



Heads Up

Date: September 25, 1996
To: All Snell Certified Manufacturers
From: Edward B. Becker, Executive Director/Chief Engineer

This is the fourteenth of the Foundation's quarterly newsletters to the helmet manufacturing industry. The thirteenth was sent out last June. Comments and items for inclusion in subsequent issues are invited.

Anaheim Manufacturers' Meeting

The manufacturers' meeting took place Wednesday, September 18, 1996 in Anaheim, California, just prior to the Interbike Show. Dr. Fenner, Dr. Chilcott, Dr. Thomas, Gib Brown and Ed Becker represented the Foundation.

Dr. Chilcott opened the meeting and introduced Dr. Fenner, the Foundation's president, who welcomed the attendees. Ed Becker briefly discussed current Snell Standards activity, that is: the use of the ISO size O headform in all active standards and details of three draft standards currently in preparation.

Dr. Chilcott also discussed experiments under way to assess helmet ventilation. The approach involves placing sample helmets in an airstream and making direct measures of the air flow through vents and groups of vents cut into the helmet shell. The apparatus required is remarkably simple but it may well afford a timely and inexpensive means of optimizing vent configurations for helmet designs.

Dr. Thomas discussed Circumstances and Severity of Bicycle Injuries, the report from the Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center describing the multi-year study funded by a grant from the Snell memorial Foundation. This report, written by Rivara, Thompson and Thompson, provides an overview of the study, including its findings and conclusions. Detailed discussions of the same material will be appearing in scientific and medical journals for some time to come. This report, however, is immediately accessible to everyone interested in bicycle injury prevention and provides a useful digest of the most exhaustive study of bicycle injury performed to date.

Harborview Study

The multi-year study of bicycle injury performed by the Harborview Medical Center Injury Prevention and Research Center and funded by the Snell Memorial Foundation has been completed. Technical discussions of the study and its findings will be appearing in scientific and medical journals over the next few months. However, the investigators have prepared an overview of the study and the findings and conclusions which is accessible to everyone interested in bicycle injury prevention. Circumstances and Severity of Bicycle Injuries by Rivara, Thompson and Thompson has been posted on the internet on the Snell home page, <http://www.quiknet.com/snellit>.

ISO Size O Headform

The ISO O headform has been added to the set of headforms used in the B-90, B-95, M-95, and SA-95 standards. Headgear which are appropriate to the ISO O headform will be marked and tested on this headform. The use of this headform enables a fairer evaluation of the visual field for M-95 and SA-95 headgear.

Draft Standards

There are three draft standards currently in preparation: an equestrian helmet standard for headgear used in horseback riding, a standard for headgear used with low powered vehicles and a ski helmet standard. All three drafts will be sent out for review sometime in October.

Snell Web Site

The Snell Foundation Home Pages originated by Dr. Philip Graitcer on the Internet World Wide Web has merged with the Snell World Wide Web Site set up by Dr. Frank Lin at the Snell California offices. The Snell Web site is at <http://www.quiknet.com/~snellit> and includes information on the Foundation and its certification programs, lists of certified products, links to ftp downloads of Snell Standards and drafts and links to other web sites of interest including Dr. Graitcer's home pages for the WHO Bicycle Helmet Initiative.

Dr. Lin welcomes comments and suggestions regarding any aspect of the Web site.

Bicycle Helmet Buckles

During the administration of the B-90 and B-95 bicycle helmet programs the Foundation has become very familiar with certain models of plastic buckles widely used by helmet manufacturers. Our testing has shown that these various buckle models perform similarly across a wide variety of helmet models and retention system configurations. If a particular helmet model meets Snell requirements with one of these buckles, we have ample assurance that it will do so with any of the others. For this reason, we may allow bicycle helmet manufacturers to substitute from among these buckle types in specific certified products with little or no additional Snell testing.

Manufacturers of helmets certified to B-90, B-95 or N-94 configured with any of the following four buckle models may request in writing to substitute one of the other three buckles into the helmet configuration. Although the Foundation reserves the right to consider each case separately, for most applications, no additional testing will be necessary. Authorization for the substitution will be granted immediately by FAX or other timely communication.

Manufacturer	Model
ITW Nexus	TSK 63
ITW Nexus	Shock-Lock

ITW Nexus	bicycle helmet side-squeeze
National Molding	bicycle helmet side-squeeze

We will consider other buckle systems for this list, interested buckle manufacturers should contact the Foundation for information.

CSA Amendment for Children's Bicycle Helmets

I have written a critique of the amendment to the CSA Standard for bicycle helmets that sets up new requirements and test procedures for helmets intended for young children. The critique is available on the Internet or may be requested through this office.

In the critique and the following summary, I have attempted to deal completely, honestly and fairly with a difficult subject. If my remarks seem, at any point, gratuitously offensive, please allow me to apologize. The critique consists of seven pages discussing the technical aspects of the amendment with some background on the development and function of helmets and helmet standards. I attempt to show that:

1. the amendment rejects almost all current children's helmets and is therefore burdensome to both the industry and the public.
2. the amendment's benefits are, at best, uncertain.
3. there are real risks of increased rates of serious injury among children once the amendment is imposed.

Certified Product Lists

Manufacturers are required to notify the Foundation of all marketing and size designations under which each Snell Certified helmet is sold and distributed. We record these names and sizes in the Foundation's Certified products lists which are used for reference and which are distributed to groups and individuals on request.

Whenever a Snell labelled helmet is distributed under a new name, please advise Steve Johnson in writing of the new name and size designation and identify the original certified product. The ID number in the lower right corner of the Snell Certificate is preferred identification for recently certified helmets. Also, please advise Mr. Johnson whenever a marketing name is dropped or goes out of production.

Bulk Educational Materials

Manufacturers and others who may require large quantities of Snell brochures, hang tags and similar items should contact Ms. Zhang well in advance. Preparation of these materials requires long lead times.

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