

# Wear Testing the Haix Black Eagle Tactical 20 Boots

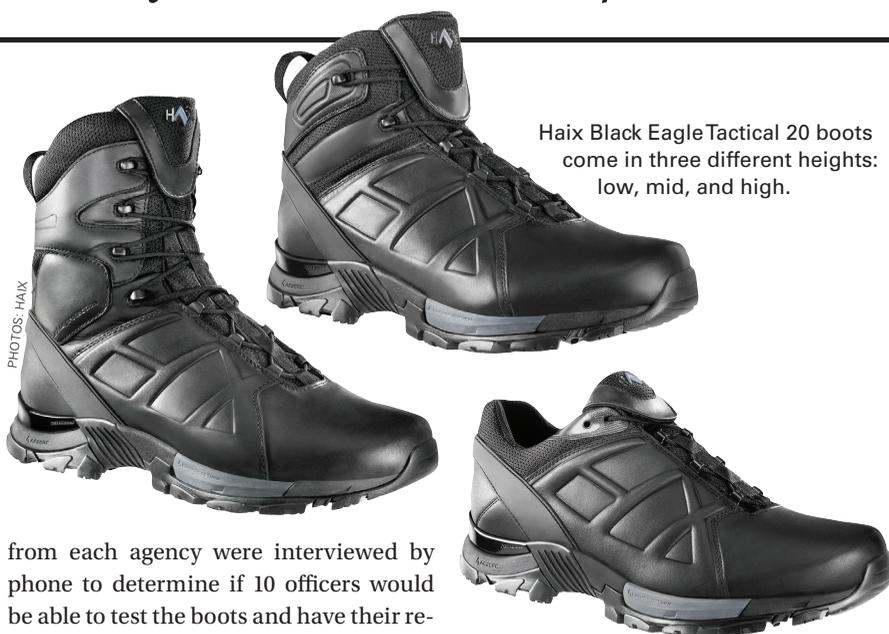
*Officers from three different agencies participated in a wear test of Haix footwear on duty and shared their experience.*

MELANIE BASICH

Earlier this year, Haix worked with POLICE Magazine to launch a contest to find agencies to wear test their Black Eagle Tactical 20 boots and provide feedback. Of the many departments that applied, a lucky three were selected.

Back in March, agencies with 150 or more sworn officers were invited to submit an application for the test by May 31. The goal was to find departments in different areas of the country with a range of officers performing different duties, such as street patrol, boat patrol, SWAT, K-9 handling, and training. This way they could test how well the boots performed in different environments under different conditions.

Haix reviewed the applications and first narrowed the list down to about 15 potential winners. Then representatives



Haix Black Eagle Tactical 20 boots come in three different heights: low, mid, and high.

from each agency were interviewed by phone to determine if 10 officers would be able to test the boots and have their responses appear in the magazine.

Haix ultimately selected the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, Plymouth County (MA) Sheriff's Depart-

ment, and Westchester County (NY) Police Department to conduct the wear test. The three winning agencies each received 10 free pairs of Haix Black Eagle Tactical 20 boots in a choice of low (shoe), mid (6-inch), or high (8-inch) models, depending on the agencies' footwear requirements. Haix Black Eagle Tactical 20s are built on an athletic shoe platform with an all-leather upper and are designed to be lightweight, comfortable, slip-resistant, and waterproof for daily duty wear. They feature Gore-Tex for weather resistance and a 2-zone lacing system as well as Sun Reflect technology, which reduces the heating effect of the upper leather by direct sunlight. Sunlight is reflected by the



Officers who wear tested the boots reported on how well they performed during tasks such as driving.

PHOTOS: INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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leather, keeping the leather and the feet cooler.

Officers participating in the wear test were asked to complete a questionnaire detailing their impressions of the boots and how well the boots served their duty needs. The following is a summary of the officers' reviews.

Based on their responses, wear testers were pleased with the Black Eagle Tactical 20 boots' weight, athletic feel, waterproofness, and traction across different details and environments, with an overall average rating of 4.65 out of a possible 5.00 and a 4.73 average for overall impressions of the boot.

Categories included wear comfort, fit and comfort for different activities, and performance in different situations. Impressively, all but two officers reported that the boot was comfortable right out of the box.

Law enforcement officers encounter all types of environments, requiring hard-working footwear. Wear testers who rely



PHOTO: PLYMOUTH COUNTY (MA) SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Deputies in Plymouth County, MA, put Haix boots through their paces on often challenging terrain.

on their boots for slip resistance in wet and uneven terrain on duty reported they were happy with the boots' performance. A Plymouth County K-9 handler said of the 8-inch models, "The boots worked great on tracks and in training on all terrain. The waterproof boots worked great when running in the woods with my dog." An officer with the Westchester Police Department's Marine Unit said, "They are very sure foot-

ed and grip the surface well, including the deck surface and the docks." One Indianapolis officer reported that he wore his Haix boots during firearms training in the rain and they performed well, keeping his feet comfortable, supported, and dry even after hours of activity in standing water.

Instructors also rated the boots favorably, especially for comfort during long periods of wear. "From standing in front of the classroom lecturing to standing over recruits on the range for hour after hour they offered stability and comfort, as well as flexibility during demos," said a Westchester PD officer who is a trainer in the police academy. He was so impressed with his experience he said, "I would buy these boots with my own money. They are worth the cost."

Several officers raved about the Velcro pouch in the tongue of the boot that allows officers to tuck their laces out of the way for safety and convenience. They found it to be an added bonus.

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On the downside, some officers reported issues with fit and difficulty in figuring out how to best tie the specialized 2-zone lacing system to maintain ankle support. "The locking mechanism on the laces was inconvenient at first, but once I figured it out I had no issues," one Plymouth County deputy shared. "They broke in quickly and are comfortable for double shifts," he added. For the category "Fit as It Relates to Activities," officers gave the boots an average rating of 4.72.

Two officers with self-described wide feet said the fact that this line of boots is available in only one width was an issue for them, but were otherwise happy with the boots. A Plymouth County deputy who spends between eight and 16 hours on his feet per shift said that although he found the boots a bit narrow for his feet, they were more broken in after a few days and after two weeks of wear they were much more comfortable.

Some officers shared their opinion that certain boots might be better for different



PHOTO: WESTCHESTER COUNTY (NY) POLICE DEPARTMENT

seasons. One wear tester expressed interest in a warm weather boot in the line. An Indianapolis field training officer said he found the low-style Haix boots very comfortable but might prefer the mid-height boot for winter weather. "Overall, the

From K-9 handlers, to FTOs, to SWAT officers, testers gave Haix boots high marks overall for meeting their needs.

comfort and stability is excellent," he said. And this positive assessment was very common.

Officers who wear tested the Black Eagle Tactical 20 boots from Haix gave them high ratings overall and planned to continue wearing them and purchase more in the future. Multiple officers said the Black Eagle Tactical 20s they tested had become their new favorite boots and gave glowing reviews, with the vast majority of officers giving the boots they tested the highest rating of "excellent" in most categories. One Indianapolis PD officer who wore the boots five days a week, eight hours a day for six weeks said, "I have been a police officer for 26 years and this is the most comfortable shoe I have worn on duty!"

For more information about the Black Eagle Tactical 20 models and other Haix boots, visit [www.haix.com](http://www.haix.com). 📍

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