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**OVER 1 MILLION NETBALLERS WEARING THE WRONG SHOES FOR THEIR SPORT**

Despite being the UK’s number one female participation sport, with over 1.4 million women and girls playing netball in a typical season, an extraordinary 70% of netballers aren’t wearing the correct shoes for the sport. The vast majority play in running shoes or generic ‘trainers’ which don’t provide the necessary grip and support for the quick, dynamic movements needed in the game.

In addition to improving performance on court, the grip and support provided by specialist netball shoes can also help reduce the risk of ankle and knee injuries. Their durability also reduces the need to replace shoes on a such a regular basis.

During a regular 60-minute game of netball, players perform a vast range of dynamic movements, with up to 900 changes of direction. Players spend less than 40% of their time on court moving forward, with most activity including jumps, accelerations and decelerations involving lateral movements.

Chartered Physiotherapist, Andy Curtis, comments: “Running shoes are simply not designed for the ‘stop start’ motions in netball, where players are focused on change of direction and need stability as they come down from the air. Choosing a netball shoe rather than a running shoe, means players are more likely to have a stable knee and ankle position when they land - reducing the likelihood of injuries in those two areas.”

In a bid to ensure more women and girls get the most from their sport, global sports brand Mizuno are on a mission to get all players to #MakeTheSwap, educating them on the importance of choosing the correct shoes for netball.

Debbie Hallas, Managing Director at Manchester Thunder, two-time Vitality Netball Super League champions, comments: “Mizuno have developed a superb range of netball shoes that offer all our players the grip and support needed to play safely and gain an all-important advantage over their opponents.”

Commenting on the huge physical demands of netball, Graham Johnson, UK Marketing Manager at Mizuno says: “Our research shows that in a typical Super League match the Centre covers 6-8km; the Goal Defence jumps 75 times, Goal Shooter 65 and Wing Defence 64; the Goal Keeper completes 151 Accelerations and 117 decelerations, Wing Defence 192 Accelerations and 248 Decelerations. In fact, all positions, except the Goal Keeper complete more decelerations than accelerations.”

“Most parents understand the need for the correct footwear for sports like football and rugby, and it should be exactly the same for netball. We want women and girls to be able to fully enjoy the sport with a greater level of control and a reduced risk of damaging knees and ankles.”

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Words: 429

**For more information, imagery, or to try Mizuno netball shoes, please contact Dan Mills at Promote PR**

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**About Mizuno**

Founded in 1906 by Rihachi Mizuno, Mizuno is the oldest sports brand in the world. The company began selling baseballs, before venturing into other sports including skiing, athletics and golf, where they developed revolutionary skis, spiked athletics shoes and golf clubs.

Mizuno opened its first research and technology facility in 1938. Since then, technology has continued to shape Mizuno’s products with heat generating material and wave technology amongst many of the recent technological advancements Mizuno has brought to the sports industry.

In December 2016 Mizuno entered the netball shoe market, launching its first range of netball specific shoes. The company has since grown to become the foremost authority on netball shoes in the industry and now partners with four of the Vitality Netball Premiership Teams – Manchester Thunder, Benecos Mavericks, Severn Stars and Wasps Netball.