

## Toronto start-up in UEFA Sports Innovation Final

A Toronto-based business that is building a global social network for athletes will battle it out in a Sports Innovation Final to mark the UEFA Champions League Final in Wales.

VIKTRE is creating a community that connects three million pro, Olympic and national team athletes across the globe.

The company will join nine others in the Hype Foundation's Sports Innovation (SPIN) Final in Cardiff this Friday – the day before Juventus play Real Madrid in the Welsh capital.

Al Steele, CEO of VIKTRE, said: “We’re really looking forward to the chance to pitch our business to an elite panel of judges at the SPIN Final.

“We founded VIKTRE when we realised many current and retired athletes had no global network online, and we discovered that the sports fan wanted to know more about their favourite athletes – about their family, business, travel, fashion, etc. So, we decided to build a global platform that solved all of those needs.”

“Our mission is to build a global ecosystem connecting athletes in order to positively influence their lives. In so doing, we wish to entertain and inspire sport fans, offer our employees a rewarding career opportunity, create an extraordinary return for our shareholders, and impact society in a positive way.”

More than 1,300 athletes are already on the VIKTRE platform, including some of the biggest names in world sports, from Michael Phelps, the 23 times Gold Medallist Olympian, to Rubens Barrichello, the Brazilian F1 driver, and Ian Poulter, PGA and European Tour player.

The ‘Dragon’s Den’ style SPIN Final is organised by HYPE Foundation, a global platform that connects and invest in sports innovation and the initiator of global SPIN FINALS competitions alongside major sports events.

Hosted by Cardiff University, the SPIN Final takes place in front of an international jury, with senior representatives from UEFA, FC Barcelona, Adidas, Amazon and Microsoft.

Bernd Wahler, ex-Adidas CMO, VfB STUTTGART President who will chair the jury, said: “The quality of the startups is outstanding. We all want to maintain the beauty of the fascinating game and at the same time welcome meaningful and exciting innovations. That’s what this event is all about: showing the world the future of football.”

Companies will be pitching on the day of the UEFA Women’s Champions League Final between holders Lyon and Paris Saint-Germain at Cardiff City Stadium - the first all-French UEFA competition final. Juventus face holders Real Madrid in the men’s final on 3 June, marking a return for hometown hero Gareth Bale.