

Give it some wellie

Roger Bisby puts on a pair of Buckbootz and goes in search of wet challenges.

Some years ago I took a pair of Buckler leather workboots for a trek in the Pyrenees. Nobody in their right mind would choose steel toe caps for hiking boots but I wanted to see just how comfortable they were. They were, in fact, as comfortable as regular hiking boots. Now Buckler has sent me some of its neoprene rubber waterproof safety boots to test. I am not taking them up a mountain but I managed to find some places where a pair of wellies would be fully tested.

These boots have undergone all the relevant safety tests and the codes are detailed in the user information. The toe cap is strong but, unlike some safety Wellingtons, it doesn't make it feel clumpy.

Buck the trend

The big story with these boots, however, is the Airmesh neoprene liner, which is bonded to the rubber. This means it doesn't get ruffled up like some liners and it provides warmth and comfort like you wouldn't believe. Neoprene is the material used in wet suits, and if it can keep divers and surfers warm in a winter sea it will do wonders for your feet. The liner is constructed of vertical fibres which are



ROGER SAYS...

"I take a lot of new products out on site and am well used to builders initial scepticism but when I took these Buckbootz out on site everyone loved them instantly and wanted to know where to get a pair. I put them on to a local stockist and he sold 10 pairs to that one site. This product is going to be a very big success.."

like thousands of chimneys allowing moisture to travel up and out. This Airmesh lining is used in quality running shoes. They give you a tiny sample of the liner to play with, which I blew into, and it really does let lots of air through. The liner will carry moisture out of the boot. It is so comfortable I even tried the boots without socks just to see if there were any rough seams and how it felt standing in deep cold water. The liner also stops your feet sliding around inside the boot so you feel a lot more sure-footed.

As well as the neoprene there is a detachable insole, which can be replaced, so you aren't likely to wear the liner through. It is also a hi vis orange, which might seem unnecessary, but you can turn

the top down to create a hi vis band around the top. Personally, I would rather keep the liner on the inside of the boot and hugging my calf to keep the muck out, but a lot of the guys on site preferred the turn down.

If you hate wearing wellies to work then I really urge you to try these, though calling them Wellington boots is a bit like calling a Porsche 911 a horseless carriage. Besides, the Duke of Wellington had nothing whatsoever to do with the rubber boot which now bears his name. It was, in fact, the invention of Henry Lee Norris. This unsung hero of the footwear industry manufactured his rubber boots in Scotland and supplied over a million pairs for the troops fighting in the water-logged trenches of the First World War. If they had been issued with neoprene lined boots then 'trench foot' would have been unheard of.

MORE INFORMATION

To request more information on Buckler boots, circle readerlink 207