

CU alum says Zip It

By Chris Barge

Camera Staff Writer

You can tie a key on your laces. You can stuff a \$10 bill in your socks. But odds are, you'll jingle as you run, and the store clerk will crinkle his nose at your sweaty money if you make a Gatorade pit-stop along the way.

No more.

A University of Colorado alumnus has finally invented a comfortable sport sock with a pocket.

The idea dawned on Evan Papel the summer after he graduated with a degree in business management. On a backpacking trip through Europe, he and two guys he met along the way were pick-pocketed by three sketchy women in an alley in Prague.

"We thought, 'Hey — here we are — we're about to get three dates,'" he said. "And then we realized these girls were probably up to no good, and it turns out they were."

Papel stashed his money in his sock in his travels after that. But by the time his train reached Munich, his money had fallen out. He decided that what he and every traveler could use was a sock with a zippered pocket.

Two years ago, Papel made it happen. The 26-year-old founded a company, Zip It Gear, and came out with cotton Zip It Crew Sox and Ankle Sox. With a cushioned sole and heel, a form-fitting arch and one sock with a pocket large enough to carry a credit card, ID, money and keys, the socks found an instant niche among travel-gear retailers.

Last year, after hunting for an affordable performance fiber, Papel launched the Zip It



Photo courtesy Zip It Gear

Cash, keys and credit cards find a secure home in these uncommonly comfortable socks invented by a University of Colorado alumnus.

SOCK IT AWAY

WHAT • Zip It Sport Sox
AVAILABLE • Changes in Latitude, 2525 Arapaho Ave., Boulder, and online at www.zipitgear.com

COST • \$14.99, or \$17.95 online

ONLINE DISCOUNT • Free shipping until Christmas; plus type 'GOBUFFS' as a coupon code at check out and get \$5 off order.

Sport Sock, with all the same features, but made with Wellman Comfortrel XP fiber. The result was a very comfortable sock that keeps the contents of the pocket from rubbing against your ankle.

"I don't know how he does it, but they're extra cushioned," said Geoff Miller, a sports psychologist who ran the San Diego Rock 'n' Roll Marathon in the Zip It Sport Sox in June. "I've had no problems with blisters."

Jeremy Rawitch, a Los Angeles political consultant, wears his Zip It's on recreational runs.

"The hardest thing when you're doing one of those runs is finding places to stuff your keys," he said. "I found the sock to be made in a way that I didn't know the key and license were in there."

Rawitch said he also brought three pairs with him on a recent trip to Estonia.

Papel said he's been encouraged by how many uses people are finding for his socks.

"They see it as a concept and they adapt it to their lifestyle," Papel said. "Whether it be for travel or sport, people are using these for peace of mind to secure their ID and their credit card and their \$20 bill."

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