

ProTect Athletics and ProTrain College Launch Inaugural Cohort of the Director of Athletic Safety Credential (DAS)

NFL, PFEMS and CFEMS Equipment Managers Kick-Off Nation's First Director of Athletic Safety Program

RALEIGH, NC, UNITED STATES, July 31, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [ProTect Athletics](#), in

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This is the beginning of a professional credential that changes what it means to be responsible for an athlete's safety.”

Jerry D. Fife, M.Ed., COO and Co-Founder of ProTect Athletics

partnership with [ProTrain College](#), announced the successful launch of the first instructor-led cohort of the [Director of Athletic Safety](#) (DAS) credential. This virtual program marks the kickoff of the nation's first professional safety certification designed specifically for the sport safety ecosystem.

The advanced training pathway, delivered through the ProTrain College platform 1st Cohort took place July 13, 2026, was led by Jerry D. Fife, M.Ed. The groundbreaking initiative enrolled 40+ members of NFL teams in the

Professional Football Equipment Managers Society (PFEMS) alongside representation from the College Football Equipment Managers Society (CFEMS).

"This is not a training seminar," said Jerry D. Fife, M.Ed., COO and Co-Founder of ProTect Athletics. "PFEMS and NFL members are among the most prepared sports safety professionals in the world. The fact that they are our first cohort tells you everything about where this credential is going."

What is the Director of Athletic Safety (DAS)?

The DAS credential is a five-course professional certification pathway developed by ProTect Athletics and offered in partnership with ProTrain College, a nationally recognized collegiate partner providing CEU credits that could transfer into academic courses.

The curriculum establishes a comprehensive "Safety Playbook" across five essential courses:

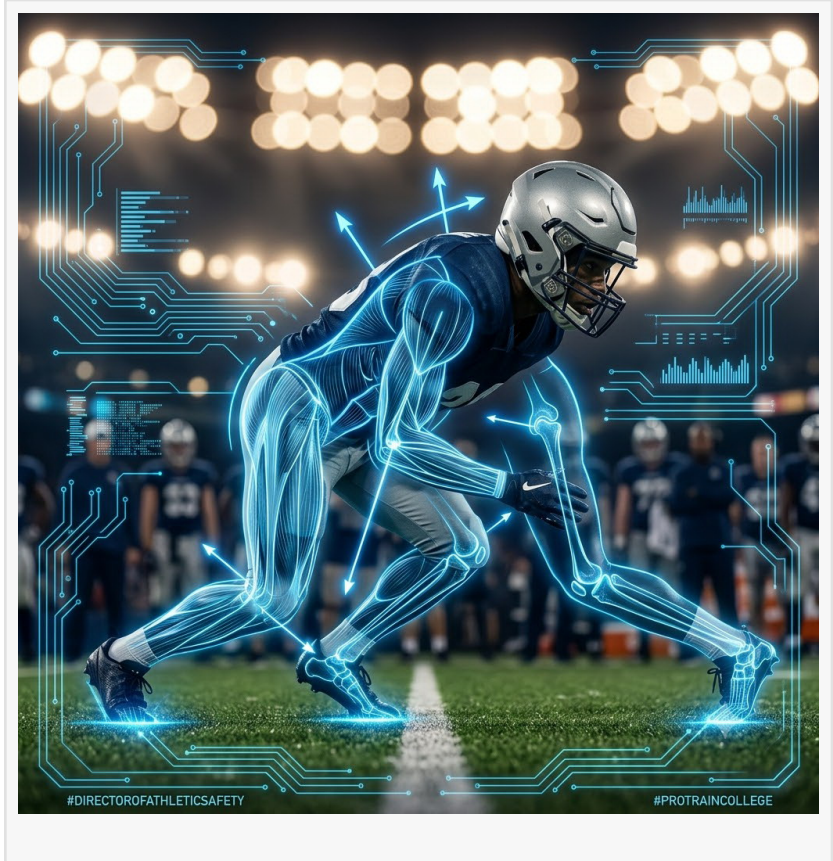
- Course 1: Athletic Safety & Risk Management: Entry point establishing role accountability, risk frameworks, OSHA compliance, emergency response, and safety culture.
- Course 2: Anatomy & Physiology for the Sport Safety Professional: Eleven body systems across

twelve modules focused on anatomical precision for incident reports and medical staff referrals.

□ Course 3: Kinesiology, Biomechanics & Ergonomics for the Sport Safety Professional: Builds biomechanical intelligence to analyze movement forces, predict structure risks, and stop injury before it occurs.

□ Course 4: Risk, Hazard, Job Safety & Root Cause Analysis: Advanced diagnostic skills covering Job Hazard Analysis, 5 Whys Root Cause Analysis, OSHA compliance, and defensible documentation.

□ Course 5: Driving Effective Change in Sport Safety: Capstone course developing stakeholder communication, policy development, and regulatory engagement to drive lasting institutional change.



The DAS works directly alongside Certified Athletic Trainers. While Athletic Trainers focus on clinical treatment and medical response, the DAS acts as a systemic safety professional uncovering root causes, protocol gaps, and environmental hazards. The credential is currently mapping toward formal accreditation through the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

Industry Impact and Validation

"ProTect Athletics and ProTrain share a commitment to the highest standards of professional education," said Betty Lucas-Gardner, CEO/President, ProTrain. "Delivering the DAS credential to PFEMS and NFL members through our platform is a landmark moment for professional sport safety education in this country."

Mike Schroder, Provost for ProTrain College, added, "We are deeply committed to delivering credential programs that pair rigid professional standards with high-quality delivery. The DAS curriculum was engineered with the highest level of academic rigor to ensure these elite equipment managers are equipped with evidence-based safety protocols."

"Plain and simple, one saved workman's comp case can offset the cost of a DAS professional's job and/or training," said Brendan Burger, Director of Equipment, Los Angeles Rams & President of PFEMS.

"It has always been wild to me that I am responsible for fitting the helmets of our hundred-million-dollar assets with no football-specific certification or credential verifying that I know what I'm doing. I think we are taking the first steps towards that recognizable credential through this class," stated Collin Peterson, Assistant Equipment Manager, Jacksonville Jaguars.

"The DAS is an excellent opportunity to separate myself from the rest of the department," added Richard Killian II, Assistant Equipment Manager for the New Orleans Saints. "The professors are very knowledgeable... and have a very fun and interactive way of getting the information through to everyone."

To learn more about custom training sequences or future cohort dates, visit protrain.edu or protectathletics.org.

About ProTect Athletics

ProTect Athletics (Athletic Safety Organization dba ProTect Athletics) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to athlete safety through professional education, credentialing, and systemic safety standards. Protection Beyond the Game.

About ProTrain College

Nationally accredited through Middle States (MSA-CESS), ProTrain College offers quality educational services at affordable cost, in the classroom or online. ProTrain is about "Education to Employment" to assist the student population in gaining employment, or developing stackable skill sets to further their career.

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