

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONDÉ NAST ENTERTAINMENT, GQ, AND ENDEAVOR FILMS
TACKLE THE CHALLENGES AND TRIUMPHS OF RETIRED NFL PLAYERS WITH
*CASUALTIES OF THE GRIDIRON***

WEEKLY DOCUMENTARY SERIES DEBUTS TODAY ON THE GQ DIGITAL NETWORK

New York (Nov. 18, 2013) – Condé Nast Entertainment and *GQ*, in partnership with Endeavor Films and Bywater Films, will today premiere *Casualties of the Gridiron*, a new documentary series that chronicles life after concussion-filled football careers for a group of retired professional players. The hard-hitting series focuses on the players' journey to overcome crippling chronic pain, drug addiction, behavioral issues and brain trauma with the support of one another and the help of a team of dedicated medical professionals. *Casualties of the Gridiron* will debut across all platforms of the CNÉ digital network including the official [GQ video site](#) and YouTube channel as well as through syndicated partnerships. New episodes of the eight-episode series will premiere on Mondays and Thursdays through December 18, 2013.

In 2009, *GQ* first shed light on the aftereffects of concussions and traumatic brain injuries in the feature "[Game Brain](#)" by Jeanne Marie Laskas. The eye-opening article chronicles a young pathologist's discovery of the link between concussion-related injuries and severe mental decline and the dramatic battle that would ensue between the National Football League and the scientific community. Five years, many high-profile professional players' deaths, and one controversial lawsuit later, Condé Nast Entertainment and the *GQ* digital channel are taking another look at the issue through their new documentary series, *Casualties of the Gridiron*.

Casualties of the Gridiron follows former **New York Jets** quarterback Ray Lucas, **San Francisco 49ers** linebacker Terry Tautolo, **Minnesota Vikings** guard Brent Boyd, **Army** fullback Gene Merlino, **Tampa Bay Buccaneers** center Randy Grimes, and **Washington Redskins** wide receiver Charlie Brown – players who once reached the pinnacle of athletic accomplishment – as they struggle with personal, physical, and emotional challenges. Their road to recovery is navigated by a group of doctors called P.A.S.T. (Pain Alternatives Solutions and Treatments) who work closely with the former players left physically broken and cognitively impaired from injury-laden football careers.

"Quality original content engages audiences and drives conversation whether you watch it in the theater, on your television, or on your computer or mobile device," said Dawn Ostroff, President, Condé Nast Entertainment. "Condé Nast Entertainment will deliver *Casualties of the Gridiron* across our digital platforms to ensure that this in-depth look at one of the most critical issues affecting too many professional football players today is available to the widest audience possible."

"Our goal has always been to spotlight the challenges of retired players who played in an era of five-figure salaries and public indifference about the health risks of professional football," said Isaac Solotaroff, director and executive producer of *Casualties of the Gridiron*. "We are proud to

be partnering with CNE and GQ to share our honest and raw series in order to make a meaningful contribution to the ongoing dialog about the lack of care available to help these players pick up the pieces after they've left the field.”

At the heart of *Gridiron* is case manager Jennifer Smith, who has dedicated her career to helping retired NFL players and other former athletes. In addition to being an integral part of P.A.S.T., Smith co-founded the Gridiron Greats retired players' organization with NFL legends Mike Ditka and Jerry Kramer. Since 2009, Jennifer has managed hundreds of players' cases as the P.A.S.T. doctors developed and honed an innovative medical approach for treating the overwhelming number of neurological, psychological, and physical ailments that have plagued players like Lucas, Tautolo, Boyd, Merlino, Grimes, and Brown. The P.A.S.T. team has been credited with improving – and in some cases saving – the lives of more than one hundred former NFL players. *Gridiron*, however, shows that there is still much work to be done to ease retired players' suffering and support their long struggle for equitable health care and disability benefits.

“Sharing my work with retired player provides a brutally honest look into the day-to-day struggles of men who sacrificed their bodies to stage the most profitable spectacle in all of sports,” said Jennifer Smith, producer and P.A.S.T director of player programs. “Through the *Gridiron* series, I am able to give viewers unprecedented, behind-the-scenes access to P.A.S.T. and our players' stories of hope and redemption.”

Casualties of the Gridiron premieres on November 18, 2013. For the latest episodes and *Gridiron* updates, subscribe to the [GQ YouTube channel](#), and follow *Casualties of the Gridiron* across social media with #GQGridiron.

Casualties of the Gridiron is directed by Endeavor Films' Isaac Solotaroff (*WHAM! BAM! ISLAM!*, *Ballplayer: Pelotero*) with co-director Jesse Handsher of Bywater Films. **Jennifer Smith and Solotaroff serve as both executive producers and producers for the series produced by Endeavor Films and Bywater Films for Condé Nast Entertainment and GQ.**

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