



ISSUE 24

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The Quarterly Newsletter of the Snell Memorial Foundation

This is the twenty-third of the Foundation's quarterly newsletters to the helmet manufacturing industry. The twenty-second was sent out last February. Comments and items for inclusion in subsequent issues are invited.

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Australia Adds B-95

The Commonwealth of Australia recently enacted legislation that opens Australian markets to bicycle helmets certified to Snell B-95. This action should greatly simplify the compliance burdens of all Snell certified manufacturers bringing bicycle helmets into Australia.

We welcome the opportunity to work with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, Standards Australia, Quality Assurance Services and all the other members of the Australian safety community. We are confident that this partnership will increase the range of effective , low-cost bicycle helmets available to the Australian cycling public.

B-95 Standards to Continue

The Foundation's directors have reviewed the current status of bicycle helmets and have decided to continue the current B-95 programs. Plans to issue a B2000 standard have been tabled. The directors may revisit this matter but, for the foreseeable future, B-95 will remain the Foundation's most stringent bicycle helmet standard and program.

B-95 had been revised in the last two years to simplify compliance with the Consumer Product Safety Commission Bicycle Helmet Safety Standard. B-95 now specifies requirements for two classes of bicycle helmet: those for persons age 5 and older (B95A) and those for younger children and toddlers (B95C). Certification in either of these B-95 programs demonstrates compliance with the corresponding CPSC classification.

The Foundation and the industry have just finished consolidating these revisions and requalifying existing headgear. Given the magnitude of this effort and the significant advance that B-95 represents over other helmet standards, the directors concluded that no substantial changes are justified at this time.



Sacramento
Test Labs

Sacramento Test Labs

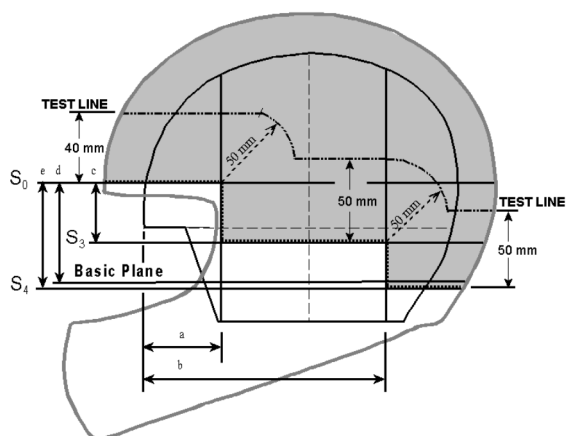
Manufacturers who require DOT or CPSC type testing but do not wish to participate in Snell Certification programs may soon submit samples for testing to Sacramento Test Labs. These samples will be tested at the same facility, by the same technicians and with the same rigor as those submitted for Snell certification.

Headgear tested under this rubric will not be subject to random sample testing and, for that reason, will not enjoy either the confidence or the recommendation of the Foundation's board of directors and staff. The Sacramento Test Labs denomination distinguishes between the simple testing service offered here and the complete and rigorous certification programs available from the Foundation.

Sacramento Test Labs will provide a complete and accurate testing service for those manufacturers' products which, for any reason, have been withheld from the Foundation's certification programs. Fee schedules are in preparation. Interested manufacturers are invited to contact this office for further information.

M2000 & SA2000 Drafts

The Foundation's directors have finalized the M2000 and SA2000 Standards. The most significant difference with current requirements is that the M and SA2000 have increased the impact test area. Helmets submitted for the '2000 standards must withstand impacts over an additional one centimeter strip in the brow region of the helmet.



This change in the impact test area, along with the recent standardization of the impact drop masses to 5.0 kg, means that current Snell test requirements are appreciably more stringent than those when the '95 standards were first introduced. However, these are not sweeping changes. The '2000 standards are part of a progression of small but steady improvements going back to the original Snell helmet standard of 1959. Many of the currently certified '95 helmet models will meet these new requirements already.

For these reasons, owners of recently purchased M-95 and SA-95 certified headgear need not replace them immediately. These helmets should continue to provide their wearers with premium levels of protection for some years to come.

Certification testing to the new standards has already begun but the M2000 and SA2000 programs will not take effect until sometime after August of 2000 when the first shipments of the M2000 and SA2000 labels will begin. This timing has been selected to make the new labels available for the beginning of the production cycle for the 2001 season.

Helmet models certified to the new standards also meet all the requirements of the '95 standards and will be included in those programs as well. Once the new labels are available, we will stop shipment of the '95 labels. Manufacturers may continue to use existing stocks of the '95 labels in their Certified helmets until March of 2001.



DOT Revision

The "Notice of Proposed Rule Making" introducing revisions to Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 218 is now expected by the fall of this year. FMVSS 218, also known as the DOT motorcycle helmet standard, has set the minimum adequate requirements for US street motorcycle helmets since the early 1970's. Except for a few procedural refinements, this standard is essentially the same as it was when it was first adapted from its ANSI Z90.1-1971 predecessor.

The notice announcing its first real overhaul has been awaited since 1997 and had been expected earlier this spring. When the notice appears in the Federal Register, it will invite comments on the draft rule making from interested parties. These comments will be reviewed and considered in the formulation of a Final Rule which might appear as early as the spring of 2000 and take effect later that year.

Snell Web Site

The Snell Foundation World Wide Web Site, <http://www.smf.org>, now includes more than thirty pages of helmet and head protection information. There are descriptions of the Foundation and its certification programs, lists of certified products, the texts of Snell Standards and drafts and links to other web sites of interest.

One of the primary purposes of the site is to acquaint the public with the importance of selecting and wearing the most effective protective headgear. Once the Foundation tests and certifies a helmet, we want people to wear it. If you manufacture or sell Snell certified helmets and you maintain an Internet web site, please contact [Mr. Stephen Johnson](#) or [Mr. Gib Brown](#) to see about establishing a link.

Pretest Information Forms

When submitting helmet samples for testing, it is essential that a properly filled in 'pretest information form' accompany them. The surest way to obtain proper and timely test results is to provide all the necessary information so that the samples can be received, logged, labeled and scheduled.

Blank forms and instructions for filling them out are available. Manufacturers are invited to modify and adapt them as necessary. The only essential is that we have sufficient information to perform and document the requested testing.

In particular, please double check the spelling of the model name, include all the sizes for which the helmet structure is intended, indicate the standard and test type and, finally the disposition of the tested samples. Although we recommend that manufacturers examine all failed samples in order to determine how best to improve their headgear, unless there is a specific request to return failed samples, they are routinely destroyed.



Snell Safety Education Center

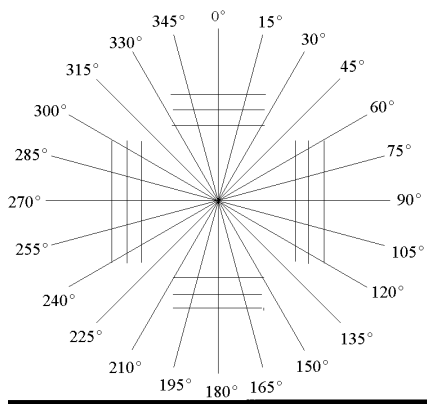
The Snell Safety Education Center (SSEC) has taken on all the tasks associated with preparation and distribution of videos, posters, brochures and similar materials promoting the correct selection and use of appropriate protective headgear. These functions have always been seen as a necessary part of the Foundation's overall mission but, in recent years, had created a considerable strain on our structure and resources.

SSEC, by virtue of its flexibility and charter, has the capabilities to perform this function and to cooperate closely with other organizations of similar interests. Currently, the Center is working with the the University of California, Davis, in a program promoting child safety across a broad front in the Sacramento area.

The Center is organized under Federal 501C3 regulations and is separate and distinct from the Foundation. The Center's president, Ms. Hong Zhang, welcomes inquiries and requests for assistance from community and national safety organizations.

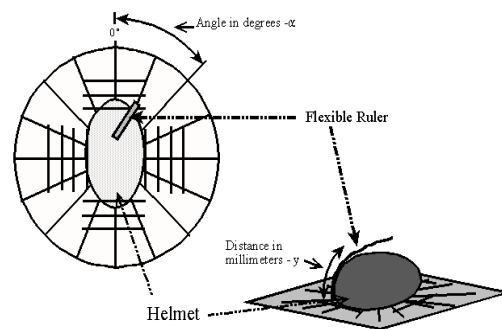
Impact Site Descriptions

Some of you may have noticed some numerals appended to the nominal impact sites (front, rear, left etc.) on Snell test reports, for example: Front @ 30, 255. "Front" conveys only a general sense of where the helmet was impacted, but the "30, 255" will locate the impact site within a few millimeters. Mr. Dean McGuffee explained the idea to us a few years ago and we've been using it ever since.



The helmet is placed on placed right side up on a flat surface that has been marked with a pattern of lines radiating from a single point. Each of these radials is labeled according to its angular displacement in degrees, clockwise from a selected 0 line. The pattern also includes some parallel lines that assist in centering the helmet over the radial pattern so that the center is midway between the front and rear edges of the helmet and midway between the left and right edges as well. When the helmet is correctly positioned, the 0 line will lie along the longitudinal plane of the helmet and project out from under the front edge.

With the helmet in position, the distance from the flat surface up to the impact site is measured with a flexible ruler. If necessary, the ruler is bent to lie along the upper surface of the helmet. The technician then notes the radial at which the base of the ruler contacts the flat surface. This radial position, in degrees, and the distance along the ruler, in millimeters, are the two values given in our site descriptions. Given this information, another technician can locate the impact site on an identical helmet with surprising accuracy simply by reversing the procedure.



Site = Front@ α , y

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