

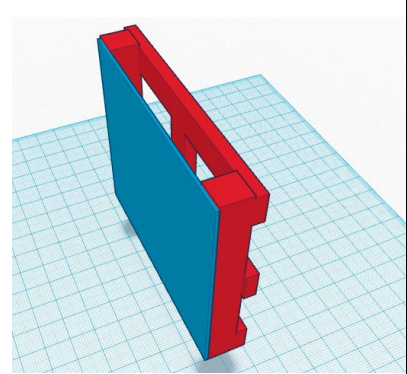
Deformable Paintball Armour

Idea: Applying shape memory polymers (SMPs) to paintball armour could totally revolutionize the market. Paintball armour is always designed to be cool, either as the primary or secondary design objective. Thinking as a designer of paintball armour, the biggest selling point of your product is going to be its 'wow factor' (I imagine that making something resistant to paintball fire isn't that hard, and you want to make the thing expensive to drive up profits). There's one particular aspect of coolness that paintball armour hasn't covered yet, deformation.

Scenario: Imagine playing with your friends, and you get a really good shot right into the side of one of their heads. Right now, there'd be a few paint splatters and not much else. With SMP, you could have a huge bullet indent in the side of that helmet, making for better stories and a way cooler piece of headgear. In addition, throwing the armour into a very low (very very low) oven could restore it completely. If these catch on, I imagine they would have a specialized tool for reformation at paintball fields.

Implementation:

I'm imagining it functioning as a SMP skin over a hardened plastic framework. In this way, coolness could be attained without security being compromised. Red is hardened framework, blue is SMP skin.



Note that the panel above is a proof of concept, the actual space between the sheet and the hardened framework could be significantly larger, in order to further emphasize deformation. Current armour designs could have all plates replaced with SMP plates, without significantly sacrificing mobility or safety, and adding a *whole new dimension* of engagement and fun.



Conclusion: Ultimately, I think that Evonik's SMPs could be used to completely *reform* the current paintball armour market. Armour deformation is the one element of first-person-shooter video games that paintball hasn't copied yet, and now they can. This will be awesome.