Boeing, Russell Athletic Give 787 Carbon Fiber New Life on Football Field

Russell Athletic shoulder pad system made with same high-performance carbon fiber as 787 Dreamliner

Collaboration supports Boeing environmental and business objectives

SEATTLE, Aug. 27, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] and Russell Brands LLC announced today that they are working together to incorporate excess carbon fiber from 787 Dreamliner production in Russell Athletic protective athletic gear.

The companies will expand an initial collaboration that puts 787 carbon fiber into Russell Athletic's new CarbonTek football shoulder pad system. Boeing and Russell Athletic see significant benefits in using aerospace-grade carbon fiber because the carbon filaments provide a high strength-to-weight ratio and greater durability.

Boeing, which markets surplus factory materials to meet the company's environmental and business goals, sees more opportunities to repurpose carbon fiber as it increases the use of composites in its commercial airplanes. Composite materials make up 50 percent of the primary structure of the 787, including the fuselage and wing, helping to make the Dreamliner 20 percent more fuel efficient than the airplane it replaces. In addition, Boeing's new 777X will be the largest and most-efficient twin-engine jet in the world due in part to the industry's largest composite wing.

"Boeing decided to build the 787 Dreamliner with carbon composites to increase fuel efficiency for our customers and improve the passenger experience," said Julie Felgar, managing director of Boeing Commercial Airplanes environmental strategy. "Our collaboration with Russell Athletic is a fabulous opportunity to utilize the strength and lightweight characteristics of 787 carbon fiber to support elite athletes on the field."

The CarbonTek with OS Technology (patent-pending) shoulder pad system has the sports industry's first-ever exoskeleton made of aerospace-grade carbon fiber, which is thinner, stronger and approximately 10 percent lighter compared to competitors. The high-performance fiber also offers an increased range of motion and secure fit for the athlete's body.

"We are thrilled to partner with Boeing and discover new ways to utilize carbon fiber used on the 787 to make innovative, game-changing products for the sports industry," said Robby Davis, senior vice president and general manager, Russell Athletic. "It's an exciting opportunity for both companies to leverage the value of carbon fiber used in high-performance gear while helping to meet environmental goals."

Several elite collegiate players from Division I universities will be wearing the CarbonTek throughout the upcoming football season, as well as Russell Athletic's three pro football ambassadors: Pierre Garcon, Mark Ingram and Colt McCoy.

For more information about:

- Boeing, visit www.newairplane.com and www.boeing.com/environment
- CarbonTek with OS Technology™, visit www.carbontekshoulderpads.com
- Fruit of the Loom's, parent company of Russell Brands LLC, commitment to corporate social responsibility and other initiatives, visit www.fotlinc.com

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