

**BOSTON, MA-** The Look-Up Line™, founded by The Thomas E. Smith Foundation, will be implemented at Citi Frozen Fenway 2014.

The Look-Up Line™, ice hockey's first warning track; is an adjunct to decreasing the risk of head and catastrophic spinal cord injuries. It is a preventive approach to making hockey safer without affecting the game's speed, intensity or heritage; all while not adding any new rules that may adversely impact play. The safety challenge in ice hockey lies with how to continue developing bigger, faster and stronger athletes while trying to operate within a progressively safer framework. The best solution to a complex problem is often the most simple, and we believe the Look-Up Line™ is the answer to a safer game of ice hockey.

Ideas similar to the Look-Up Line™ are currently mandated in other major sports. These sports have made the proper playing surface modifications to help ensure a participant's safety before hitting a solid object. Here is an overview of modifications made to the following sports:

**Football:**

- In 1974 the NFL moved goalposts to the back of the end zone.
- In addition it is required that players and coaches stand 5 yards back from the field of play.

**Basketball:**

- The NBA installed padded L-shaped framing posts to ensure player safety.
- Players, coaches and fans are required to sit at least 3-5 feet back from the court of play.

**Baseball:**

- Major League Baseball implemented a warning track ranging 12-15 feet around the perimeter of the field.

**Swimming:**

- All Olympic size pools have black lines on the bottom of the pools in each swimming lane. These lines end roughly 6-½ feet before the edge of the wall.

These modifications all have one thing in common: They give athletes the opportunity to pick up their heads and make proper bodily adjustments before hitting a solid object.

Surprised nothing like this exists in hockey? You are not alone. The idea for the Look-Up Line™ was founded in 2012 while co-founder Thomas Smith was watching a Red Sox game. As an outfielder was tracking a fly-ball he ran onto the warning track and upon doing so, he immediately raised his arm to feel for the Green Monster without actually looking at it. Pensive, he could not help but ask himself, "How does this not exist in hockey?" Like Boston University's

Travis Roy, Thomas suffered a spinal cord injury (SCI) not once, but twice while playing hockey that eventually put him in a wheelchair for 27 months. However, through vigorous cutting-edge therapies at both The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis and Boston Medical Center he overcame all odds, recovered, and is miraculously walking again with the aid of Lofstrand crutches. During his recovery, Thomas had the opportunity to connect with some of the world's top doctors, and through his experiences has developed into a public figure speaking on behalf of those living with paralysis. He is an advocate for SCI and paralysis research as well as cutting edge therapies, and is currently spearheading his Foundation's preventative project the Look-Up Line™.

With the help of Hockey East Commissioner Joe Bertagna, The NCAA Rules Committee, and Fenway Sports Group, the Look-Up Line™ will be implemented at Citi Frozen Fenway 2014. The Look-Up Line™ is a warning track extending around the circumference of the rink which will provide players with information that will warn them, 1. To keep their heads up in order to prevent head and neck injuries, and 2. To be careful not to body check (contact) opposing players from behind. The original Look-Up Line™ extends 40 inches from the boards around the circumference of the rink; however, it will appear slightly different at Citi Frozen Fenway 2014 because New England's weather conditions are extremely unpredictable. This version of the Look-Up Line™ will appear 28 inches away from the boards and is 12 inches in width. The 28 inches of white-space are necessary along the boards so there will be no loss of ice in the event that games are played under warmer outdoor temperatures.

The Thomas E. Smith Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization that benefits those affected by and living with paralysis. All members of the foundation are extremely excited for the opportunity to debut the Look-Up Line™ nationally at Citi Frozen Fenway 2014. It is their hope that through aligning with the appropriate league officials and educating the general public the Look-Up Line™ will be in hockey rinks across the United States and all over the world so that players can have more awareness of where they are on the ice in relation to the boards. Thomas and his team believe that this idea is a preventative approach to decreasing the number of severe head and neck injuries in all levels of hockey.

The entire Thomas E. Smith Foundation would like to sincerely thank Hockey East Commissioner Joe Bertagna, the NCAA Rules Committee and Fenway Sports Group for helping us launch this idea at Citi Frozen Fenway 2014. For more information about The Thomas E. Smith Foundation and the Look-Up Line™, please visit [www.justcureparalysis.org](http://www.justcureparalysis.org).

