



## Cairns N5A Leather Helmet

### **GENERAL MAINTENANCE**

As a general rule, always remember that your leather fire helmet is made of the skin of an American steer and while this animal grows very tough hide it generally has the same limitations as your own skin.

Contact should be avoided with all strong acids or alkalis in order to avoid attacking the leather and strong solvents, such as acetone and lacquer thinner, in order to avoid attacking the paint finish. The leather does not have any oil or preservative in it. None should be added. The leather fibers have been impregnated with a hardening agent and should not be softened with such items as silicone leather preservative or Neet's Foot Oil.

The conditions that are most dangerous to leather fire hats are exposure of the leather itself to drying and to a continuous cycle of wetting and drying. This means that all bare leather should be covered at all times with either a spot of shellac or a spot of paint. Left to sit in an overheated area such as a radiator of the back of an automobile, the leather will shrink up and twist and curl very much as you own skin would under these conditions.

Unlike the human skin the thick steer hide can withstand considerable heat over short periods of time. The leather has performed very well in atmospheres approximating 300 F for upwards of 20 to 30 minutes.

### **CLEANING AND REFUSRSIBING:**

After each use, the helmet should be rinsed off with clean water to get ride of all dirt and debris. At this time it could be washed with a mild detergent and lukewarm water to more actively remove the grime of fire.

To remove drippings of tar, the leather helmet can be cleaned with the kind of tar remover used in the automotive industry. The DuPont Company has a product for this use. Other spots can be cleaned with alcohol if an organic solvent is required.

After a good cleaning, and when the paint finish appears dull and lusterless a good finish with self-polishing was will bring back the new appearance to the paint finish.

## **PAINTING**

The following procedures are suggested for those wishing to repaint a structurally sound N5A/5A New Yorker or N6A1 Houston leather helmet. If there is any question concerning the serviceability of the helmet or if you would like Cairns to inspect and repaint the helmet, please contact the factory.

1. Before proceeding, inspect the helmet for damage. If there is any sign of brunt or broken stitching, soft or cut leather, cracked leather, etc, the helmet should be repaired before proceeding.
2. Remove front piece and put aside.
3. Clean off the helmet with soap and water to remove as much surface dirt as possible. Use the minimum amount of water possible.
4. Roughen the entire surface of the helmet with fine sand paper, taking care to avoid excess sanding of the stitching.
5. Mask off all areas that you do not wish to be painted.
6. With all surfaces of the helmet thoroughly dry and clean, apply the first coat of paint.
7. Allow the helmet to dry thoroughly and apply the 2<sup>nd</sup> coat of paint.
8. After the second coat of paint is completely dry, the helmet is ready to return to service.

## **RECOMMENDATED PAINT COLORS**

Use: Sherwin Williams-Kem Lustral Enamel

Primer Gray	E61 A 45
Primer White	E61 W 12
Primer Red	E61 R 26
Gloss Black	F65 B 1
Gloss White	F65 W 1
Lemon Yellow	F65 Y 44
Vermilion (Red)	F65 R 1
Bright Blue	F65 L 10

## **WAIVER**

1. Due to the lack of control over conditions and methods used, MSA/Cairns & Brothers, Inc cannot guarantee the result of repainting helmets when performed in the field.
2. Re-printed from MSA/Cairns
3. For more information contact MSA Customer Service at:

1-877-MSA-FIRE

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