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GUARDIAN ATHLETICS INTRODUCES INNOVATIVE KATO COLLAR TO REDUCE FOOTBALL HEAD AND NECK INJURIES

MANKATO, Minnesota (April 17, 2018) – Guardian Athletics, an innovation-driven sports company, announces the launch of the company’s Kato Collar, a new category of football equipment to enhance player safety.

With its innovative design and technology, Kato Collar features a patented two-stage deceleration process with impact absorption pads and a collar that flexes. Kato Collar slows down a player’s head upon impact to keep the brain from reaching those extreme points where injuries occur.

“There is a lack of protective gear for football that properly addresses the frequency, severity, and recovery times tied to head and neck injuries. As a result, the fear of concussions and other head injuries is preventing athletes of all ages from playing football,” said Jeff Chambers, founder of Guardian Athletics and certified athletic trainer for 35 years. “We designed Kato Collar to give players confidence in their safety and technique to let them play the game they love.”

While helmets provide a level of protection for the skull, the brain can still move with impact causing head injuries, particularly concussions. A concussion is a serious injury to the brain resulting from the rapid acceleration and deceleration of brain tissue within the skull.¹

Kato Collar’s unique design decelerates the head after impact by up to 30 percent² and reduces the forces that are believed to cause concussions. Kato Collar’s design adds another layer of protection for the brain and prevents burners and stingers, a common injury among football players.

“As the former Director of Spine Research, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Minnesota, I have studied extensively the biomechanics of devices for the treatment of spine injuries and diseases. When I analyzed the data and high-speed video from the impact biomechanics testing, the results were compelling,” said Dr. Charles Ledonio, Clinical Trials Director with Innovative Surgical Designs.

“The unique design of Kato Collar slowed down the velocity of the head after impact in two stages and transfers the G-forces from the helmet to the collar, then on to the shoulder pads. The testing showed up to 30-percent



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reduction of forces when the collar was attached compared to no collar. By decelerating the brain movement within the skull after impact, Kato Collar addresses the key issue of head and neck injury forces, thus promoting player safety,” said Dr. Ledonio.

On a player, Kato Collar is positioned behind the neck and attaches easily to the inside of the shoulder pads. Unlike traditional football collars, Kato Collar’s design allows for full active range of motion, so a player can perform with optimal confidence on the field.

“At Guardian Athletics, we believe the game can become safer through innovations such as Kato Collar, as well as placing a greater emphasis on neck strength, and teaching proper blocking and tackling techniques,” said Dave Norris, Director of Operations, Guardian Athletics. “These are fundamental to protecting players and helping restore confidence in the game.”

Kato Collar is compatible with most adult-sized Large and above shoulder pads. Kato Collar is available to order online for \$249 at GuardianAthletics.com.

Additional product information along with videos on the science behind Kato Collar can be found at GuardianAthletics.com.

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¹Concussion Legacy Foundation

²Thirty-percent decrease based on biomechanical testing at Chesapeake Labs, Belcamp, MD

About Guardian Athletics

Based in Mankato, Minnesota, Guardian Athletics is an innovation-driven company built around the belief that there is a better way to approach football safety around concussions and other head and neck injuries. Founded in 2008, the company’s flagship product Kato Collar with its patented deceleration design slows down the forces on a player’s head after the initial impact of the hit and keeps the head from reaching those extreme points where injuries occur. For more information, visit GuardianAthletics.com.



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