

Everyone is into football helmet safety these days.

# Helmet Wars 2020

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Debuting in 2020: the LS2 model.

**F**ootball equipment – more specifically, football helmets – will undoubtedly be a focus of the team sports business in 2020 as safety concerns and the participation decline they bring with them continue. As the new decade dawns there is certainly no slowdown in the amount of news involving football helmets and player safety coming across our desks. Maybe it is because of all of the money involved in the sport or because it makes for good pr, but it seems a larger number of companies are entering partnerships or developing new products aimed at the market. Let's take a look.

## Light Helmets Is Lighting It Up

Offering a legitimate alternative to the major helmet brands, most of whom sell direct,

comes a new company called Light Helmets, based in Carlsbad, CA. The brand, which made a splash at the Sports inc. Fall Show in Las Vegas late last year, is utilizing a Kevlar shell that it claims is much stronger and lighter than plastic, combined with patented multi-layer Armor and Auxetic foams that offer the necessary additional protection.

As its name suggests, the primary selling point for the Light helmet is, well, its light weight. It weighs in at 1.5–3.0 pounds less – approximately 40 percent – than its primary helmet competitors.

The company claims that the Light LS series of helmets is the first to address player performance and fatigue in addition to the requisite protection. The thinking goes that since weight slows you down and adds to momentum and kinetic energy transmitted

to the head, neck and back, as well as fatigues muscles, a player is more susceptible to injury.

Based on the timing of when the company started and the sales window, Light Helmets just caught the end of the 2019 season, but had helmets on heads from the NCAA down to Pop Warner.

“We brought to market three Five Star (Virginia Tech) rated helmets in less than nine months, but weren't delivering helmets until July,” reports CEO **Nick Esayian**. “We delivered about 1000 helmets and expect to far exceed that this year. Response has been fantastic as dealers have gotten enthusiastic interest in a helmet that brings battlefield, military aviation and auto racing tech into sports helmets.”

The design and materials of the shell and multi-layer liners work together as a unit to absorb and dissipate energy over the entire surface area, the company claims, and the helmet has been approved by sanction-

ing bodies such as NOCSAE and SEI and has received a 5 Star rating from Virginia Tech. (NFL testing is scheduled for early 2020.) The helmet also includes a strong and light hollow wire Chromoly steel facemask, which improves helmet balance, and comes standard with features such as the Douglas EZ Pro Snaps, Sport Star chin cup and impact absorbing facemask dampeners.

New for 2020 is the LS2 model that replaces the original LS1. It boasts an even lighter shell that is “significantly stronger” and features smoother edges, earholes and vents. The new shell and liner geometry also include an increased amount of its Armor Foam in key areas with an improved finish that is more durable and doesn't look as much like Styrofoam. New comfort pads feature a softer, thicker version of its Auxetic Foam, encased