

## Tim's Arai Helmet Review

A long time ago I bought a Honda motorcycle from a fellow orderly at a hospital I worked for. He sweetened the deal with a free helmet. When I picked it up he handed me a paper sack with the helmet in pieces all disassembled, he said he was going to paint it. I was kinda annoyed but I took my helmet and after some contemplation I decided I could make it work. I suppose I could have tossed the thing and bought a new one but I did not know too much about helmets back then. The first thing I discovered is it was too big so I had to improve the fit. I was also working for a carpet installer at the time and I took some scrap carpet padding and lined the inside of the shell so it was nicely padded and then I forced the Styrofoam liner back inside and filled the ear pockets with foam sponge inserts. The result was a very comfortable, ultra quiet snug helmet that would stay on my head at 100 mph with out the strap buckled. Yeah, I know what good is the helmet if it is not strapped on? That was not my main concern, back then I was looking for comfort.

One of the fastest ways to motorcycle fatigue is noise. The constant rush of wind in the ears is as bad as arguing children or barking dogs, it gets old quick. My custom made helmet was quiet. I wore that thing coast to coast and border to border for the next eight years. I remember the day in college I dropped it in the student center and it went like a black bowling ball down three sets of stairs.

My second helmet came from David Brown. I remember that name because I traded a pair of snow skis for his Lange Freestyles and a used **Arai** full face helmet. David's name was engraved in the front tips of the skis so I saw it every time I used them. But it's the **Arai** helmet I want to review. I had never worn a full face helmet before but I quickly learned to love it. It was comfortable. It had real leather trim and I wore it till the lining fell out and I kept getting the bits of white Styrofoam in my hair. That lid is hanging in the store today. It was pretty hot at times and the shield was not very sophisticated but I keep it as a reminder of good times.

My present **Arai** is a Vector Phill Reed model complete with venting, quick exchange shield and not only is it an exceptionally safe helmet exceeding all safety tests but it is highly wearable year round. I wore it to Sturgis in '07 when it was over 100 degrees just as I am wearing it now in the heat we have been having lately.

Today all the helmets are better than the one I first got in the paper bag, they even come with a better bag for storage. However, what I have learned is that fit and comfort still are the most important factors in choosing your helmet. If it fits well then you won't mind wearing it and if it just happens to look good as well then all the better.

Back when I was a street cop, I decided the pavement is basically a giant grinder and facial reconstructive surgery is not in my future. A really good helmet is my insurance policy and **Arai** gives me the protection I'm looking for.

Sharon has a full selection of **Arai**, Shoei, Scorpion and lots of others and she knows how to make sure they fit well and are comfortable. She's the one that talked me into mine.

Oh Yeah, that first helmet, I loaned it to a friend to use and he threw it away.