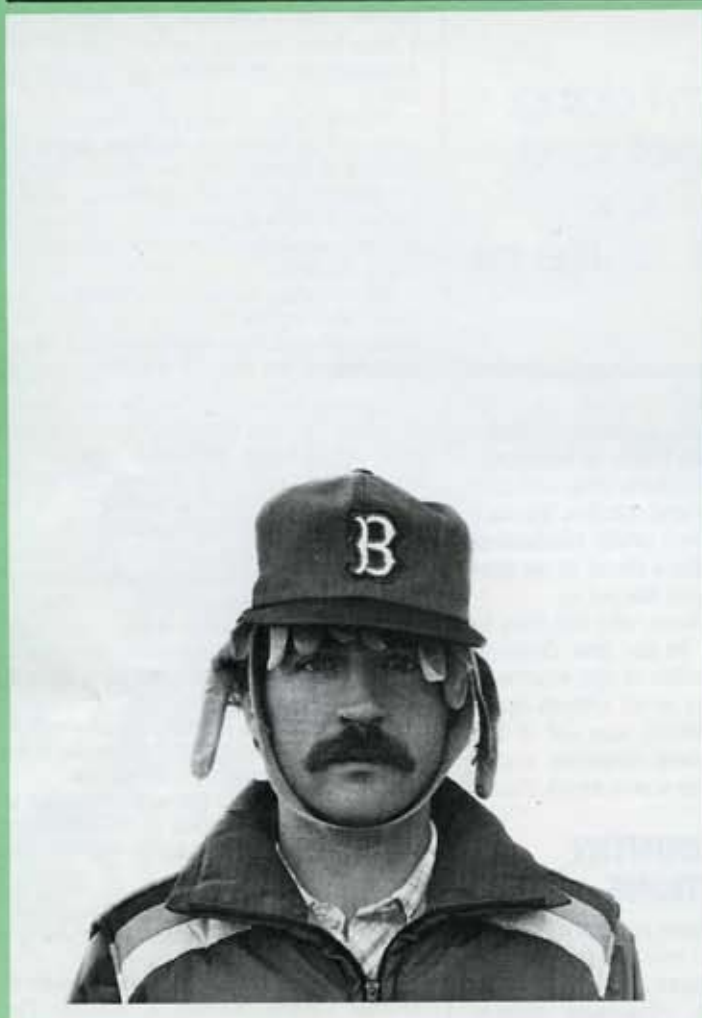


THE BIKECENTENNIAL AIRBAG HELMET

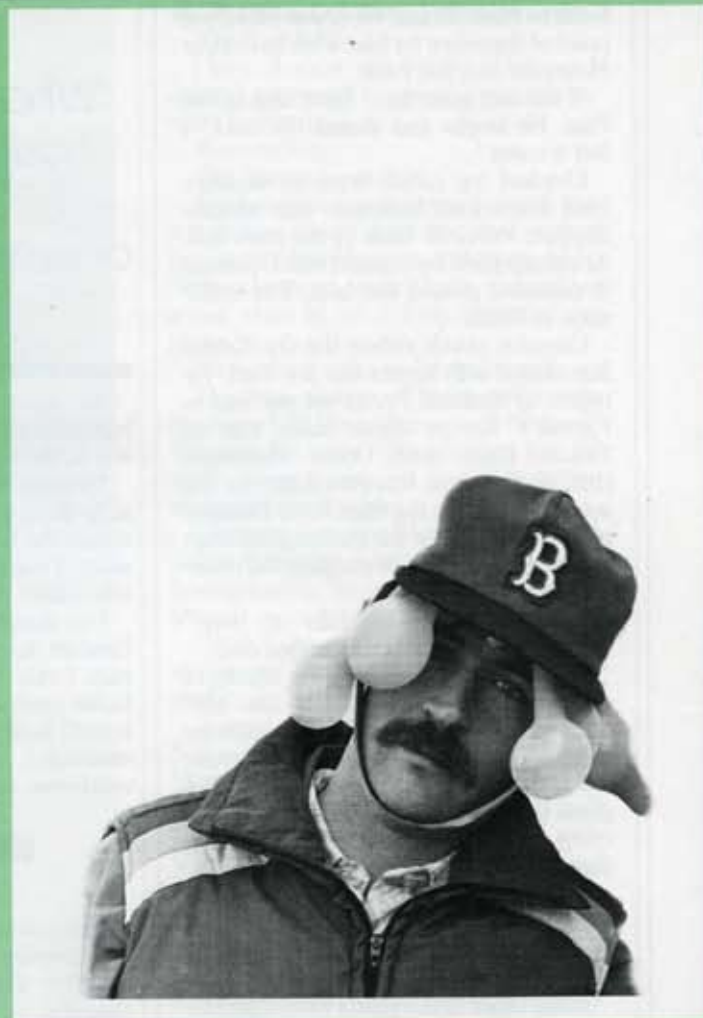
During the past decade, bicycle helmets have become widely accepted by bicyclists in the United States. Yet, many riders continue to shun them. Despite steady design improvements by helmet

manufacturers in recent years, comfort and appearance remain the biggest drawbacks cited by those cyclists who still refuse to protect their heads. In response to this problem, Bikecentennial's Research and Development Department has created the prototype for a com-

pletely new kind of head protection: the Air Bag Bicycle Helmet. Below, the magic of time-lapse photography freezes the action during an actual lab test of the prototype helmet by Bikecentennial staff member Mac McCoy.



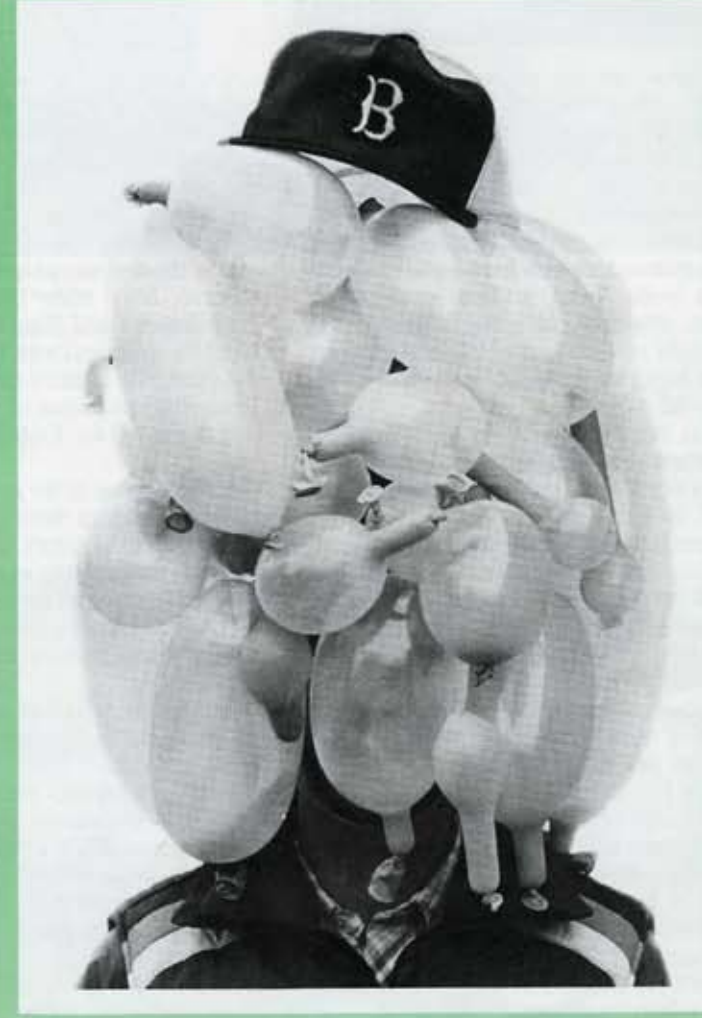
0.0
sec. The Air Bag Bicycle Helmet before inflation looks very much like, in this case, a normal baseball cap. Plans call for a variety of styles, including sombreros, berets, top hats, tam o'shanter, and ten-gallon cowboy hats.



0.1
sec. Inflation of the helmet is triggered by the change in head angle of the falling cyclist. This instantly fills the hidden air bags. Here, helmet tester McCoy simulates such a fall by inclining his head 30 degrees from horizontal.



0.5
sec. In an actual spill, the cyclist would still be headed for the ground. Obviously, inflation must occur rapidly. An earlier version of the Helmet required the rider to inflate the air bags using a rubber tube inserted in the mouth. The system was discarded as being too slow and unreliable.



0.9
sec. Upon contact with the ground, the Helmet is fully inflated and offers complete head protection. Over a period of time the bags deflate and the Helmet can then be removed. The Air Bag Bicycle Helmet is good for only a single use, and must then be replaced.

Mr. McCoy reports that the Air Bag Bicycle Helmet is proving to be both comfortable and discreet. Few people realize that he is wearing anything other than a common baseball cap. Due to the success of the initial testing of the Helmet, plans are already underway to expand the Air Bag line to include a belt, gloves, anklets, and knee pads. Total protection for the cyclist is

just around the corner thanks to the efforts of Bikecentennial's Research and Development Department. However, until these Air Bag products are generally available to the cycling public, Bikecentennial urges every cyclist to use an ANSI-approved helmet bearing the Z-90.4 sticker. These helmets are available at your local professional bicycle dealer.



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Photos by Greg Siple