



## Blitz

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### Mentor Statement:

I have known and mentored this student from the last year when I taught Fashion CAD. I also taught her in my class, Activewear Design and Product Development during Spring 2019. This entry is part of her class project in the course. The student completed her first activewear design project where she was asked to develop unique activewear considering aesthetic impacts and functional need for comfortable movement. One of the requirements was to execute unique embellishment techniques to make the outfit distinctive and attractive. My mentoring was focused on her implementation of creating unique embellishment reflecting a new way of her interpretation of what is going on sportswear design and women's role and perspective. I also provided guidance and feedback on her surface design to make her outfit looks unique and also functional while teaching how to execute her ideas in using stretchy knit fabrics and 3D spacers. She made tried a few different samples and also practice different seaming methods to make the process effective. Her effort and dedication to reach perfection with careful selection of materials, and unique surface embellishment, led me to enthusiastically support her entry. She made a successful transformation of her idea of duality of masculinity and femininity found in typical American sports, football, to unique design functional activewear. The outfit has professional finish with neat construction and proper use of 2D and 3D materials in the embellishment.

### Design Statement:

This look derives its inspiration from football, namely from the padding used to protect athletes while playing the sport. I am very interested in exploring classic Americana, and I often find inspiration in American history. When creating an activewear garment, it came natural that I found inspiration in football as it is one of the most uniquely American sports. However, since football is extremely masculine in nature, I wanted to create a look that reimagined football padding in a uniquely feminine way. My look expresses the duality between masculinity and femininity through the lens of football.

The title, "Blitz", stems from the football play. In a blitz, more than the usual number of defensive players rush the opposing team's quarterback in attempt to disrupt pass attempts from the opposing offense. When researching football terms, I found this most appropriate based on the unique, almost glamorous name and meaning of the play. Both my look and the football play are disruptions from the normal. I see women as the disrupters in my look as they are portraying something traditionally masculine in a uniquely feminine way. My look allows women to be powerful and express themselves without giving up their womanhood.

To materialize this concept in clothing, I developed a white crop top/jacket and a pair of matching red leggings. The top references the big, rounded shoulders in football padding through

the shaping of the sleeves. However, it is cropped to reveal a feminine waist shape. The fabric choices continue my concept. I used white spacer mesh and white neoprene to complete this look. Both fabrics have structure that allows for interesting shaping details, and the spacer mesh in particular gives a similar appearance to padding. The spacer mesh also has an element of sheerness that further explores the female form by obscuring and revealing. The white neoprene is used in panels across the garment to further obscure the form and across the bust to allow the garment to be worn by itself without an under layer.

The leggings reference football through the padding placed on the thigh and calves. Football players typically have extensive padding on their thighs, and, although their pants do not extend much beyond the knee, they wear shin guards. I wanted to reference this in a way that is also fashionable. As females today do not necessarily want massive thighs, I did not make either panel particularly thick and tried to balance the concept of padding and aesthetic quality. The quilting used is meant to be seen rather than covered by other layers and therefore must remain stylish. The fabric choice is a red stretch velvet. This contrasts the idea of football with something that is more traditionally feminine.

The pieces were drafted using traditional methods and digitized and adjusted via Optitex. The digital files were then converted to Illustrator so I could use laser cutting to create the final pieces. Before the final fabric was used, I first created the top with a different stretch fabric to check the placement of the stripes. I also created a sleeve out of the final fabric to test the fabric properties with the shaping of the sleeve and check it for accuracy. For the pants, I created a muslin using the same fabric and used them to figure out the placement of the padding.

For the surface design on the top, I cut slits in the front panel of the top using laser cutting and used a long strip of the spacer mesh to create loops. Each loop was hand tacked into place to create the perfect shape and size loop. This element is designed to emphasize the femininity aspect of the look. It references the bust while maintaining a boxy silhouette that does not conform to the natural body curve. The surface design on the pants was created by quilting. I attached batting to the stretch velvet and stitched the quilting design onto the fabric. I then cut the shapes out of the fabric, used another piece of the main fabric to bind the edges, and attached them to the leggings.

Overall, this look is a way to reflect duality of masculinity and femininity through football in functional activewear. The most interesting part of this look is the surface design elements. This element sets this look apart from other activewear pieces on the market. It is both stylish and practical. This look can be worn both as a fashion piece and while working out as the surface design elements do not obstruct movement, and the fabric choices allow for mobility.

