

BodyTeq Helmet Liner Keeping Your Cool

by Preston Pierce, PCI #847
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In late July 2005, I was contacted by Dale Lichtenstein, the President of BodyTeq Apparel, Inc. regarding a helmet liner his company had designed. Mr. Lichtenstein wanted his helmet liner tested in the grueling summer heat of Arizona and what better place than Chandler, Arizona. I jumped on the opportunity to test a product that had the potential to keep me cool during bicycle patrol in the 110-degree heat.

BodyTeq Apparel, Inc., based in Chicago, IL, has developed a line of garments and accessories that deliver extraordinary protection against the damaging effects of heat stress at play, recreation, and competitive sports. BodyTeq utilizes Hydroweave, a unique, high-performance fabric that eliminates the trade-off between protection and the wearer's comfort, safety, and endurance. Unlike other fabrics that perform well in a given environment, Hydroweave actually enhances the performance of the WEARER, as it continually protects against heat and fatigue through evaporation, while keeping the individual dry.

The actual Hydroweave fabric is composed of a patented three-layer design. It starts by combining special hydrophilic fibers (fibers that attract water) with hydrophobic fibers (fibers that repel water) into a batting core. The batting is sandwiched between a breathable outer shell and a thermally conductive inner lining, which provides durability, separates the wearer from moisture, and acts as the critical conduit for exchanging heat with cooling comfort. The keys to the Hydroweave fabric are the three steps needed to "activate" the helmet liner. First, you soak the liner in a container of cool water for five minutes to charge the absorbent fibers. Second, you remove the excess water by wringing out the garment, and third, you towel dry the inner lining and outer shell.

I received the helmet liner in August, which has some of the hottest days and weeks in Arizona. I tested it during August and September during both day and night patrol. The high temperatures ranged from 93-113°F, with 8-50% humidity. A variety of factors contributed to the overall performance of the helmet liner. First, temperature and humidity levels dictated how often the liner needed to be "recharged." When the temperature level was high and the humidity level was low, water needed to be added to the liner to maintain effective performance. However, when the temperature level was low and the humidity level was high, the helmet liner performed flawlessly for hours.

Another factor that affected the liner's performance was the amount of patrol time and miles ridden. Naturally, when it's extremely hot outside, the hours of patrol time are reduced due to heat stress and fatigue. I was initially skeptical of the claim by BodyTeq that the garment cools continuously in temperatures as high as 120°F for up to eight hours. To my surprise, the helmet liner did keep my head cool during my two months of patrol. It fit comfortably under my helmet and required only minimal adjustment. With a purchase price of \$18.95, which includes all shipping and handling, BodyTeq's helmet liner is a great buy for those long, hot days or nights. The product can be purchased on line at www.bodyteq.com or by calling 773-465-7665.

Preston was certified as an IPMBA Police Cyclist in 2004 and as an IPMBA Instructor in 2005. He can be reached at Preston.Pierce@ci.chandler.az.us.

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