

FOLLOWING A TREND

Seeking a breath of fresh air in the workshop, **Colin Simpson** puts Trend's popular respirator through its paces



COLIN SIMPSON



The Trend battery-powered Airshield respirator has been around for some years now and has proved to be very popular with both woodturners – like myself – and woodworkers alike. So what makes it such a popular model? I decided to get one to try it out.

The Airshield comes complete with a four-hour NiCad rechargeable battery, a battery charger, an airflow indicator, a visor overlay and a soft plastic drawstring bag in which to store the helmet.

The respirator itself has a pre-filter and a fine filter giving respiratory protection to BS EN 146 THP2 and the flip-up visor is made of polycarbonate and is to BS EN 166, giving medium energy-impact eye protection. The manual says the battery should be charged for 24 hours initially,



and subsequently charged from fully discharged, a process of 14 hours or 1.5 hours for every hour of use.

I can imagine that this charging time could be something of a pain to many of you, but the helmet provides space for a second battery, increasing its use time to eight hours.

The Airshield is designed to give a constant flow of filtered air over the face, and a soft face seal ensures that there is a greater air pressure inside the helmet than outside; this positive pressure prevents dust from entering the visor.

The well-padded headband is fully adjustable.

IN USE

The helmet felt very comfortable and I had good visibility. It is relatively quiet, although I thought the noise of the motor might be an irritant initially. However, I soon became used to it – after all, the noise of my dust extractor and the electric drill I use for power sanding is much louder.

The helmet weighs about 730 grams; I used it for several hours at my lathe and was quite happy with this weight. I am aware that many of you wear glasses and so I put mine on under the helmet. I am happy to report that these did not fog up,

nor did they restrict me in anyway. I have to say that I normally use a respirator that is connected to a filtered fresh air supply through a hose connected to an inlet in my workshop ceiling.

This is like being connected by an umbilical cord to the workshop, so I enjoyed the freedom that the Trend Airshield gave me. Spares are readily available and all parts, including the filters, are easily changed.

THE VERDICT

All in all I liked the helmet, although I was a little disappointed with the charge time required by the batteries. If this bothers you it could be addressed to some extent by replacing the NiCad battery with NiMd.

If you are in the market for a powered respirator then the Trend Airshield is worth consideration.

PRICE & CONTACTS

Price: around £195 inc VAT, but it is worth shopping around
Website:
www.trendmachinery.co.uk