

PORTRAIT OF THE WEST

Fiona Hankins and baby Killian in Montana.

Words and photos by Rebecca Colnar Mott.



It is never too young to learn about ranching. That is the mantra of rancher Fiona Hankins with her son, Killian, born Oct. 1, 2023. The first-time mother, who is an integral part of the family ranch near Angela, Mont., wanted to continue helping after the beautiful boy arrived. She simply bundled him up with a front pack nestled on her chest inside her warm coat on one of Killian's first rides at fall shipping. The infant continued checking cattle horseback with his mom or riding alongside the feed truck throughout the winter. Last April, mom and babe demonstrated their roping skills during the family branding.

Fiona only takes her son along on a gentle horse and stays alert for potentially difficult situations. Killian enjoys riding—much preferring the gentle rhythm of the horse's gait to sitting in a car seat in a vehicle. With such an early start, Mom and Dad feel their son is well on his way to loving ranch life. ■



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