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Hello and welcome!

We are living through an unprecedented and difficult moment as a country, so thank you all for taking the time to read the first issue of Fan Experience Quarterly, or FXQ.

We are an eco-friendly, "fan-first" magazine dedicated to producing quality content for sports super fans. Our goal is to trumpet the dreams and visions of the athletes that give so much of themselves to us during their sporting lives, yet continue to give when their practices and games are over and their playing days are done.

We have witnessed how sports have become a lifestyle, and we hope to further facilitate this movement by engaging you, the passionate, adventurous sport fan, with sport culture through visual storytelling. Our original content focuses on current and former professional athletes who are involved in the activation of creative ventures and also highlights your experience as a fan.

On behalf of everyone at FXQ, we are grateful you chose to spend some time with us. We encourage you to visit our website and subscribe so we can continue to engage with each other.

Thank you, and remain safe.

Kevin Jordan

PUBLISHER



CONTRIBUTERS



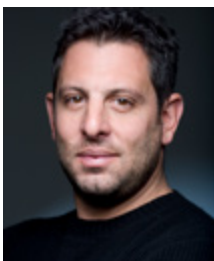
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FXQ

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THE DAY THE SPORTS WORLD CALLED A TIME OUT

WRITTEN BY **MATT BOWEN**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ROB TRINGALI**

COVID-19,
Common Bonds
& The Upcoming
Alchemy Of The
Fan Experience

Whispers from around the world quickly became news by the nanosecond.

Coronavirus graduated to COVID-19. From a “flu-like” virus to a disease, a nuisance to a full-blown pandemic. The severity of its disruption was heavily discounted... until it wasn’t. Stateside, even as it spread from sea to shining sea, it wasn’t real to those who were “far away.”

On March 10, 2020, Santa Clara County in California announced a ban on public gatherings over 1,000 people until the end of the month.

COVID-19’s droplets began their dissemination across the sports world. Residing in Santa Clara County, the NHL’s San Jose Sharks officially announced on March 11 that they would play their three remaining home games of the month in front of a crowd of zero.

Fanless.

Still, for most the Sharks’ announcement wasn’t alarming. Odd? Inconvenient? Eerie? Sure. Real? Nah. Soon that somewhat sci-fi announcement from the Sharks became a stark reality. Akin to its grips on the global population, COVID-19s impact spread rapidly.

Later that day, when the NCAA announced that it would play tournament games in the same fanless fashion, the surreal nature of COVID-19 finally had everyone’s attention.

A few short hours later, right before tipoff of an NBA game between the Utah Jazz and the Oklahoma City Thunder, the sports world changed forever. It would later be announced that Jazz star center Rudy Gobert tested positive for COVID-19. Not only was the disease real, but it was also powerful. If superheroes on the court weren’t immune no one else was.

The rest is history. Sports were placed on pause.

“Social Distancing”, the act of separating oneself from society, was the prescribed method to constrict the velocity of the virus.

In a matter of two days COVID-19 went from a buzzword to a cacophony of circumspect certainty amongst citizens.

Throughout our modern history, in times of flux, Americans have turned to sports for a reassuring lifeline. If each individual fan was a thread of fabric, together, a common bond was formed thanks to sports.

Now, we can’t head to the stadium to “take our mind off things.” Tipoff isn’t happening—the clock has struck midnight—all we have is a pumpkin. We’re left on isolation island, only connected to the world via the umbilical cord that is the internet.

What are fans at large to do?

While COVID-19 is utterly intense, now is the time for the sports world to unite us through education and esports to create the world of tomorrow.

Driven by big money and exquisite technology, the sports business isn’t for the faint of heart. It’s 24.7.365 at the speed of an F1 machine jetting down the track. Everyone in the business is constantly looking for a competitive advantage. An inch, a lead, a victory at the end. Whatever it takes, right?

Pause. Hard stop.

Like author Simon Sinek says, “Play the Infinite Game.”

Looking at recent history, 2008 was a pivotal year for society in its entirety. The Great Recession had an impact that parallels COVID-19. It was also the year that social media was adopted by the

41%

STRONGLY AGREE



masses. A combination of these two things, for better or worse, crafted what sports business is today. Fast forward to 2020, every sports business, organization, and league identifies as something like, “a tech company that happens to produce sports to the delight of fans.”

Social media gave way to endless fan experience,

streaming, and every athlete becoming their own business. There’s nothing wrong with this, but the incremental improvements were not giant leaps, rather baby steps that were often eviscerated by the breakneck pace of new-age evolution.

In all its horror, COVID-19 gives the sports industry time to come up for air.

Do you agree or disagree that professional sports leagues are doing the right thing by suspending their seasons due to coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic?

25% SOMEWHAT AGREE

11% SOMEWHAT DISAGREE

08% STRONGLY DISAGREE

15% DON'T KNOW / NO OPINION

Source: statista.com

Suddenly, overnight, we're in a new age of delicate innocence.

It's time to breathe. Time to think. Time to educate. Time to find a creative edge again. By doing this, in an inverted way, people will be unified by sports once again.

Under this mindset truly revolutionary solutions will be born.

A new way game will manifest, a new way of business, a better fan experience.

Take it from Serena Williams, who plans on spending this unfortunate time in "solitude."

Per her Instagram account, "Spending the next 6 weeks in solitude. Being a wife. Being a mom. Cooking. Cleaning. Spring cleaning. Face mask. Makeup tutorials. I'll let you

know how it goes.... stay safe everyone. This is serious."

In other words, she's stepping away for a minute to be human.

Now that the airwaves are void of passionate fans operating under the guise of Madness, how should broadcasting slots be filled?

Education and esports.

Display the stars of yesteryear to show the young fans how

the game was shaped. ESPN has done a fine job of pivoting to *30 for 30* and *Basketball: A Love Story* for fans to soak up.

It's hard to believe that a 25-year-old fan wasn't alive for the Dream Team.

Outside of airing what's happened between the whistles, it's time for the sports industry to educate the fan on the true business of sports.

When did sports and pop culture begin to meld into a uniform being?

Why was the culmination of the Dream Team so monumental? Why was Allen Iverson so important to the league? And why was Sebastian Telfair's appearance on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* such a big deal at the time?

The answer—the game wouldn't be the same today. Without a blend of the above, we don't have the likes of Overtime.tv today. Without this recipe, we don't have athletes like Andre Iguodala becoming an affluent force in business. Not just sports business—business. BIG BUSINESS.

Fans need to be educated on the ins-and-outs of business terminology, advanced technologies that assist in making better decisions, and what it takes to attract and engage with fans.

STEM is commonly combined with sports in the classroom these days. Broadcasting a financial version now will pay dividends to major sports franchises. There's a future GM that's 12 year-old at home just waiting to be inspired. In 20 years, she'll be great in the front office.

Despite the tragedy that COVID-19 is unleashing, now is a better time than ever to reinvent the fan experience wheel within the front office.

The teams that adopt new ways to attract fans will win. Look at Greenfield Sports Group. The young company is aiming to transform sporting events from a product to a service. It's CEO, Chris Giles, is the former COO of the Oakland Athletics. He knows the business as well as anyone.

Sports as a Service is needed—sports business is no longer a one-size-fits-all-or-tough-luck product. Fans will soon be able to tailor sports to their individual liking. At home or on the road, fans will be able to create their own formula for memories.

Looking at the San Jose Sharks again, the team is one of the best in the business when it

comes to fan experience. From February 20–25 of the 2019–20 season the team hosted a “Digital Road Trip” for fans through its app. This allowed fans to ask Sharks broadcasters direct questions and vote on the content they wanted to consume. That's amazing.

The Sharks also have the 1991 Club, which is described as “a community for those who take vacation days to attend away games, as well as for those who have never once been to a game yet swear loyalty anyways.”

This embodies sports as a whole.

Community. Brotherhood. Common Bonds.

Preferred alternative content to live sports during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the United States as of March 2020



Source: statista.com



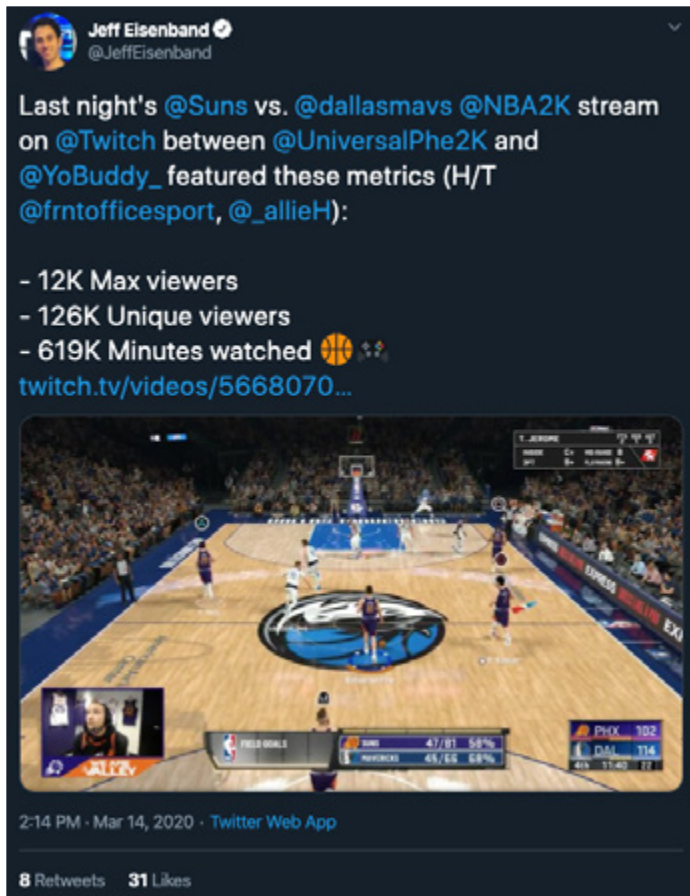
With everyone being encouraged to stay at home, esports is another obvious answer for where teams can enhance the fan experience during these troubling times.

Phoenix Suns star Devin Booker found out about the NBA shutdown while live streaming on Twitch. Memphis Grizzlies rookie stud Ja Morant stated the following:



91,800-plus like this within 24 hours. That's nearly five FedExForum sellouts.

On March 13, 126,000 unique viewers peeped the Suns vs. Mavericks in a streamed NBA2K game.



Baseball upstart content company Pitcher List started an MLB The Show league on Discord.



MLB pitcher Trevor Bauer is organizing a sandlot league for charity with proceeds going to those in need due to the crises.



Bauer is enhancing the fan experience himself by making it mandatory that the players are mic'd up.

The digital impact being made is already apparent.

When live sports are on pause esports and athletes will evolve in unimagined ways. This will expand fan engagement exponentially. Creativity will only compound under the unfortunate circumstances COVID-19 dealt the world. Something in the sports world is being dreamt up right now that's beyond fans' wildest fascinations. Alchemy is brewing.

Stay safe. Be kind. Unify.

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

For these three sports stars,
creative and entrepreneurial
juices flow outside the lines,
to stimulate their inner passion.

WRITTEN BY LINDSAY BERRA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROB TRINGALI

DIDI GREGORIUS

New York Yankees shortstop Didi Gregorius is a serious ballplayer, which he proved in 2018 with career highs in both home runs (27) and RBIs (86) before blowing out his elbow in the ALDS. But in the time it took him to rehab from Tommy John surgery, he also proved he is seriously good at several creative pursuits. Gregorius taught himself to play the piano, so well that he can crush John Legend's "All of Me." He also honed his already stellar photography skills. His Instagram is rife with the fruits of his labors, and so are the social media pages of his Yankees teammates, who use Gregorius originals as their cover photos. Gregorius favors low-light, nighttime and long-exposure photography and has also learned digital drawing. "It's a distraction," he told a TV crew from B&H Photo in Manhattan. "The job is already hard, so you need something to relax your mind. And I don't want to be pegged as a guy who can only play baseball."



Lyn



RUSSELL WILSON

“If you have a billion-dollar idea and you don’t have a billion-dollar mindset, it doesn’t matter,” says self-proclaimed go-getter Russell Wilson. The Seattle Seahawks quarterback grew up fielding queries from his dad from the back seat of the family car. “Tell me where you see yourself at 25,” he would say. “At 30? At 40? Paint the picture for me.” And if Wilson’s dreams weren’t big enough, dad would push for more. Now, Wilson is a Super Bowl Champ and six-time Pro Bowler. He is married to pop star Ciara. And he is a bona fide entrepreneur. His successful clothing line Good Man Brand gives 3% of its proceeds to Wilson’s Why Not You foundation, which appropriates money to children’s charities. His production company, West2East, provides photo and video storytelling services to worldwide brands. And his latest venture, the predictive analytic gaming app Tally, is backed by Amazon’s Jeff Bezos. So far, his picture is perfect.

STEPHON MARBURY

You may know Stephon Marbury as a 22-year standout in the NBA and New York City high school basketball legend, but he is a legitimate megastar in China. Following his NBA career, he won three Chinese Basketball Association championships with the Beijing Ducks, and the hearts of the Chinese people, who gave him his own statue, stamp, museum and stage play. Marbury is currently the head coach of the Beijing Royal Fighters, but he is also upping his game off the court. He is chairman of the sports blockchain group at media mogul Bruno Wu's Sun Seven Stars Investment Group, where he directs planning and operations for the company's athletic content and branding services. Additionally, Marbury has opened several youth basketball camps in China, his sports gear line Starbury Sports offers stylish and affordable high-performance sneakers and Starbury Media will be running exclusive esports tournaments in both the US and China. "I was focused on basketball when I was playing basketball," Marbury told *The Undeclared*. "But now I'm focused on sports. Sports is the revolutionary wavelength to allow people to connect with each other."



GIVING HEARTS

How the Changing Face of Celebrity is Helping Pro Athletes Run Successful Charities

WRITTEN BY SORILBRAN BUCKNER

There's no shortage of professional do-gooders in professional sports: Soccer star Cristiano Ronaldo paid for a young fan's much-needed brain surgery. JJ Watt put together a Hurricane Harvey relief fund that generated more than \$37 million in donations and built nearly 1200 homes for Harvey victims. Coincidentally, his goal was to raise \$200,000. These types of charitable acts are common amongst professional athletes, even if the results are quite so dramatic.

Charity, for all intents and purposes, is a cultural norm in the U.S. Most Americans (six in ten) make at least one charitable donation in any given year. USA Today reports that in 2016, nearly 37 million tax returns claimed charitable deductions at tax time, with the average deduction being well over \$5,000.

But making a single charitable contribution is different from founding a charitable organization whose mission is to meet a specific set of needs for your community.

In that way, professional athletes outshine most of us.

Launching a charity, foundation, or nonprofit is no easy task. More, efficiently managing one takes resources most charities are continually struggling to acquire and to keep, and that includes donors. But organizations run by high-profile elite athletes start with two key advantages from which any charity would benefit, and they are resources and visibility.



PHOTO BY ROB TRINGALI

Why High-Profile Founders Can Circumvent Certain Challenges

The U.S. is home to more than 2.7 million foundations, charities, and nonprofit organizations. For organizations in the U.S. and Canada, the two biggest challenges nonprofits face have to do with resources - specifically, having the manpower needed to run the nonprofit (18% of respondents surveyed identify staff as their biggest challenge) and acquiring and nurturing donor relationships (11% of respondents said donor cultivation, acquisition, retention and communications was their biggest challenge).

Professional athletes are consistently some of the most influential people in the world. For as long as professional sports have existed, professional athletes have been revered by fans of professional sports. And that's a primary reason you brands partnered with athletes to sell everything from cigarettes to home owner's insurance.

Long before Michael Jordan and Nike redefined the endorsement deal, Babe Ruth pitched chewing tobacco and multiple cigarette brands (no pun intended there) to adoring fans.

Today, brands aren't just relying on athletes to promote athletic footwear or sports equipment. But luxury brands like Rolex are aligning with elite athletes like Roger Federer and lifestyle brands like State Farm and Nationwide are leveraging the influence of NBA stars Chris Paul and James Harden.

There's sound reasoning behind these choices. A Washington Post piece by Christine Emba notes that for sports fans, team affiliations can be more powerful than social groups, professional affiliations and even and religious affiliations.

While historically, an athlete's celebrity grew in direct proportion to his or her success in sports, today, social media makes celebrity far less predictable and far more accessible. Athletes leverage social media tools like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to keep the lines of communication open with their fans. In that way, social is the perfect medium for athletes to get the word out about themselves, their teams, corporate partners, and charitable organizations.

The reach of social media goes a long way toward helping professional athletes create compelling personas off the field and off the court to establish themselves as attractive, trustworthy, and knowledgeable - the three qualities that typically compel social media followers to inquire more about the brand and causes mentioned in athlete-promoted social media content (Hambrick and Mahoney, 2009). Social media also aids athletes, celebrities, creators, and entertainers in building their own fan bases, separate and apart from their respective disciplines and teams.

This one seemingly small shift can actually provide athlete-run foundations, charities, and nonprofits with the kind of exposure needed to have the greatest impact to the communities they serve.

The U.S. is home to more than **2.7 million** foundations, charities, and nonprofit organizations

FOUNDATIONS

A foundation is an organization funded by a family or corporate entity. Foundations may or may not accept donations from the public, and they don't generate revenues from goods or services they provide. Instead, foundations invest portions of their endowments then use the money made from those investments to provide support to other organizations in the form of grants.

CHARITIES

Charities receive donations and generate revenues from their operations. Charities like hospitals and universities provide support and services to the public and help to advance the overall health and success of a community while other charities exist to support other charities.

NON-PROFIT

A non-profit organization is typically one that exists to do social good. Revenue for the organization is generated through the sale of goods and services. Revenues generated over the cost of running the non-profit are invested into the organization's mission.



Athlete-Run Charities That Are Successfully Serving Their Communities

We shortlisted a handful of athlete-run charitable organizations that are making a measurable impact in the communities they serve.

Lebron James Family Foundation

One of the most well-known charitable organizations founded by a professional athlete has to be the Lebron James Family Foundation. If you happen to follow Lebron James on social media, you may notice he often tags his posts #just akidfromakron, or a similar variation. Long before he created the foundation, James had already made a commitment to give back to the community that nurtured his growth for so many years. The Lebron James Family Foundation was created to do just that.

Founded in 2004, LJFF's mission is to teach children in the Akron, Ohio area the value of education, physical fitness and healthy living.

The Lebron James Family Foundation supports the I Promise School in Akron, a STEM-based initiative aimed at creating a pipeline through which at-risk kids can move seamlessly from elementary school to being high school graduates. There's a stat that says one child drops out of school in America every 26 seconds. I Promise was specifically designed by Lebron James to combat that problem. To date, more than 1400 Akron students have been served by the Lebron James Foundation and the I Promise Initiative.

Serena Williams Fund and The Williams Sisters Fund

Tennis star Serena Williams is an icon, a living legend. Her motto to #BeSeenBeHeard is one that resonates with women everywhere. For years, she and her older sister (and tennis star) Venus have been participating in charitable causes, many of which have been initiated through either the Serena Williams Fund or the Williams Sisters Fund.

Officially, the Serena Williams Fund "was established to promote equity; through education, gender, race, disability or anything else that stands in the way of someone achieving their goals and living their best possible life." From Serena Williams' perspective, the fund was born from two key passions:

Creating equity through education - Williams is known to say "education is the great equalizer". So, much of her foundation's work focuses on providing children and communities the resources needed to further educational endeavors. Whether that means stocking the classrooms with books and supplies in Compton, CA where she spent her childhood or building actual schools. In 2008, the Serena Williams Fund partnered with Hewlett-Packard and the Build African Schools Initiative to build a secondary school in Kenya. Since then, the organization has funded schools in Uganda and Zimbabwe. In 2016, the Serena Williams Fund partnered with Helping Hands Jamaica Foundation to build the Salt Marsh Basic School in the parish of Trelawny.

Supporting those affected by senseless violence - Serena Williams comes from a large family. In September 2003, Williams' oldest maternal sister, Yetunde Price was killed, the innocent victim of a gang shooting in Compton. In 2016, the Williams Sister Fund opened the Yetunde Price Resource Center, a community center that provides resources, programming, and therapy for those directly or indirectly affected by senseless violence.

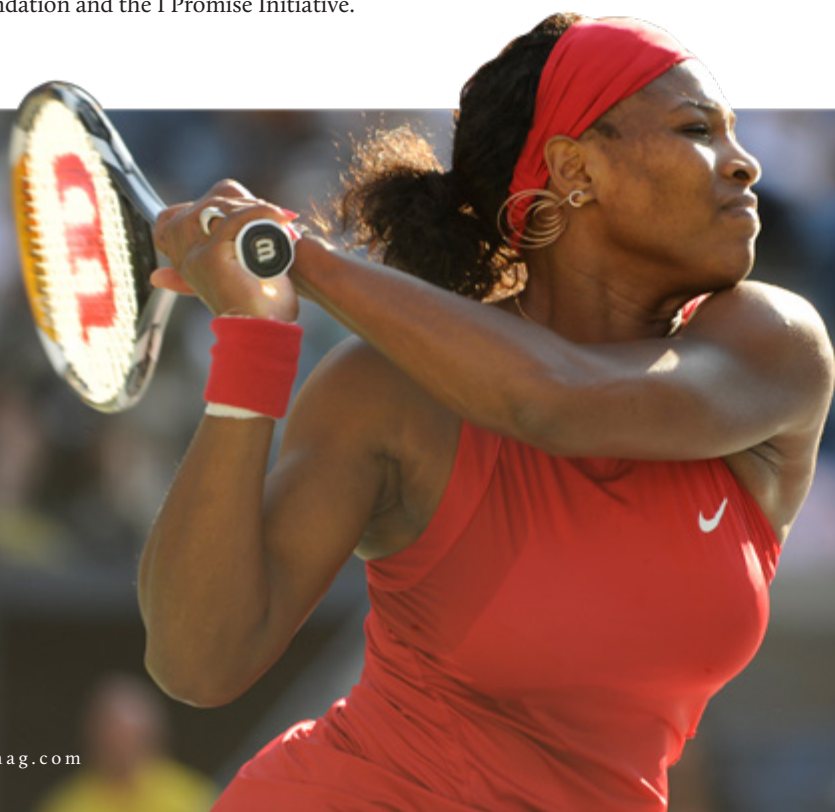


PHOTO BY ROB TRINGALI



Russell Wilson Why Not You Foundation

Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson has a long list of charitable credits to his name. He visits the patients at Seattle's Children's Hospital, he co-hosts the annual charity golf event, and he hosts the annual football camp, Russell Wilson Passing Academy, which helps to develop kids between the ages of 8 and 17 years old both as athletes and as upstanding, productive citizens. Russell Wilson Passing Academy is a fee-based program that extends scholarships to under-privileged inner city youths who otherwise would not be able to afford the camp.

Founded by Russell Wilson in 2014, the Why Not You Foundation aims to create "real and lasting change in the world by motivating, empowering and preparing today's youth to be tomorrow's leaders." Why Not You serves both the Seattle community and a wider national audience through programs, scholarships, and donations.

For instance, the DREAM BIG: Anything is Possible campaign awarded \$100,000 in scholarships to high school seniors who wanted to further their education at a trade school, college or four-year university. The program works in connection with the King County Library System to deliver a wide variety of programs for local students.

Why Not You also raised \$2.6 million in donations for Strong Against Cancer. And Wilson's Pass the Peace campaign (on social media #wnypassthepeace) raises both awareness about, and money to help, victims of domestic violence.

Create "real and lasting change in the world by **motivating, empowering and preparing** today's youth to be tomorrow's leaders.

In the grand scheme of things, charities are a lot like people, doing their part to make a positive contribution to their communities and to the world. But charitable organizations are often subject to a string of challenges that can gradually shift their missions from doing good to staying afloat. The outliers may be the foundations, charities and nonprofits founded by professional athletes.



If given three wishes, what would the other two be?

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PORSCHE

A FORCE OF CHANGE

WRITTEN BY LINDSAY BERRA PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROB TRINGALI

Former NFL Pro-Bowler
Shawn Springs is making
a big impact on
impact protection



A photograph of a locker room with shelves of football helmets and open equipment bins. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

"It's about doing something
that can make a difference
in the world." — Shawn Springs

It was the summer of 2012 when 13-year NFL cornerback Shawn Springs was driving up Interstate 95 south of Washington, D.C. with all three of his sons in the back seat. Teenage twins Skylar and Samari were belted in, and young Shawn, just 5 years old at the time, was in his car seat. Springs' Cadillac Escalade struck a driver who had stopped in the middle of the freeway, totaling the vehicle. But all four Springs men, including little Shawn, were fine.

Springs had gotten his son's car seat from Ken Duffy, an executive at the child safety company Dorel Juvenile Safety 1st, whom he met in Washington while with the Redskins. Even before the accident, Springs had been interested in the technology inside the baby seat; if the cushioning inside the seat could protect a baby's head during a collision at 40 miles per hour, it stood to reason it could also protect a football player's head from impact. Isn't football, after all, a series of car crashes? But the baby seat's padding was much softer and more pliable than that in a football helmet. Springs was intrigued, and founded Windpact in 2011. Now, the company has raised nearly \$6 Million, is about to close its series seed round of fundraising, and will follow soon after with a Series A.

Springs goal is simple: To build the most advanced impact-protection company in the world. And he's well on his way.

"When Shawny walked away from that accident virtually unscathed, it solidified Shawn's determination to push forward with adapting the technology for football helmets and beyond," says Windpact chief of staff Kaarta Maron. "The accident was a game-changing moment for Shawn. It really sealed his mission."

Really, though, it started long before the car seat. In 1997, when Springs was drafted, third overall, by the Seattle Seahawks, Microsoft founder Paul Allen owned the team. Throughout Springs seven years in Seattle, Allen fostered Springs' interest in business, science and technology and encouraged his entrepreneurial spirit. "Mr. Allen taught me it wasn't just about being a billionaire," Springs says. "It's about doing something that can make a difference in the world."

Maron met Springs when he was playing for the Seahawks and she was in their community relations department. Springs was always community minded and interested in charitable endeavors, so Maron helped him start his Springs for Life foundation,



then followed him East when he started playing for the Redskins in 2004. “Who Shawn is, and his enthusiasm for learning and helping others and making a difference, is what made me want to work with him,” Maron says. “He has so many ideas and he is always able to figure out how to get them done.”

While in the NFL, Springs, a defensive back who took more than his fair share of bumps to the head, wondered why the helmet his father, Ron Springs, wore in 1981 when he tallied 12 touchdowns for the Dallas Cowboys, looked pretty much the same as the one he was wearing 30 years later.

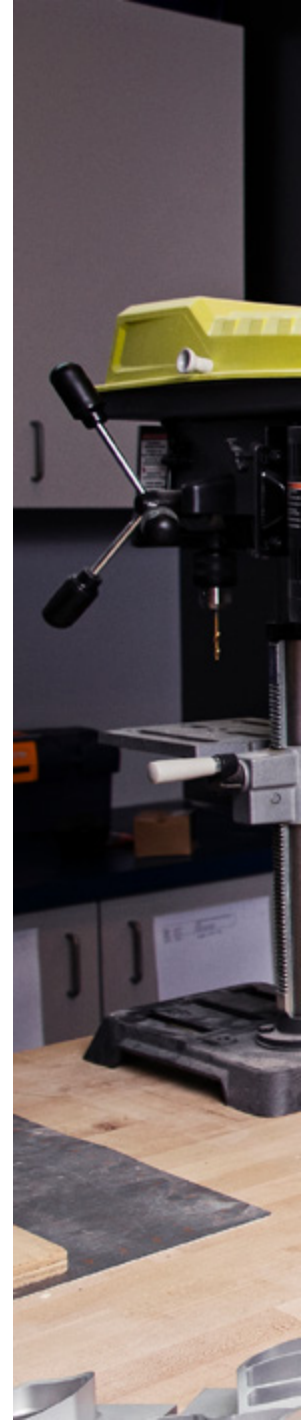
“If you look at a Honda or a Mercedes from 30 years ago, you wouldn’t recognize it with all the safety features and upgrades,” Springs says. “I wanted to know why helmet technology hadn’t really changed at all over that same period of time.”

Springs discovered three reasons the helmet industry hadn’t changed. First, no one, including the NFL, had any idea of the danger posed by both concussions and smaller, repeated blows to the head. Second, even when research began to emerge proving that danger, no one took it seriously until TIME Magazine put a worn, deflated football on the cover, along with the

headline “The Most Dangerous Game.” And third, there has always been a large disconnect between helmet manufacturers and doctors.

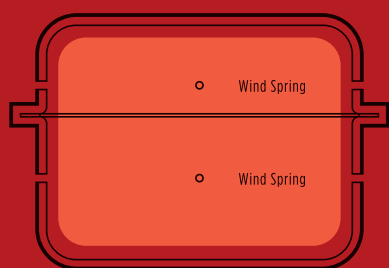
Springs wanted to change all that. He gradually assembled a team of scientists, engineers and industrial designers to adapt the technology in the baby seat for other uses. At the time, Dorel was a \$3 billion company and Windpact was just a startup, but Dorel’s patent was so specific, and the company had no interest in diversifying, that Springs had no problem getting a patent of his own. In 2013, Springs took his first prototype helmet to the Helmet Lab at Virginia Tech University, where it tested higher than any other helmet had tested to date. “That’s when we knew it would work,” says Maron.

The protective material in a standard football helmet is a single piece of hard foam that compresses to absorb impact over the distance between the shell of the helmet and the head. This is very effective for high-level impacts, but not very effective for lower-level impacts; hard foams protect you from cracking your skull on a big impact, but with softer impacts, they transfer the impact from the shell to the head too quickly to provide protection.



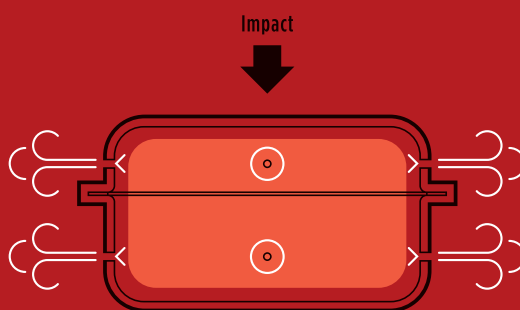
Crash Cloud Technology is designed to address real-world impacts, the majority of which happen at low to medium velocities.

"I wanted to know why helmet technology hadn't really changed at all." — Shawn Springs



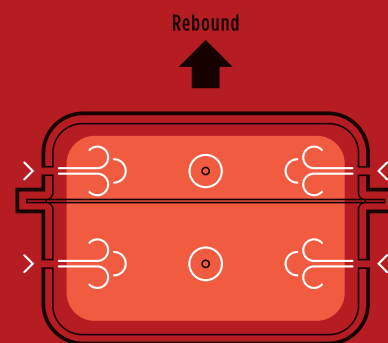
ABSORB

The Crash Cloud™ system is made up of three important elements: Wind Springs™, Impact Vents™, and Refresh Vents™. These self-recovering airbags are activated instantly on impact, absorbing the energy of a hit.



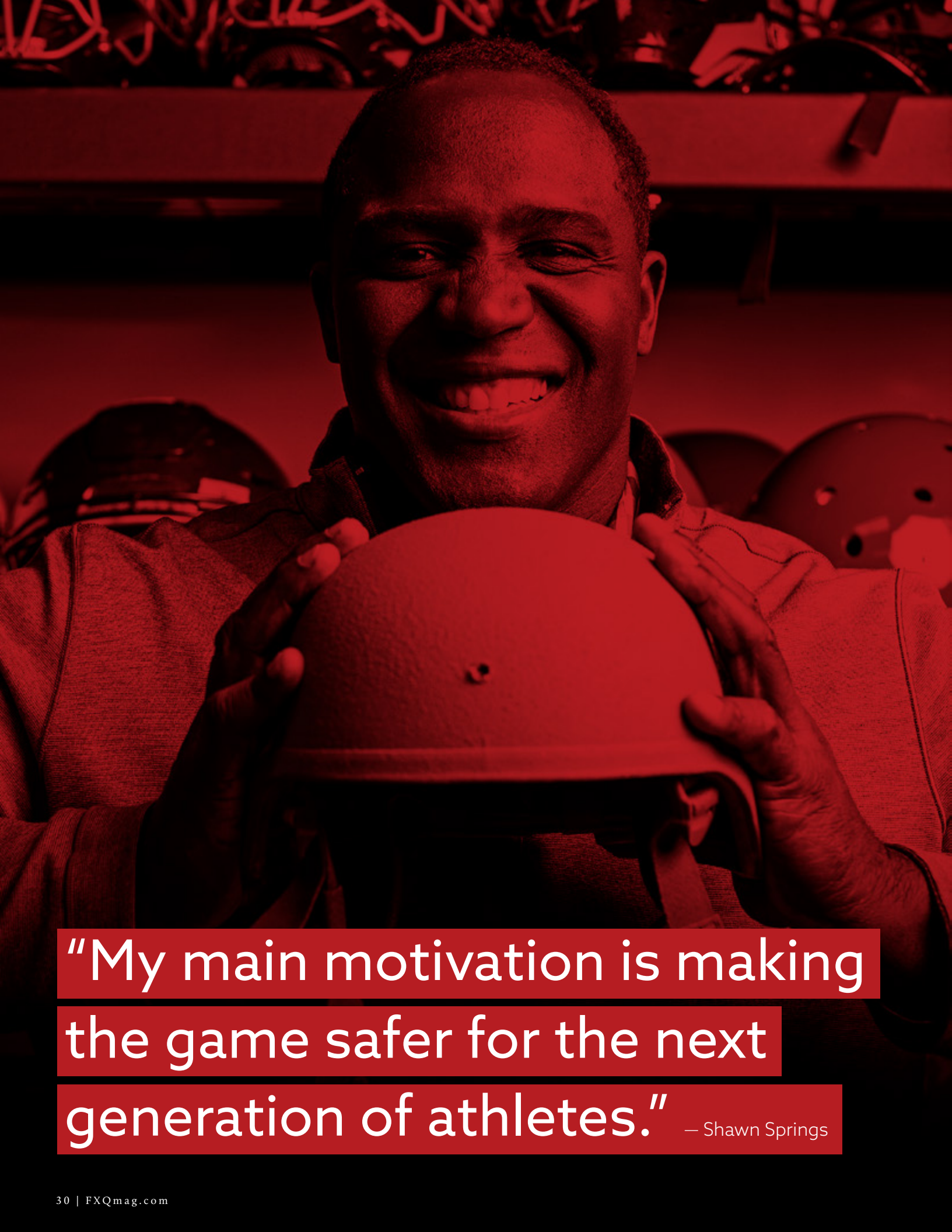
DISPENSE

As each Wind Spring™ is compressed, energy is transferred through the Impact Vents™, away from the point of impact.



RECOVER

Wind Springs™ and Refresh Vents™ then work together to rapidly re-inflate each Crash Cloud™. This enables both the system and the user to withstand the multiple impacts that often make up a single event.



"My main motivation is making the game safer for the next generation of athletes." — Shawn Springs

Windpact's Crash Cloud technology, however, is designed to protect the head during all types of impacts. Crash Cloud is an air-diffused impact system composed of soft foam "air" bags that respond instantly to linear, angular and rotational impacts, wind springs that disperse energy through air vents upon impact, and refresh vents that rapidly reinflate each Crash Cloud to withstand the multiple impacts that often make up a single event.

"Our system tunes itself to the level of impact," says Windpact director of design and development Leon Marucchi. "With a smaller impact, it is soft and compliant and will squeeze slowly and protect with great comfort. But if it's hit hard, the system stiffens and locks up because the air cannot escape fast enough. It's soft when it responds to smaller impacts and stiff when it responds to bigger impacts. It is self adjusting."

In 2018, through the NFL's HeadHealthTECH II Challenge, Windpact partnered with Riddell on its Speedflex Precision helmet and brought it up from No. 18 to No. 3 on the NFL's Helmet Laboratory Testing Performance Results list, which evaluates which helmets best reduce head impact severity; Riddell chose to move forward with its own padding solution. Last April, Windpact won the NFL's HeadHealthTECH VI Challenge, marking the third time the company has taken home an award from the League. They are currently working with Schutt Sports on its Q11 helmet, the testing of which has been put on hold due to COVID-19.

Windpact has also applied for the NFL's Helmet Challenge, through which up to \$2 million in HeadHealthTECH grant funding will be available. Selections will be made in June.

"My main motivation is making the game safer for the next generation of athletes," Springs says. "I have kids. My sons want to play, and I want to make sure the game is safer. I think we all want to make sure the game we love so much is not as dangerous and is safe for the next generation of athlete."

Springs, though, will not stop at just football helmets. Windpact technology is currently available in a girls' lacrosse helmet manufactured by Hummingbird Sports. It is being used in

"Our system
tunes itself
to the level
of impact."

catchers' masks made by Under Armour. And in 2018, Windpact was one of several companies given a contract by the Department of Defense to improve the Advanced Combat Helmet, or ACH. They were the only team that passed the 17 meters-per-second drop test (current helmets solve only for 10 MPS) and were awarded a second year of contract to improve the Enhanced Combat Helmet, or ECH; Windpact is currently building 80 prototypes.

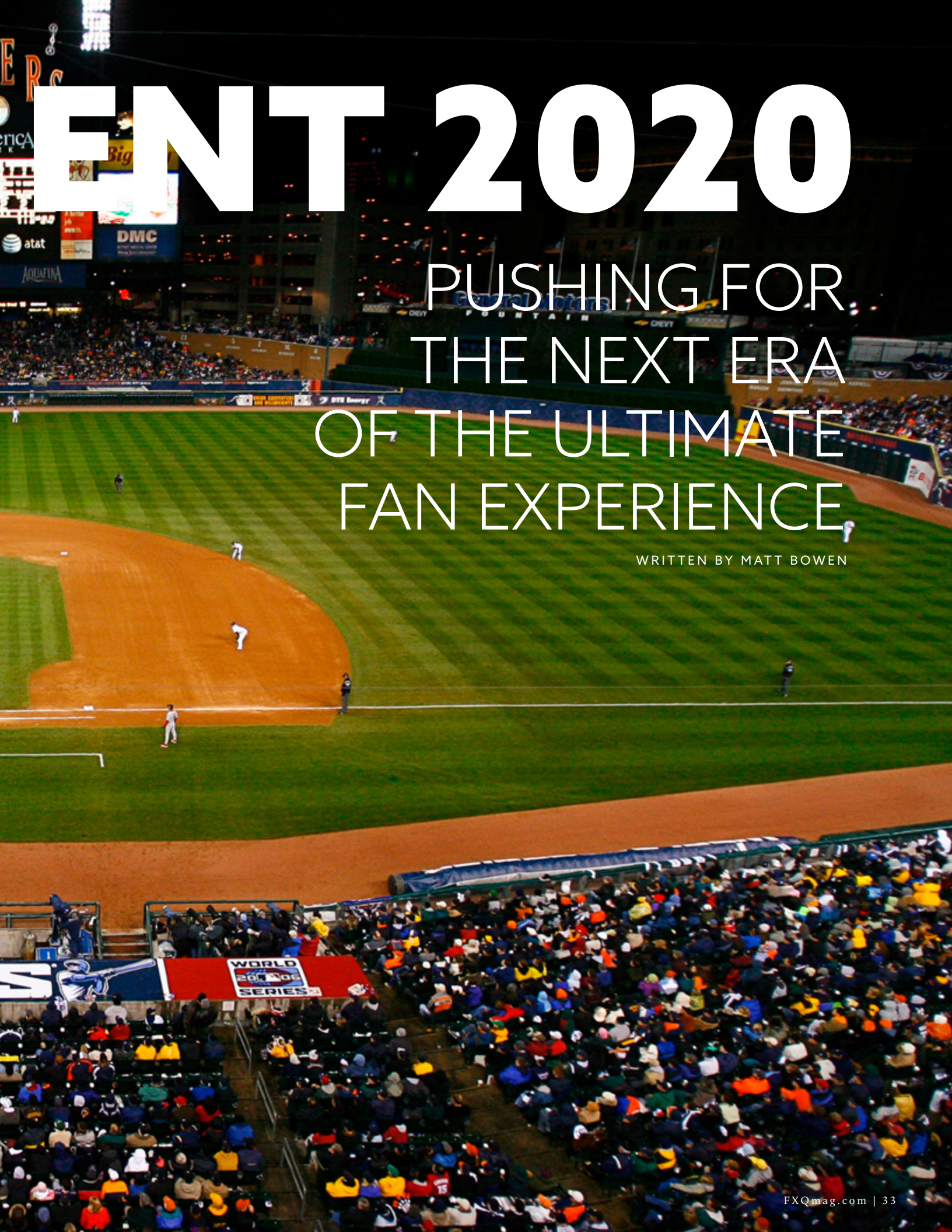
Windpact has a proprietary database of characterized foams, allowing them to evaluate different types of materials, choose those for optimal performance and tune and build a Crash Cloud system to solve for any type of impact. It is currently being tested in gun butts for shot guns, wall pads for gymnastics and basketball, hockey boards and gloves, bicycle and motorcycle helmets, medical-grade protective pads for hip replacement surgeries, packaging for trucking and shipping and headrests and door panels in cars, amongst other things.

"It's all just a matter of what kind of impact you need to solve for," Springs says. "A headliner for an automobile is no different than a wall panel in the school gym. It's just a matter of creating a precise solution for each specific type of impact."

And having a serious impact on upgraded impact protection in the process.

ENGAGEMENT





EVENT 2020

PUSHING FOR THE NEXT ERA OF THE ULTIMATE FAN EXPERIENCE

WRITTEN BY MATT BOWEN



PHOTO BY ROB TRINGALI

“Experience” may very well be the single word that’s dominated marketer’s dreams over the past couple of years. In the age of digital, our attention is being pulled from screen-to-screen as if it’s on a magnetic pendulum. Yet, as humans, we yearn for something more, something pure, something real.

For brands, marketers, and experience geeks, it’s about finding a harmonious recipe that will engage with supporters. This is the ultimate challenge in today’s sports world. As we digest stories about experience ad nauseam, it’s time for the industry to find that balance with its most loyal fans.

Sports is big business. Your favorite sport, team, and player represent something bigger than you. Pulling at our most human instincts, our favorites tap into our tribal traits. It becomes woven into our DNA.

It’s inherently a part of us. As sports fans, we want to be involved in the most devoted ways with our team — we want to feel that unique experience that “the team did this for me.”

Chelsea FC of the Premier League recently took engagement to the next level.

This is fantastic — a genuine, personalized touch. Kudos.

As a fan, let’s take this to an even grander level.

This is in-depth and likely a bit absurd, but let’s push the boundaries a bit. Fans want more. Without becoming privy to proprietary team information, the fan would become entrenched within every aspect of the team. If the fan has to sign



a non-disclosure agreement, so be it. The team should carefully allow the fan to dip their toes in hidden waters without being fully submerged.

Before you gasp in befuddlement, please read on.

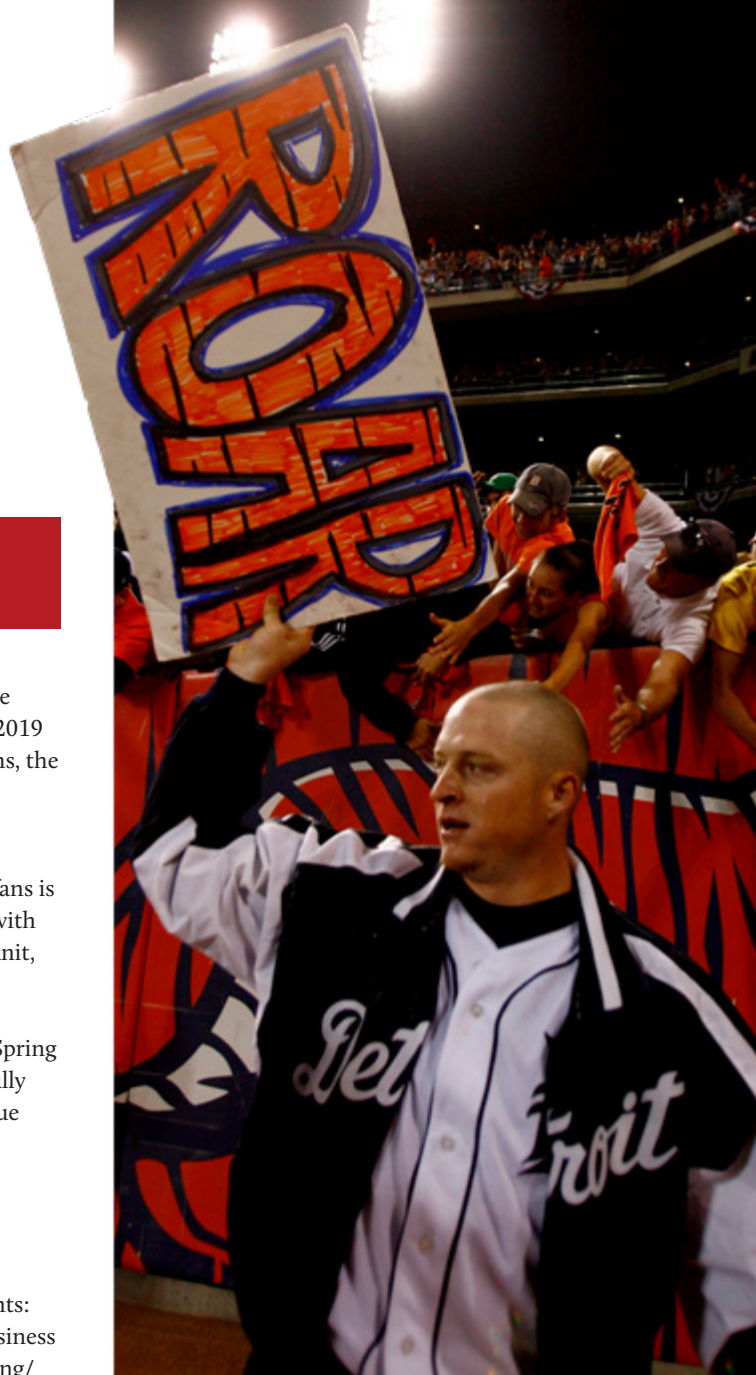
Teams should look at making this a yearly case study to improve future fan engagement. There would be a limit to the number of fans to the program

every year. Fans should be chosen based on some of the elements Chelsea FC applied and the fan’s availability to attend all events. In order to get a true representation of a team’s fan base, corporate sponsorship of this Ultimate Fan Experience is encouraged with the money helping offset the travel and ticket expenses for the fan. (in some select cases, offsetting all expenses).

How to Make an Extraordinary Fan Experience.

For purposes of this exercise, I'll use my favorite Major League Baseball team, the Detroit Tigers as an example.

- 1** The ultimate package encompasses the ins-and-outs of an entire seasonal cycle, which begins in the offseason. For the Tigers in 2019 this would most likely begin in October. (Don't worry Tigers fans, the future is mighty bright).
- 2** The selected group would have designated fan experience representatives from the Tigers organization. Say the group of fans is set at 12, there would be at least three representatives that are with the group throughout the season. This is to encourage a close-knit, personal relationship between the team and its fans.
- 3** The schedule would include the Winter Meetings, Tigers Fest, Spring Training, 6–8 regular season games, the MLB Draft, and hopefully postseason. Again, the scope is broad but it's to showcase the true nature of the team's business.
- 4** Being a case study, the Tigers would create a syllabus with entwined departmental interaction and goals for the group to study/discover over the course of the season. Fans would be allowed behind-the-scenes access with the following departments: Marketing(promotional/merch), Brand/Design, Ticket Sales(Business Analytics), Corporate Sponsorship, Game Day Operations(parking/gates/concessions), Player Personnel(salary cap education/game-day lineup decisions), Farm System, Scouting, Player Analytics, Technology, and Community Outreach.
- 5** Each regular season game the group would sit somewhere different within the ballpark, taking detailed notes on the view, concessions, seats, bathroom access and overall enjoyment. The Ultimate Fan Experience would also allow fans to test (providing feedback) the latest technology being deployed in the park. This includes food and beverage tech, customized merch (to be created on-site and delivered to one's seat), AR/VR apps showcasing advanced player data, and ways to wager (yes, it'll be here soon) on the game, at-bat, or next pitch.
- 6** At the conclusion of the season the fans would present their findings. The team would digest the information, implementing improvements with proven significance. Of course, if a potential game changer is unearthed during the season (accompanied by a high r-square/low p-value) this gem could be immediately integrated in order to improve the team performance/fan experience.



Correct, this entire experiment could come off as preposterous. Bottom line — fans want more. Teams need to continuously enhance their offerings and there's no better data than an inclusive, invaluable, and intimate experiment with its closest fans.

Think about the Ultimate Fan Experience for a while. What do you desire from your favorite team?

*As a team in rebuilding mode the Tigers website is phenomenal right now. Yes, it's the middle of winter, but they're really showcasing their farm system and prospects. This is exciting! Hopefully this translates to the in-season message as well.



UNCHANGED SINCE 1873



100TH NFL SEASON

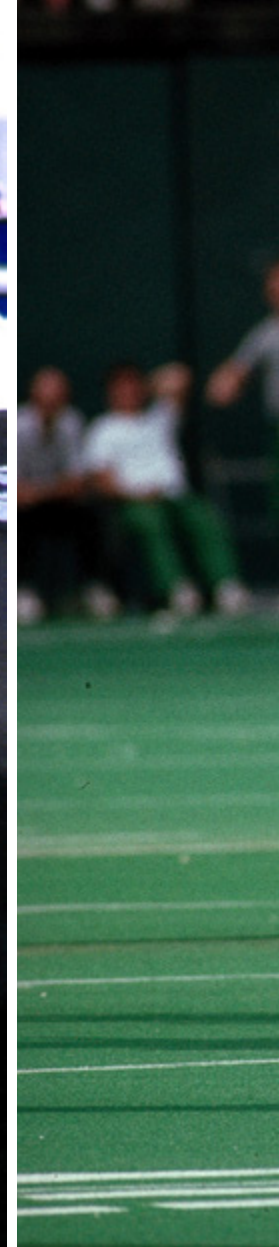
A PHOTO ESSAY BY ROB TRINGALI

The NFL kicked off its 100th season in 2019 so I put together 25 of my favorite images over my 30 year career which has taken me across the continent 100's of times, knelt on many frozen sidelines which my knees can attest, witnessed the best of the best play weekly and have attended the grandest of all games the Super Bowl more times than I could of ever dreamt about. These images are a collection from some of those biggest games, players I enjoyed photographing and some images that have a special meaning to me. I assisted my first game at 16 years old at RFK Stadium in Washington DC and as soon as I walked through the tunnel that day as a young kid I was hooked. 34 years later, I still get a thrill of walking onto a NFL field and looking back on these photos brings back some incredible memories.



A referee in the fog during the game between the New England Patriots and the Pittsburgh Steelers in an AFC playoff game at Foxboro Stadium on Jan. 5, 1997





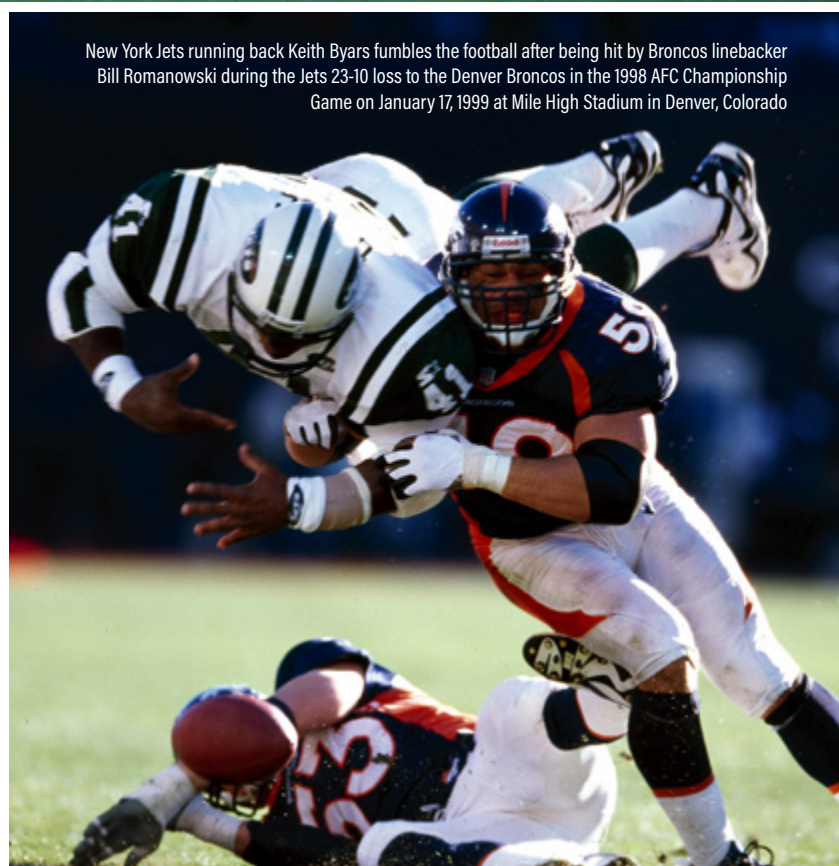
Running back Steve Smith #35 of the Los Angeles Raiders is tackled by Ken Norton #51, Robert Jones #55, Charles Haley #94 and Thomas Everett #27 of the Dallas Cowboys during their NFC East football game on 25 October 1992 at Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, Los Angeles, California, United States.



October 2, 1988 Houston Oilers' wide receiver Ernest Givens lays on the ground after taking a vicious hit by Philadelphia Eagles' cornerback Eric Allen



#10 Santonio Holmes receiver of the Pittsburgh Steelers gets upended by #25 Keiwan Ratliff during a Week 3 game of the 2006 regular season NFL football game played between the Cincinnati Bengals and the Pittsburgh Steelers at Heinz Field in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The Steelers defeated the Bengals by a score of 34 to 27.



New York Jets running back Keith Byars fumbles the football after being hit by Broncos linebacker Bill Romanowski during the Jets 23-10 loss to the Denver Broncos in the 1998 AFC Championship Game on January 17, 1999 at Mile High Stadium in Denver, Colorado



Buffalo Bills kicker Scott Norwood (11) misses his last-second game-winning field goal attempt wide right during Super Bowl XXV, a 20-19 loss to the New York Giants on January 27, 1991, at Tampa Stadium in Tampa, Florida.



Dallas Cowboys Ezekiel Elliott (21) in action, rushing vs Philadelphia Eagles at Lincoln Financial Field, Philadelphia, PA on 11/11/2018





Quarterback Eli Manning #10 of the New York Giants enters the field before the game against the Denver Broncos at MetLife Stadium on September 15, 2013 in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

The sunlight beams through the windows down onto the field as Tony Romo #9 attempts to complete a pass during the game between the Dallas Cowboys and the St. Louis Rams at Cowboys Stadium on October 23, 2011 in Arlington, Texas.







Randall Cunningham #12 of the Philadelphia Eagles looks to pass against the Los Angeles Raiders during an NFL Football game October 22, 1989 at Veterans Stadium in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



Jason Witten #82 of the Dallas Cowboys gets his helmet knocked off by Quintin Mikell #27 and William James #21 of the Philadelphia Eagles after making a catch at Lincoln Financial Field on November 4, 2007 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



Pittsburgh Steelers vs Cleveland Browns in the snow during the AFC Wild Card game on January 5, 2002 at Heinz Field in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The Steelers won 36-33.



Drew Brees #9 of the New Orleans Saints walks from the locker room to the field before a game against the New York Giants at MetLife Stadium on September 30, 2018 in East Rutherford, New Jersey.



Drew Brees #9 of the New Orleans Saints walks back onto the field against the Philadelphia Eagles at Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on September 20, 2009. The Saints defeated the Eagles 48 to 22.



Running Back Emmitt Smith #22 of the Dallas Cowboys scores a touchdown as teammate Michael Irvin #88 approaches to celebrate during the NFC Championship Game on January 17, 1993 against the Candlestick Park in San Francisco, California.



Philadelphia Eagles fans celebrating in streets after winning game vs New England Patriots. Philadelphia, PA on 2/4/2018



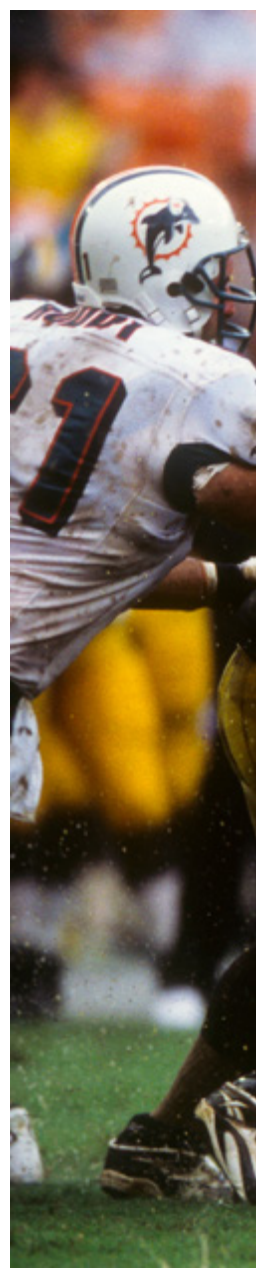


Quarterback Eli Manning #10 of the New York Giants celebrates a victory against the New England Patriots during Super Bowl XLII on February 3, 2008 at University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale, Arizona. The Giants defeated the Patriots 17-14.



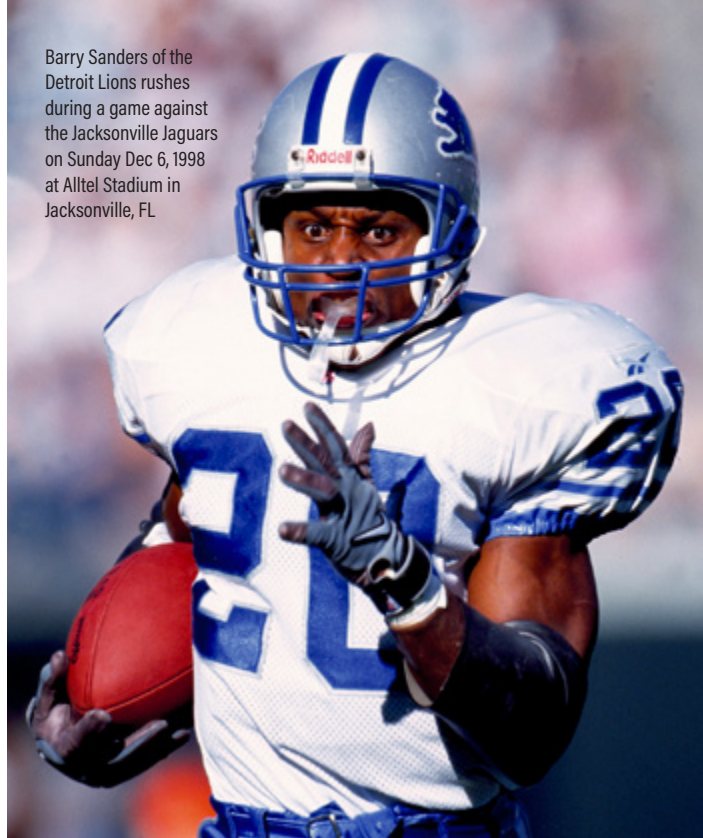
Quarterback Brett Favre #4 of the Green Bay Packers celebrates a play against the Detroit Lions at Lambeau Field on November 3, 1996 in Green Bay, Wisconsin. The Packers defeated the Lions 28-18.

Pittsburgh Steelers running back #36 Jerome BETTIS celebrates after scoring a 2nd quarter touchdown during the AFC Championship game played between the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Denver Broncos at Invesco Stadium in Denver, Colorado. The Pittsburgh Steelers defeated the Denver Broncos by a score of 34 to 17 to advance to Super Bowl XL in Detroit.





Bo Jackson #34 of the Los Angeles Raiders runs with the ball against the Cincinnati Bengals at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum on November 5, 1989 in Los Angeles, California. The Raiders won 28-7.



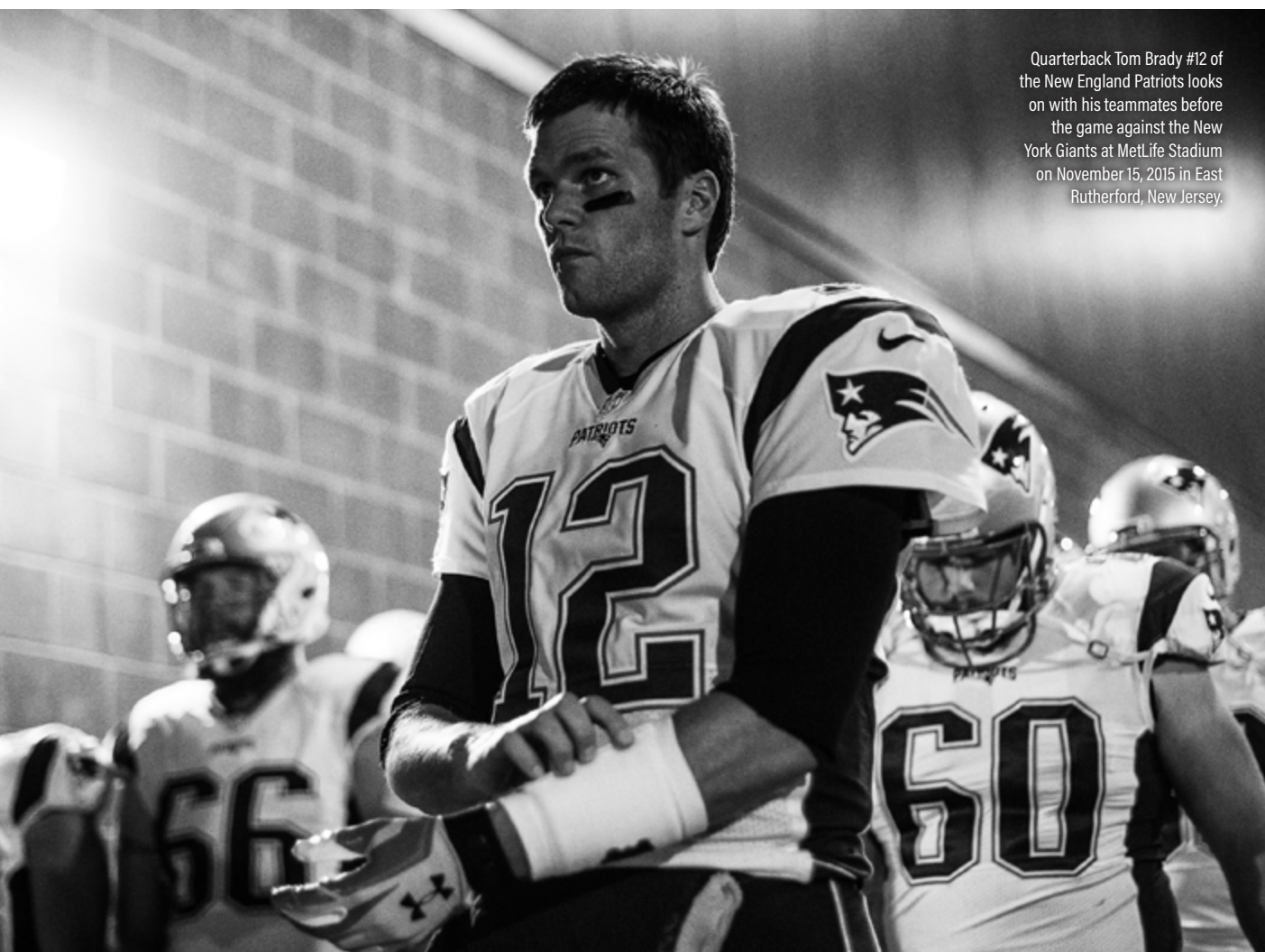
Barry Sanders of the Detroit Lions rushes during a game against the Jacksonville Jaguars on Sunday Dec 6, 1998 at Alltel Stadium in Jacksonville, FL



Kareem Abduk Jabbar of the Miami Dolphins in action against the Pittsburgh Steelers on 9/20/1998 in Miami, FL



Tom Brady #12 of the New England Patriots celebrates with his daughter Vivian Lake Brady after the Patriots' 13-3 win over the Los Angeles Rams during Super Bowl LIII at Mercedes-Benz Stadium on February 3, 2019 in Atlanta, Georgia.



Quarterback Tom Brady #12 of the New England Patriots looks on with his teammates before the game against the New York Giants at MetLife Stadium on November 15, 2015 in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

Tom Brady and his daughter
after Super Bowl LIII between
the New England Patriots and
the Los Angeles Rams at the
Mercedes-Benz Stadium in
Atlanta, GA, USA on 2/3/2019



WELCOME TO THE GAME

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