

Inside Long Island business

Long Island firm's new helmet looks like a hat

Monday January 23, 2012 11:11 AM By Joseph Mallia



Crasche New York, a Woodbury company, has launched a line of protective -- and fashionable -- headgear for active sports participants.

The Crasche hat is a helmet, in the sense that its hard inserts are said to offer protection in the event of a fall or impact. Yet it looks like a knit cap.

"The Crasche hat is ideal for people who should wear a helmet, but do not," the company said Monday in a news release.

"It can be worn by skiers, snowboarders, bicyclists, hikers, skateboarders, roller bladers and for athletes in other sports who usually do not wear helmets, such as girls lacrosse, girls field hockey and touch football," Crasche said.

With inserts made of polycarbonate plastic and neoprene rubber, the hats retail on the company's website for \$24.95 and are available in eight colors.

The company also said the hat can be worn by law enforcement or military personnel in "situations where head protection would be beneficial, but a helmet may not be practical."

The helmet's designer, Robert Emmett, got the idea after a bad fall while bicycling without a helmet. Luckily, he landed on grass.

"I knew then it was time to get a helmet, but I never did," Emmett said in the news statement. "Instead, I decided to create a hat that would offer some impact protection, but would have enough style so that people like me would wear it."

The hats can be machine-washed, after removing the protective inserts.

The company says the inserts' outer layer is "an extremely strong polycarbonate plastic, the same material used to make bulletproof glass," while the inner layer of neoprene has air bubbles trapped inside to help cushion it and spread the impact in case of an accident.

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