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**Hard Knox... a brief history of
Planet Knox, innovators in impact
protection for a quarter of a century.**

Whatever else
don't forget
your Knox



World leaders in
body protection systems

Foreword

Knox is a dynamic and pro-active company, specialising in the design and manufacture of impact protection for use across a wide range of high-risk sports.

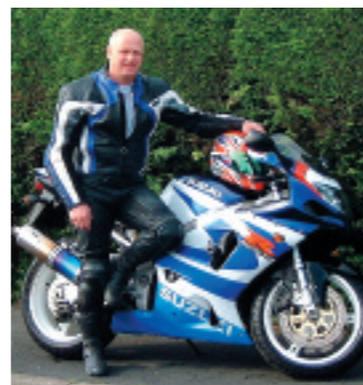
The company was the first in the world to gain CE approval for impact protection and is now widely recognised as a brand leader in some sports.

In house testing facilities enable Knox to implement extensive Research and Development programmes, which help to ensure that their products are technically superior and that the quality is consistent.

In business you are normally successful through being in the right place at the right time, but the Knox story begins with me being in the wrong place at the wrong time – this was an enterprise that began by accident!

We hope that this brief history of Planet Knox will demonstrate that our company has thrived by embracing high standards and responding the needs of our customers. Perhaps most of all, Knox is still driven by the passion for motorcycling that led to its creation. Ride safely!

Geoff Travell
Managing Director
Planet Knox



“ In 1981 I was an aspiring racer with an international licence. This was in the days when you could still turn up at a foreign GP in a transit van and talk the organiser into letting you race. ”

“ We went to the British GP at Silverstone with a van full of armour and had GP racers queuing up to buy it ” recalls Geoff Travell.

Roger Marshall and Wayne Gardner discovering another use for one of our first back protectors in the early 1980's.



A Lucky Accident

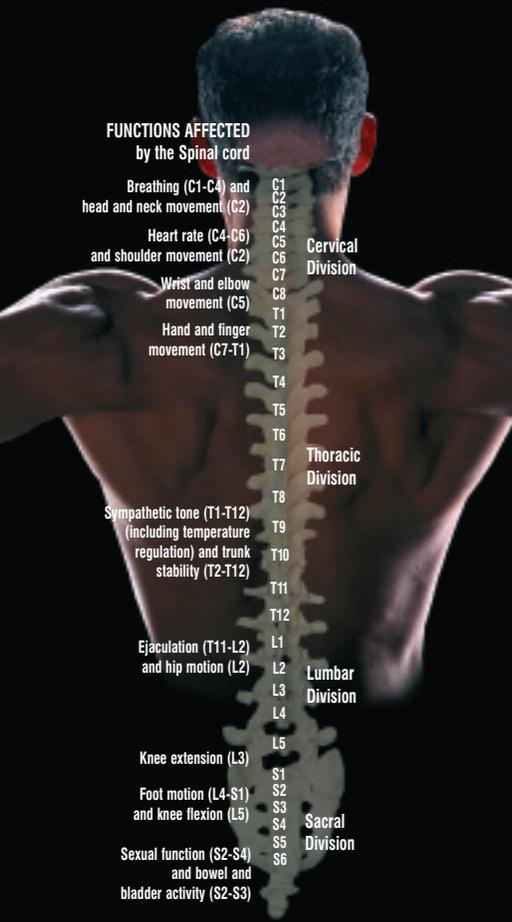
Geoff Travell raced for fun, working as an upholsterer to fund his passion and hoping to make the grade and go professional. Then disaster struck, when he had a big accident on his Yamaha TZ350 at the notoriously fast Snetterton circuit in Norfolk. At that time no armour existed, so during recovery he used his knowledge of fabric and foam to develop the first armour for sale in the UK. The following year Geoff was ready to launch his first back protector, under the brand name ProTek.

Between 1983-1987 ProTek forged ahead with the development of their range of protection for motorcyclists, primarily using data collected from racers. During the 1980's only racers bought armour, but Geoff and his colleagues believed that most motorcyclists would buy clothing fitted with armour, if only it were available. However, they were unable to convince any clothing manufacturers to incorporate ProTek armour in their products, so they decided to make their own, which was unveiled at the 1988 Motorcycle Trade Show.

The ProTek armoured jacket was greeted with enthusiasm and it won the Motorcycle Industry Award for “Best Safety Product”. This should have propelled ProTek into the big time, but the reality was to be somewhat different.

Not only was their idea copied, their armour was mercilessly copied too. At the time there were not recognised standards for motorcycle protectors, so it was very simple for clothing brands to equip their garments with look -a-like products, the majority of which were completely untested.

Protect your Freedom



Standard Practice

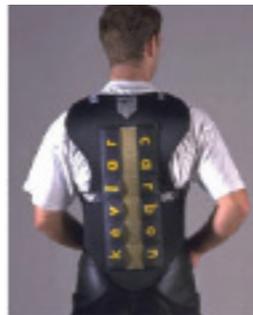
ProTek began campaigning to raise rider awareness of the benefits of wearing body armour, not just for racers but also for anyone riding on the road.

Then something remarkable happened. In 1992 the European Commission announced that it would introduce a Personal Protective Equipment [PPE] Directive in three years time. Protectors for motorcyclists would fall under the scope of this and by 1995 would have to meet a standard to be decided.

This caused a state of near panic in the motorcycle industry, particularly for companies who lacked strong technical expertise. Geoff Travell embraced the announcement with enthusiasm and in 1994 he was appointed as the UK representative to EU Standards-making committee.

In 1995 PPE Directive become EU law, meaning that ALL protection for motorcyclists MUST be CE approved. To obtain the CE mark, protective equipment had to be tested and approved by a recognised testing house.

Despite having had three years to prepare, the vast majority of motorcycle clothing was still fitted with non-approved armour!



Knox is Born

In 1995, while the rest of the motorcycle industry was struggling to come to terms with the fact the PPE Directive was now the law, ProTek was re-launched as Knox - the first motorcycle armour to be CE-approved in the world. This was swiftly followed by the introduction of the first CE-approved back protector.

From new premises in the Cumbrian mining town of Aspatria the Company continued to innovate, always experimenting with new materials. The KC100 back protector featured carbon/Kevlar reinforcement, providing abrasion resistance in the event of the outer jacket ripping open, which was another first from Knox.

In the field of body armour, Knox progressed by introducing lightweight polypropylene honeycomb cells that work like crumple zones. Once developed for limb protectors, Knox incorporated the honeycomb cells into their KC2000 series back protectors, effectively doubling their ability to absorb energy from an impact.

The KC2000 was also revolutionary in that it was available in a wide selection of sizes to suit road and track use for both men and women.

By 1999 the Company had outgrown its facility in Aspatria and moved into a substantial new industrial unit just a few miles down the road in Cockermouth, the hometown of poet William Wordsworth and Bounty mutineer Fletcher Christian. The millennium ended on a high note when Knox was awarded the prestigious Motor Cycle News Award [clothing category] for its revolutionary roll-up Stowaway back protector.

Knox Advance X – 1997





New Millennium – New Message

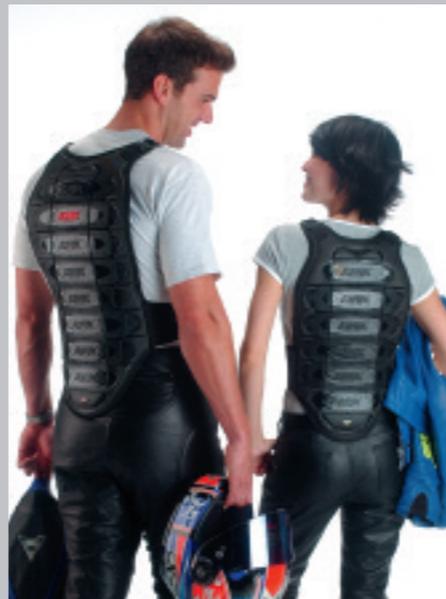
Knox began the new millennium determined to raise awareness among road riders of the benefits of back protection and commenced a determined campaign of advertising and public relations activity, including sponsorship of high profile motorcycle racers like the late Steve Hislop.

Knox Advance Armour received another MCN industry award in 2000 and over the following years the specialist motorcycle press increasingly endorsed the use of back protectors. The company's commitment to R & D continued with the introduction of the Ricochet range of back protectors. These combined the best aspects of 'soft' armour (energy absorption) and 'hard shell' (resistance to penetration). However, the Ricochet was also produced in the widest choice of sizes available on the market, offering protection to men, women and children of all sizes.

For the 2004 British Superbike season Knox sponsored veteran racer John Reynolds, who proceeded to win the Championship on his Rizla Suzuki. As a result of this Knox was approached by the Government to be official safety partner in its "Think!" campaign, which was aimed at increasing awareness of safety issues among Britain's 1 million motorcyclists.

In the same year, 2005, Knox launched its revolutionary Contour back protector, which was ultra light weight, offered class leading impact absorption and followed the shape of the spine for unmatched comfort. Knox also sponsored James Ellison, riding for WCM Blata in Moto GP.

The technically advanced Ricochet range of back protectors



Today, 25 years after Geoff Travell's crash at Snetterton, Knox is recognised as world leaders in impact protection for motorcyclists, with its own test -rig at its factory in North West England, so it can assess all products in-house. Knox protectors are fitted by many of the leading clothing brands and the Company offers the biggest choice of back-protector designs in the widest selection of sizes available today.

Knox supplies back protectors to many top racers, including James Ellison in MOTOGP and Gregorio Lavilla and continues its association with the "Think!" campaign. In 2007 Knox will be closely supporting the First Bike on Scene training courses, which are approved by the Royal College of Surgeons! With its base in the core motorcycle market, Knox is expanding its sales and marketing teams to develop its products in the mountain bike, equestrian and ski markets.

James Ellison – MOTOGP 2006

