

## **Trek Sued Over WaveCel Helmet Safety Claims**

A New York man recently filed a lawsuit against Trek for “false, deceptive and misleading” claims about the Trek WaveCel helmet’s concussion mitigation technology, according to a January 9, 2021 article published on the VeloNews.com website. What’s interesting is that the plaintiff is trying to get the lawsuit certified as a class action. In general, class-action lawsuits produce money not only for the class of people who are the alleged victims but for the lawyers as well. The lawyers for the plaintiff will have to prove to the satisfaction of a judge that their claim merits being certified as a class action.

The helmet was released in 2019, and the lawsuit claims Trek touted it as the “most significant advancement and cycling in the past 30 years.” It further alleges that Trek claims WaveCel is up to 48 times more effective in providing head injury protection than its competitors. The VeloNews article references the assertions in the lawsuit that the authors of the study Trek relied upon for its claims had a financial interest. Furthermore, the lawsuit states that Trek did not actually use a Bontrager helmet for their testing but used a Scott ARX fitted with WaveCel technology.

Like you, I have no idea whether there is any merit or truth to the allegations made by the lawsuit. What we read has been filtered through media outlets.

When the WaveCel helmet was first introduced, I read the statistic quoted in the lawsuit about its concussion mitigation ability and found it to be pretty amazing. I was curious what they used to prove the “48 times more effective” conclusion. I never found the original study. I did find people discussing how difficult it is to compare Trek’s claims since there is no unified testing protocol for each manufacturer. It means they used their own testing. That’s all fine. I’m not aware of an ‘apples to apples’ test of the WaveCel helmet against MIPS for instance.

To a certain extent it doesn’t matter a great deal to me. I’ve always felt it was difficult to evaluate a product based on the manufacturer’s representations. But we can look to independent third parties we trust that do helmet testing.

You may recall that we recently did a livestream interview with Dr. Miller of the Virginia Tech Helmet Laboratory. Their staff applies one consistent test to each helmet provided by each manufacturer. They rate the helmets according to how they perform in comparison to one another. Their highest rating is a Five Star. Two Bontrager WaveCel helmets are in Virginia Tech's top ten. I would urge you to go to the website (<https://helmet.beam.vt.edu/>) and read more about the topic.

I'll leave it to the courts to resolve the claims made by this most recent lawsuit. Personally, I like the Trek helmet and wear one for my daily riding. I also have confidence in the [MIPS technology](#) that's incorporated into helmets my wife and I wear. My Trek helmet is painted neon yellow, which I prefer for visibility.

WaveCel and MIPS are both in the top ten of the Virginia Tech list. I'm not personally concerned one way or the other about the allegations made in this lawsuit, and I hope you won't be either. I would be amazed if Trek did not have data to support its marketing claims. Do your own research. It would be a mistake to stop wearing the helmet based simply on one lawsuit.

*Jim Dodson is an experienced bicycle accident lawyer, cyclist and bicycle safety advocate who has been representing accident victims for over 25 years. Although his primary office is in Clearwater, he represents injury victims throughout Florida. He is the author of the [Florida Bicycle Accident Handbook](#) which answers the most commonly asked questions by injured cyclists. If you have questions about a Florida cycling accident this valuable resource is available to you absolutely free of charge at [www.jimdodsonlaw.com](http://www.jimdodsonlaw.com).*

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