

We are all very saddened by this tragedy and know it affected the players, coaches and fans that were present as well as all those in the overall hockey community.

USA Hockey has always been concerned about skate blade lacerations to the unprotected body areas, especially the neck, wrist, thigh, and lower leg.

*“USA Hockey continues to recommend a neck laceration protector for all players. The heightened discussions around lacerations from a skate blade reinforce the recommendation that players wear a neck laceration protector that covers as much of the neck as possible along with cut-resistant socks, sleeves, or undergarments.”*

We have studied neck laceration protectors in detail and believe that they may be helpful.

Unfortunately, many of the currently available designs do not cover the vulnerable anatomic areas.

Another study shows that some devices shrink after washing with more exposure of the neck region.

In addition, laboratory testing shows that most do not prevent cut-through from a sharpened skate blade.

There has also been speculation and concern that a collar-type device could deflect the skate blade resulting in a laceration, to an unprotected area under the angle of the mandible.

Neck range of motion testing with and without neck laceration protectors revealed a significant reduction in flexion, extension, side bending & rotation designs. The consequences of reduced neck motion are unclear but may affect both performance and safety on the ice.

USA Hockey, led by its safety and protective equipment committee, is continuing to work with equipment companies to affect the safest possible environment for all participants.