

Trendsetter

Mark Baker tries the new Trend Air/Pro Airshield Pro Respirator on for size to see how it shapes up in the workshop



PHOTOGRAPHS: GMC/ANTHONY BAILEY

Here's the dilemma: whether to cover your entire face with a respirator, feel claustrophobic and risk 'Darth Vader' cracks from your mates, or to look cooler and more comfortable in an ordinary mask and risk inhaling fine and possibly toxic dust along with assault by flying wood chips.

Not so much of a dilemma after all is it, put like that!

So if we take it as a given that a full-face respirator will do what it says on the box, we are left with the gurning pals and our own personal comfort zone. I have to admit that, while I wear a respirator for safety's sake, up until now, I have never relished the prospect of donning it.

I own – and use – the Airshield model that the 230V Air/Pro Airshield Pro Respirator replaces, so am I going to get a positive wearing experience from this new one? I'm looking for comfort, health and efficiency at a reasonable price.

AT A GLANCE

- Offers double the protection of its predecessor
- Low-energy impact visor
- 98% filter efficiency
- Improved face-seal and hood
- Attachment points for optional ear defenders
- Components positioned for optimum centre of gravity
- Motor positioned away from forehead
- Functional components positioned away from brow
- Single rechargeable Ni-Mh 8-hour removable battery pack
- Replaceable visor
- Twin filters
- Removable brow guard allows access to components
- Pre-use airflow go/no-go indicator

IN USE

With the battery, motor, face shield and head guard sitting effectively on top of your head, the old-style respirators – of which the last Airshield was just one – could cause such a neck ache and feeling of being closed in that after a couple of hours, I always felt like removing the face shield and abandoning the job. But this new Airshield is light years away from



The airshield has the option of attaching ear defenders

its predecessor. The balance is better, I was able to work for four hours without neck fatigue, and could have gone on for longer. There's a feeling of more space inside it and an impression of more air blowing across the face. It's a massive improvement on the old version and one of the least expensive PPE (personal protective equipment) respirators available today. In terms of value for money and performance, I wouldn't hesitate to give this product a full five out of five stars with four out of five for build quality.

The Airshield is sold with an 8-hour battery, charger, pair of THP2 fine filters, an airflow indicator, clear visor overlay and a handy storage case. **F&C**

THE NUMBERS

TREND AIRSHIELD PRO RESPIRATOR
PRICE £233.82 inc VAT

Airflow 160 l/min
Airflow fully charged 200 l/min
Headband size 520-620mm
Motor sound level 70dB
Battery 8 hours
Weight 995g
Power 230V
Eye protection BS EN 166 (low energy impact)
Respiratory protection (NPF50) to BS EN 12941 THP2

Contact Trend Machinery and Cutting Tools Ltd
Tel 0800 487363
Website www.trend-uk.com