HAIX NEVADA PRO MID

SPECIFICATIONS	
COST:	£100 /$120/€100
ESD:	yes
Puncture protection:	yes
Anti-static:	yes
Certification:	CE EN ISO 20345:2011 S3 HRO HI CI WR SRC
Upper Material:	Waterproof leather, hydrophic, breathable
Weight/Thickness:	2.0 – 2.2 mm thick
Breathability:	5.0 mg/cm²/h,
Inner Lining;	Breathable inner liner.
Colour:	black
Height in cm:	14cm / 5.5"
Safety toe:	plastic composite
Safety classification:	S3
Fastener:	Velcro
Waterproof?:	water resistant
Weight per shoe:	780g / 1.72 lb
Certified for orthopedic insoles:	yes
Cut protection class:	no cut protection
WEB:	www.haix.com

My kids have had Velcro closure school shoes since before they could walk and I always really appreciated not having to bend down to tie their laces or indeed, teach them how to tie a shoe lace. Of course, now that the eldest is 20+, it's a bit embarrassing that they still can't tie their own shoelaces but this boot and its shoe equivalent could be the answer. It's not so much my laziness that has made me appreciate the Nevada Mid Pro, its the speed of getting them on and off. That is the be-all and end-all for owning this boot. Sure, there are other decent features like the lightweight, no-metal construction while remaining as sturdy as any that we've used and a good fit for my fat, Anglo-Saxon foot, but for the most part there are a hundred and one mid-height boots that we could choose to wear that are of equally high quality to this Haix boot. One of the advantage of choosing a proven name in boots is that you can be confident that they know how to design and manufacture a thing of quality even if it includes featured hitherto unproven for their own models. The trick is to buy new designs several months AFTER launch so that if there are any problems a recall will have sorted things out. We've worn Haix since the last century so that's 'proven' sorted.
In the case of the Nevada Mid Pro there are one or two features that make this more appropriate for wilderness SAR than the urban/industrial sector - lightweight being key, so the protective toe is not a full metal jacket giving 200 joule protection but it's much better than nothing or a simple extra layer of leather or rubber that you get on most. To give you an idea of how good a lightweight composite can be we balanced a 20ft length of 8x3" cedar on the toe cap to check for deflection as well as dropping some 3-10kg/22 lb lumps of rock on the toe with no ill-effect or disconcerting sensations in the toe. Of course there's no cut protection in terms of chainsaw use - it's not that kind of boot and composite toes are next to useless in such circumstances as well but for incidental rock fall and branches your tootsies are in good hands....or feet. What Haix describe as the insole is a fixed, fleece-lined inner sole that purports to wick away moisture but really, 1) it has to get down there first past a preformed and layered removable insert and, 2) once you've sweated in it a few times and taken the boots off in the field, that insole will go from a welcoming looking white lamb to a seal pup that's been run over by a tank (inset pic above) so I'm not sure whether there's much advantage over other options. One thing though, once it's been well squashed, the 'fleece' becomes so compressed that it can't absorb any more unhealthy and unworldly life-forms.

The sole seems pretty good, it has worn very well and traction on our test incline, which is various grades of lumber and paving, is not quite Spiderman but as good as most, one of our tests is to wet a wooden section and keep increasing the incline until we slip. Nevada Pro's own brand sole fared as well as the Vibram 'Commando' we had on an accompanying boot. That doesn't mean it will wear as well as the Vibram - these Nevada's are used daily (month 7) but they still haven't put in the miles we would need to make that comparison. All we can say is there's very little wear and no edge decomposition we see on lesser quality soles. Every lug has individual grooves less than a mil wide which does seem to aid traction in the wet but may actually decrease traction on hard surfaces if you first walk across a sandy surface because each groove traps a line of grains which seem to sit slightly proud of the rubber. Maybe that even improves grip on wooden surfaces?
There's a subtle, almost imperceptible reflective strip sewn into the outer edge of each boot's heel counter reinforcement strap. Can you spot it? it's the silvery coloured diagonal line at the back in the title shot. The heel counter on which that strip is sewn is very firm, more akin to the support of an urban rescue boot . In contrast, pretty much half of the upper is a flexible and comfortable mix of foam and ballistic nylon outer - good for comfort but when you're putting the boots on in a hurry this often folds inwards under your heel - more bending required to remedy that.
And so to the the all-important Velcro. I know what you're thinking - Velcro attracts debris and freezing balls of snow like flies around whatever comes out of this boot but there are pros and cons. The pro is the speed of donning and doffing or is it it offing...you can quite literally put each boot on in 2 seconds so let's say 5 seconds for the pair and you can be sure of a firm fit first time, every time. We can only assume that Haix put in plenty of research time to come up with a strip of hook at the top 8cm/3" long and on the bottom strap 6cm/2.25" long as the optimum lengths? The leather on the secured ends of the straps helps keep the Velcro surfaces flush to their respective curved interface, which is vital if you don't want to be snagging them every time you walk through scrub. Let's face it, on the odd occasion they might get pulled off, it takes you a second to tighten them in place again. The downside is debris - wood chips, dirt, grass, fluff and ice, they can all work their way into the hook side. The answer is use some of that time you saved in putting them on to routinely pick bits out of the hook sections - it doesn't affect the loop so much but they will eventually not adhere to each other so well and need replacing, which is not that easy if it's even viable. Seems a shame to ditch a perfectly good pair of boots for the sake of some Velcro so perhaps you'll figure a way. The tedium of cleaning Velcro aside, I'm with the kids on this - screw laces. A great, full-spec, rapid -donning boot for patrol or wilderness search that looks a bit like an iron foundry workers boot.

WHAT THE MANUFACTURER SAYS

Inner Lining: Breathable inner liner.
Fleece insole: Moisture-absorbent fleece insole.
Insert: Moisture wicking comfort insert with cushioning effect and antibacterial properties. Separate heel cup ensures optimized cushioning and foot guidance. "AIRFLOW" channels. "Perfect-Fit" mark for optimum verification of the correct shoe size.
HAIX® Composite toe cap:Anatomically formed and ultralight protective toe cap made of fiber-reinforced plastic for highest safety requirements.
HAIX® Protective sole: Flexible, light, metal-free and penetration protected insole.
Sole: In vogue, light sports shoe sole structure with rubber/PU, street/cross-country tread, raised level of foot roll comfort, highly abrasion-resistant and anti-slip - even under cold conditions. The PU lightweight cushioning wedge ensures excellent running properties. Very good insulation against cold, resistant to oil and gasoline, leaves no marks. According to EN ISO 20345:2011.
Anti Slip: Excellent adhesion on various surfaces achieved from the tread design and special rubber used.
HAIX® Vario Wide Fit System: The width of the shoe can be individually adjusted by 3 different insoles. The shoe is supplied with a red insole (medium). A yellow insole (wide) and blue insole (narrow) can be ordered separately.
Sun Reflect: Reduces heating effect on the upper leather. Sunlight is reflected, keeping leather and feet cooler.
Others: Reinforcement at the tip, reflective stripes at the heel, strip lock stops the upper strip fastener becoming undone when the shoe is put on or taken off, low-weight, metal-free, ESD *[ED:Electro-Static Discharge - good for helis]*