



Oklahoma Athletic Trainers' Association Safety in Football Campaign:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose:

Over the last several years, there have been numerous news reports and stories questioning the safety of American football. With significant media attention focused on concussions and a possible link to long-term neurological conditions such as chronic traumatic encephalopathy, and with nation-wide attention on the 13 high school and one youth football player who died during the 2015 season, many athletic programs have seen a renewed concern from their parents and their athletes regarding the overall safety of American football. Several families have now walked away from the sport altogether.

Unfortunately, what is being done to ensure for safety in football hasn't been communicated as strong and as consistent as the current message of concern. Therefore, the Oklahoma Athletic Trainers' Association (OATA) has organized a "Safety in Football Campaign" in order to promote increased safety in football in the State of Oklahoma.

All across the state of Oklahoma, athletic trainers are providing their clinical skill and expertise each and every day to improve the overall health and safety of their athletes. According to a study conducted by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the presence of athletic trainers in the secondary schools lowers overall injury rates, improves diagnosis and return-to-play decisions, and reduces the risk for recurrent injuries. The placement of athletic trainers in every secondary school that offers an athletic program is recommended by both the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine.

This campaign, by the direction and efforts of the OATA BOD, the state's athletic trainers, and their respective administrations, is designed specifically with the goal of helping each and every football team in Oklahoma identify ways in which they can lessen the risks of injury and keep the focus on the fun and camaraderie of football.



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Method:

The Oklahoma Athletic Trainers' Association, through its members and through its Board of Directors, has directly contacted numerous high schools and the states three division one universities and invited them to participate in this event. Participating schools and institutions are encouraged "campaign" about how their respective athletic training staff(s) work each and every day to improve safety in football. In support of this effort, the OATA has provided each participating school and institution with a Public Relations Toolkit that includes ideas for how to build a campaign, mock talking points for athletic trainers, coaches, and administrators, sample radio/television commercial scripts, sample press releases, and OATA Logos to use along with their campaign. In addition, *all participating schools and universities are provided 1"x2" helmet decal stickers at no charge to wear during their respective games.* (see below)

Likewise, the OATA has created its own campaign of press releases, membership eblasts, website resources, social media postings, and radio/television interviews to accomplish the following goals:

- *Demonstrate leadership and advocacy in the State of Oklahoma for the express purpose of utilizing athletic trainers to improve safety in sport.
- *Provide direct and unparalleled recognition for the association and its membership pertaining to its/their clinical expertise and value in healthcare.
- *Provide direct and unparalleled recognition for select schools and institutions in Oklahoma who have made access to athletic training services a priority for their respective teams.
- *Provide parents, coaches, administrators, legislators, and sports teams and organizations with simple, straight forward resources necessary to 1) explain the value of athletic training services towards improving sport safety and 2) provide research-based, injury prevention and emergency preparedness information on how they may keep their families, their teams, and their athletes safe. (www.oata.net)





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Participants:

*Timeline of Campaign: Tuesday, September 6th – Saturday, September 17th

*26 of the State's largest and most recognizable high school football teams participated.

-Several participating schools/games are exceedingly high profile rivalries in the State of Oklahoma.

Friday, September 9th, 2016

*#1 Jenks vs #2 Union @ TU Stadium (Cox TV Game of the Week)

*#5 Owasso @ #4 Broken Arrow

*#8 Bishop Kelley @ #3 Bishop McGuinness

Friday, September 16th, 2016

*Norman North @ Edmond Sante Fe (Cox TV Game of the Week)

*Bishop Kelley @ Sapulpa

*Yukon @ Southmoore

*PC West @ Bixby

*Catoosa @ Coweta

*Holland Hall @ Metro Christian

*Stillwater @ Mustang

*Claremore @ Tulsa Edison

*Del City @ Midwest City

*Tulsa McLain @ Tulsa Rogers

Saturday, September 17th, 2016

*The University of Tulsa vs North Carolina A&T

*Numerous high schools are continuing to wear their helmet stickers for several more games during the season.



News Reports, Articles, etc...

***Tuesday, September 6th, 2016:**

Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin issued a state-wide proclamation declaring September 6th through September 17th, 2016 as "Safety in Football Campaign Days."

<https://www.sos.ok.gov/documents/proclamations/40067.pdf>

***Friday, September 9th, 2016:**

Fox 23 News in Tulsa: "Jenks, Union join state-wide safety effort at Backyard Bowl."

*Interviews with the each school's athletic trainers highlighted the need for AT's in the secondary schools.

<http://www.fox23.com/video?videoId=442335261&videoVersion=1.0>

News Channel 6: "Top High Schools Join Football Safety Program"

"Summary article regarding the entire campaign"

<http://www.newson6.com/story/33057418/top-high-schools-join-football-safety-program>

News Channel 9: "Top High Schools Join Football Safety Program"

"Summary article regarding the entire campaign"

<http://www.news9.com/story/33057418/top-high-schools-join-football-safety-program>

Select Athletic Training Staff for Broken Arrow and Owasso High Schools were recognized by their schools during pre-game ceremonies.

Cox Channel 3 Game of the Week: Jenks vs Union

*On air broadcasters and sideline reporters discussed the helmet stickers and the safety in football campaign.

***Tuesday, September 13th, 2016:**

The University of Tulsa Weekly Football Press Conference

*Dave Polanski, ATC Assistant Athletic Director for Student Health & Performance/Director of Sports Medicine spoke on the importance of athletic trainers and how The University of Tulsa was supporting the statewide campaign.



***Wednesday, September 14th, 2016:**

Tulsa World Newspaper article: "The other role players: Owasso's athletic trainers have a hand in every team's success."

*A feature story on the three AT's employed at Owasso High School and how their work is crucial to the success of the athletic department.

http://www.tulsaworld.com/communities/owasso/news/business/the-other-role-players-owasso-s-athletic-trainers-have-a/article_d1edc479-c263-5959-a71d-7bea693a347e.html

***Redistributed by AthleticTrainingToday.com

***Thursday, September 15th, 2016:**

Tulsa World Newspaper article: "TU Sports: Hurricane teams up with Oklahoma Athletic Trainers' Association to promote safety."

*An article specifically address how The University of Tulsa has promoted and supported the OATA Safety in Football Campaign.

http://www.tulsaworld.com/blogs/sports/tu/tu-sports-hurricane-teams-up-with-oklahoma-athletic-trainers-association/article_a2b0f99f-24dc-54a6-b217-d7b3e6d43d51.html

***Redistributed by AthleticTrainingToday.com

The Daily Oklahoman Newspaper article: "Friday Night Lights: A Day in the life of an athletic trainer."

*An article featuring the work of Leander Walker, ATC, Head Athletic Trainer for Yukon High School.

http://newsok.com/article/5518321?utm_source=MobileNewsOK.com&utm_medium=Social&utm_campaign=ShareBar-Facebook

*The author also created three additional articles to parallel with this story:
"What does it take to become a certified athletic trainer?"

<http://newsok.com/article/5518323?embeddedLinkType=article>

"Timeline: A day in the life of an athletic trainer."

<http://newsok.com/article/5518322?embeddedLinkType=article>

"By the numbers: Athletic trainers in high schools."

<http://newsok.com/article/5518341?embeddedLinkType=article>

***This news story series was picked up by the NATA Range of Motion Eblast on Monday, September 19th, 2016.

***Redistributed by AthleticTrainingToday.com



***Friday, September 16th, 2016:**

The Franchise Radio Station on air interview with Darren Lunow, AT, President of the Oklahoma Athletic Trainers' Association

*OATA President discussed the state-wide campaign, the necessity of being proactive where athletic healthcare is related, key games and schools participating, and how Oklahoma is last in the US for SS AT's.

Numerous Athletic Training Staffs for Several area High Schools were recognized by their schools during pre-game ceremonies.

Cox Channel 3 Game of the Week: Norman North @ Edmond Sante Fe

*On air broadcasters and sideline reporters discussed the helmet stickers and the safety in football campaign.

***Saturday, September 17th, 2016:**

The University of Tulsa Game Day Radio Show

*The sideline reporter discussed the helmet stickers and the involvement of The University of Tulsa with the OATA Safety in Football Campaign.

ESPN 3

*The TU game was broadcast on ESPN 3 for the entirety of the game.

***Wednesday, September 28th, 2016:**

Tulsa World Newspaper Article: "State, schools join Safety in Football Campaign"

"An article focusing on Coweta High School and the overall success of the state-wide campaign"

http://www.tulsaworld.com/communities/wagonercountyat/schools/state-schools-join-safety-in-football-campaign/article_c031938b-cb9f-5c6f-83c7-08d964ff9666.html



OATA Social Media Campaign and Statistics:

- *The OATA Created a series of strategically positioned Facebook and twitter posts throughout the campaign that:
- 1) referenced the highlights of the campaign,
 - 2) recognized athletic trainers throughout the state,
 - 3) strategically released information on a daily or every other day manner to continue awareness, focus, and interest,
 - 4) provided simple and straight forward tips for how all teams can improve safety, and
 - 5) directed interested readers to the OATA Safety in Football Campaign resource page to learn more about how to keep their athletes safe.

OATA Facebook Page: @OklahomaAT

<u>Metric:</u>	<u>Baseline:</u>	<u>Campaign:</u>	<u>Variance:</u>
Page Visits	36 per week	77	+113.9%
Total Reach	4.66k per week	14.2k	+204.6%
People Engaged	315	1.29k	+308.9%
Total Page Likes	527	550	+4.4%

OATA Twitter: @OKATC #OATASafetyinFootball

<u>Metric:</u>	<u>Campaign Results:</u>
Retweets	284
Favorites/Likes:	438
Impressions:	21,440
Engagements:	1,781

Pictures:

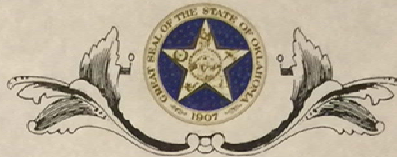






OKLAHOMA ATHLETIC TRAINERS' ASSOCIATION

STATE OF OKLAHOMA



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

Whereas, it is estimated that 53 percent of high school athletes have sustained a concussion; and

Whereas, because the frontal lobes of the human brain continue to develop until age 25, it is vital to manage youth concussions and other sports-related injuries carefully to ensure optimal neurological development; and

Whereas, the Oklahoma Athletic Trainers' Association (OATA) has organized a Safety in Football Campaign to promote increased safety for our high school athletes; and

Whereas, the goal of the Safety in Football Campaign is to help football teams in Oklahoma identify ways to reduce the risks of injury to their players; and

Whereas, this Oklahoma-based, statewide campaign will encourage participating schools to speak publicly about the value of properly trained staff, how safety is a priority for every athlete and how coaches can mentor and teach player well-being and improve the safety of this beloved team sport; and

Whereas, as part of the campaign, each participating school will be provided with OATA helmet stickers that will bring awareness to this noteworthy cause;

Now, Therefore, I, Mary Fallin, Governor, do hereby proclaim September 9 through September 17, 2016, as

"Safety in Football Campaign Days"

in the state of Oklahoma.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Oklahoma to be affixed.



ATTEST

Assistant

Done at the Capitol, in the City of Oklahoma City, this 6th day of September, in the Year of Our Lord two thousand and sixteen, and of the State of Oklahoma in the one hundred and eighth year.

[Signature]
SECRETARY OF STATE

Mary Fallin
GOVERNOR







OKLAHOMA ATHLETIC TRAINERS' ASSOCIATION



Jenks' Noah Hernandez (left) and Raegan Stephenson (right) hit Springdale (Ark.) Har-Ber's Logan Collins during a football game at Jenks High School in Jenks, Okla., on Friday, September 16, 2016. MATT BARNARD/Tulsa World



Bixby offensive lineman Bryce Bray (left) gets ready to block Putnam City defensive lineman Ron Tatum (right) during the game at Spartan Stadium in Bixby, OK on 9/16/16. BRETT ROJO/For the Tulsa World