

NEW CRICKET HEAD PROTECTOR TESTING STANDARD

(More commonly known as the Helmet testing standard)



The ECB, PCA and the ICC have worked with BSi and head protector manufacturers to develop a new specification for the testing of head protection for cricketers. This specification has recently been approved by BSi Group, which is the national body responsible for producing appropriate safety standards in the UK. With cricketers and bowling machines able to deliver cricket balls at high speeds, and given the obvious importance of protecting against head injuries wherever possible, head protectors are an essential part of a cricketer's kit.

It is important that individuals understand how the new specification will apply to head protectors on sale from Spring/Summer 2014.

The key features of the new specification, **BS7928:2013**, are:

- 1 it now includes a facial contact projectile test that assesses for penetration of the ball through the faceguard, and contact of the faceguard onto the face, using realistic ball impact speeds and conditions; and
2. head protectors have been tested separately against men's and junior sized cricket balls (a five-and-a-half ounce ball and a four-and-three-quarter ounce ball, respectively).

Head protectors that have been tested against the new standard will be clearly labelled with "**BS7928:2013**" and will contain clear labelling setting out whether a head protector has been tested against (i) men's standard ball size of 5 ½ ounces, (ii) junior standard ball size of 4 ¾ ounces, or (iii) both men's and junior size balls.

The manufacturers have advised that there is currently no specific women's head protector and so there is no specific standard for women's cricket head protectors. As the size of the standard women's cricket ball is between the standard men and junior balls, it is recommended that women use head protectors that have been tested against both the men's and junior sized ball or at least against the junior size ball (as the smaller ball could potentially get through the gap above the face guard on a men's head protector).

From 30 June 2014, the old BSI standard for cricket head protectors (**BS7928:1998**) will be withdrawn and the ECB therefore recommends that all new head protectors brought to market are tested against the new standard. However, head protectors which have already been tested against the old standard can and will continue to be available for sale and will not be withdrawn from the market.

In light of this, the ECB has issued this guidance to ensure that the public understands the meaning and merits of the new specification (and consequent labelling that will soon be introduced) and therefore to enable the public to make an informed decision as to which head protector to use.

Finally, whilst the ECB considers that head protectors are an essential part of a cricketer's kit to mitigate the risk of injury, it must be remembered that wearing a head protector and faceguard (whether or not it has been tested against the new standard) cannot always prevent death, injury or disability.

For further information, please contact helmets@ecb.co.uk

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