and adhesives, and learned a lot from dealing with a group of people that was rough on our product.

"Instead of complaining about the customer, we worked together to create a boot that stood up to the daily wear and tear of a reiner."

Evans says that the NRHA membership was also instrumental in the company developing new sole styles that did not wear quickly.

"A leather sole is by far the best you can put on a cowboy boot, but we found that when you repeatedly get your boots wet washing horses and cleaning stalls, the sole gives up the tannins you put into it. The leather soles did not last as long or wear as well. Based on that feedback, we started working with reiners to come up with some new soles," he says.

The style that suits most NRHA members is a hybrid sole. The traditional leather sole is in place, but natural rubber covers the ball of the toe and heel. This small tweak enhanced the already popular product and ensured those purchasing Anderson Bean's got their money's worth.

#### DESIGNED FOR STYLE

Where a fashion boot may have the looks, it can't stand up in the arena. Anderson Bean proves that tough can also be pretty. Working with retailers that cater to the reining horse industry, the company produces what they call fashion-forward styles.

"The professionals are the style setters; they want a careful, specific look, and they give us clear guidance," Evans says. "Our retailers will do a small run of boots, 6 or 8 pairs, and when they see people like it, make a second order with maybe a new width for new customers.



One of the skilled craftsmen at Anderson Bean Boot Company using lemon wood pegs to secure the steel shank in place on a pair of  $\frac{3}{4}$  welted Anderson Bean Boots.



Each boot is made by hand. You can see here a set of tops are being stitched together. Attention to detail is important.

Typically, it is reiners that are buying the new boots and weighing in on colors. In addition to being a great platform to show the Western wear people our product, the association is a good testing and proving ground for new styles."

Reiners have not trended toward tall top boots like the cutting or cow horse industries. Instead, shorter tops and darker colored boots—like chocolate brown and black—continue to drive fashion. But the boot tops show flare. The reining clientele walks the line between a business bottom and a fashionable top, allowing customers to show off their style.

This mix of durability and panache makes Anderson Bean the boot choice for the NRHA's membership. In addition, the corporate partnership with the association and the boot company allows for Anderson Bean to provide boots as prizes at NRHA shows. No matter how many boots a rider has in their closet, no one turns down a free pair, especially not a pair of Anderson Bean!

"Winning a pair of boots is like winning gold, but your boots better not fall apart in a couple months! Anderson Bean has worked hard to create a quality product that suits the industry," says Evans. ♦