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Character References™

Volume 3 Number 2

The Street Characters Inc. Newsletter

Fall/Winter 1999

Mascot documentary being filmed

By Ian D. D. Livermore, Editor

Mascots have become a standard feature at sporting events worldwide.

In fact, mascots are so familiar that fans often take them for granted, not realizing all the work required to incorporate the furry creatures into the sports entertainment package.

The work of bringing a successful sports mascot to the fore is the

subject of a just completed hour long documentary film produced by New River Media and the Cerebellum Corporation.

"The documentary is basically a behind the scenes look at what people take for granted at a game," states Cerebellum's Lara Hopewell, the film's line producer.

"It looks at who is in the costume, ...See *DOCUMENTARY*, Page 4



SCI puts the "Roar" back into the Detroit Lions' mascot

By Ian D. D. Livermore, Editor

The Detroit Lions mascot Roary received a complete make-over this summer by the creative engineers at Street Characters Inc.

The end result is phenomenal. Roary's fur coat shimmers like it hasn't done in years and his eyes sparkle with renewed vigour. Roary is also sporting a new hairdo that features a thicker and more luxurious mane.

...See *ROARY*, Page 2

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Character References

is published twice annually by Street Characters Inc., the mascot solutions company. You can reach us at

Bay #6, 3529 - 12 St. NE
Calgary AB, Canada T2E 6P4

Phone: 1-888-MASCOTS

Fax: (403) 250-3846

e-mail: info@mascots.com

Glenn Street, Publisher

Ian D. D. Livermore, Editor

Columbus Blue Jackets abuzz about Stinger



By Ian D. D. Livermore, Editor

"We are completely satisfied. It was a great experience!"

Those are the words that the NHL expansion Columbus Blue Jackets use to describe Street Characters' work on the hockey club's Stinger mascot program. That work included construction of the Stinger mascot costume, and the recruitment and training of the performer inside.

"We could not be happier with how things went," says Joel

Siegman, the team's Community Relations Coordinator.

"The original talent search by Street Characters got the best crop of people to apply, and the auditions that followed were great. And the people here in Columbus really respond to the character."

Among the candidates to apply for the role of Stinger were existing NHL mascots, several minor league mascots, and the reigning NCAA mascot champion from the University of Nebraska.

Roary the Lion concluded...



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"We definitely put the roar back in Roary," says Creative Team Leader Colleen Bryant. "We started from the ground up with new artwork, and created an enduring character. Roary is completely reborn."

Roary joins Big Red of the Arizona Cardinals as the second NFL mascot built entirely by Street Characters. The company has also performed plastic surgery on three other NFL mascots: Edgar, Allen and Poe of the Baltimore Ravens.

The new look Roary was officially unveiled at the Celebrity Mascot Games in Orlando, Florida where he was an instant hit with the fans and his fellow mascots.

The calibre of the Stinger wannabees was so high that it made choosing the right performer difficult.

Following the auditions, four of the 11 audition candidates were interviewed for the job. Of those, two were so good that the Blue Jackets could not immediately decide who to hire. As a consequence, both individuals received training with the final decision being made a week later.

The Blue Jackets are ecstatic with their final selection. "We are thrilled with him!" exclaims Siegman.

Once the performer was selected, Street Characters finalized the costume for a tailor fit. When Stinger was unveiled July 2 at the Red, White and Boom event in Columbus, he was an instant hit.

"The people love him!"

Because the Blue Jackets will not begin play until the 2000-2001 NHL season, Stinger will be the Club's main ambassador in the community for the next 10 months. It's a tall order, but something he is more than up to.

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Street Talk

with Glenn Street, President, Street Characters

Mascot sponsorships are golden

A recent property tax dispute between the NFL Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Hillsborough County, Florida has given sports marketers a rare glimpse inside major league sponsorship packaging.

When the Buccaneers filed their tax appeal, they were required to publicly disclose the sponsorship packages they had negotiated. Interestingly, private appearances by the Buccaneers' mascot were featured in seven of 12 major sponsorship packages.

The companies that had chosen appearances by the Buccaneer mascot as part of their compensation for sponsorship, include such heavyweights as Adidas America, Miller Brewing Co., Coca Cola Co., and Raymond James Financial Inc. Six of the seven sponsors requested two mascot appearances a year. Raymond James Financial requested four.

Appearing at a sponsor's private event (e.g. corporate open house, employee family day picnics etc.) is but one of many ways to attract new sponsors with your mascot.

The mascot can also be incorporated into a sponsor's charitable activities. For example, several sports teams will enter in sponsor-driven youth



education initiatives such as Literacy for Kids programs. In many cases, the teams will send their mascot to visit the schools involved in these programs.

Another avenue for sponsorship is to permit use of the team mascot in sponsor advertising, be it in TV or print media ads, or in game-day promotional giveaways (pizzas, posters, gift certificates etc.). By doing so, however, the team is giving a defacto endorsement to the sponsor's products. If team management has any qualms about doing this they should avoid this option.

These are but a few of the ways a team can incorporate their mascot into sponsorship programs. The revenue value of each one will depend on the sponsor's size in the local marketplace, and the value the sponsor sees in using your mascot in their programs.

If you would like to learn more about mascot sponsorships and how they can benefit your organization, please call me at 1-888-MASCOTS.

Glenn Street founded SCI in 1986 after he co-developed the NHL's first mascot, Harvey the Hound. Glenn also performed as Harvey for several years.

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And this little Sleepy makes 49

When it comes to being a repeat Street Characters' customer, Travelodge Hotels goes all out.

For when the latest Sleepy Bear mascot was delivered to Travelodge this summer, it marked the completion of the 49th costume Street Characters has produced for the hotel chain.

Street Characters built its first Sleepy Bear costume for Travelodge Canada in 1996. Earlier this year, the mascot solutions company was awarded the contract to build the Sleepy costumes for Travelodge USA.

If the hotel chain ever expands into Mexico or Europe, Street Characters hopes to follow along. If that happens another 50+ Sleepy mascots is a definite possibility.



Documentary concluded

how those people are picked and trained, and how teams go about marketing the mascots.”

To get the complete picture on the mascot phenomenon, Hopewell and her crew searched far and wide for footage. This included filming on location in the US, Great Britain and Canada, as well as acquiring stock footage from Japan, Australia, and U.S. based sports teams.

During their trip to Britain, Hopewell’s crew filmed Gunnersaurus Rex, the mascot for the Arsenal Gunners Football Club, as well as a mascot costume manufacturer in Wimbledon.

In Canada, Cerebellum spent a full day filming at Street Characters



FILMING MASCOT TRYOUTS – Cerebellum cameraman Rich Confalone (far left) films Iggy the Iguana as he auditions for the mascot job with the Columbus Blue Jackets Hockey Club. Footage from the auditions will appear in the forthcoming documentary. Photo by Glenn Street



Inc., the mascot solutions company. They also filmed Street Characters’ president Glenn Street at work in Columbus, Ohio, as he conducted mascot auditions for the NHL Columbus Blue Jackets (see photo at the top of the page).

Filming the documentary has been an eye-opener for Hopewell.

“Honestly, I had no idea how much of a business there was

behind the mascot running around out there,” says Hopewell. “It was hard for us to believe that people were making a living doing this. Before we started, we had just thought it was a side perk of watching the game.”

Instead, Hopewell discovered the competitive nature of choosing the right mascot performer and the detailed attention that goes into marketing the mascot’s character. She also learned the technical intricacies that go into creating a workable mascot costume.

“We didn’t know there was such a science to keeping the costumes

cool and easy to perform in.”

The documentary is scheduled for release in mid-2000, states Executive Producer Doug Donaldson of New River Media. “We have already sold the international rights and are negotiating domestic distribution,” comments Donaldson.

Among the domestic contenders to air the documentary, tentatively called *The Mascot*, are PBS and ESPN. Donaldson says New River Media also intends to sell the documentary on home video.

Mascot Promotion Idea – Dash for Cash

Here’s a great promotion idea suggested by one of our News Group users, Devin Elliot.

“When I was the mascot for the Houston Astros AAA team in Arizona, we had a dash for cash in the third inning. I started at second

and the lucky fan started at home. I walked and he ran in a race to see who got to home plate first. If the contestant won, they got \$10. If I won, they got a consolation and the pot rolled over to the next game.”

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The Mascot 10 Commandments

Like any other job, certain rules govern work as a mascot performer. Ten in particular stand out. At Street Characters Inc., we call these rules the Mascot 10 Commandments. Please read and comply.

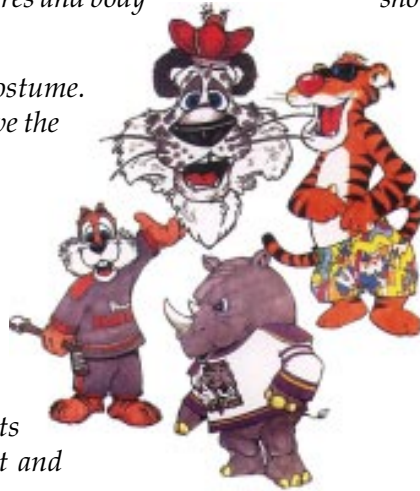
1. **NEVER** speak when in costume as it will ruin the fantasy that the mascot is a real creature, not just a person inside a costume. Use hand gestures and body language instead.

2. **NEVER** be seen publicly in partial costume. Either be fully dressed in costume, or have the costume secured in its storage bag.

3. Have fun, but never at anyone else's expense.

4. Know when to leave. It is better to leave with fans wanting more than to overstay your welcome.

5. Know what your role is at all events you attend so you can add to the event and not detract from it.



6. Remember that your sense of sight, sound and touch are reduced while you are in costume and that you should be in good physical condition.

7. **NEVER** try to pick up or hold children and other fragile objects.

8. Keep your fluids up: always drink plenty of water before, during and after each appearance. Avoid alcoholic and caffeine beverages.

9. Use a spotter whenever possible.

10. Remember, you are a high profile representative of your organization both in and out of costume.

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IUP bear travels in style

By Ian D. D. Livermore, Editor

If storks deliver newborn babies, who or what delivers newborn mascots?

Well, in the case of the Indiana University of Pennsylvania bear, it was a chartered Lear Jet.

The first class delivery was a by-product of Hurricane Floyd which ravaged the Eastern seaboard this September.

Due to flood damage brought on by Hurricane Floyd, the courier company transporting the bear experienced a computer system crash. As a result, the shipment was held up a day at a clearing station.

Then, amid all the confusion of clearing the backpile of shipments, the courier company forgot to load the mascot onto a plane for its final destination. This further delay put the characters' opening game unveiling in jeopardy.

When Street Characters learned of the delay, company staff got straight on the phone to the courier and insisted the costume be delivered to IUP within the day, and accepted no excuses for this not happening.

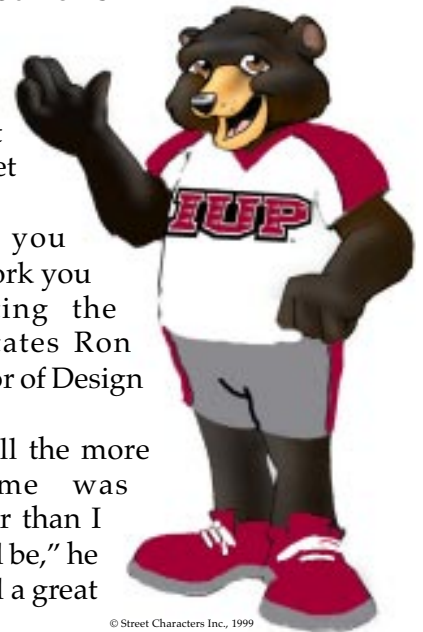
The courier company complied and chartered a Lear Jet to fly the mascot to its new home. The price tag: \$5500, all at the courier's expense.

IUP was very grateful for the extra effort Street Characters made to get the costume to them.

"I can't thank you enough for all the work you folks did in getting the costume to us," states Ron Mabon, IUP's Director of Design and Marketing.

Ron was pleased all the more when the costume was unveiled. "It is better than I ever expected it could be," he stated. "You guys did a great job."

Thanks Ron! Glad we could be of service.



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Dear Fuzzballs – The Character References' advice column

From the annals of the Mascot News Group at www.mascots.com

Question: Should dogs really “pee”?



I have been asked by the alumni association of my school to urinate on my opponents as a dog would do a fire hydrant. I personally think that it is unsportsmanlike. What do you think?

– Bruiser the Bulldog

Replies: Generally, no!

If you pee, I have a feeling you might get beat up if the opposing team's fans get hold of you. You might want to do something that is as effective but in better taste.

– PK Lizard, Miami Fusion Soccer Club

I ran into such problems in my tenure as a college mascot. You are entertaining mainly college students and alumni right? Do what you think they will be entertained by. But also bear in mind how you would feel if the opposing team's mascot pretended to urinate on you. I'd personally find it slightly entertaining.

– Slyly, Hiroshima (Japan) Toya Carp Pro Baseball Club

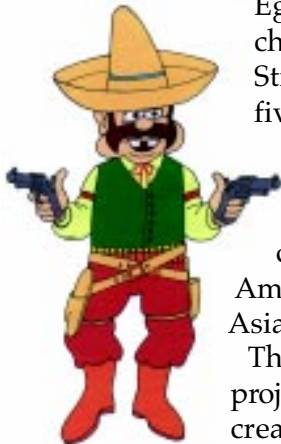
From my experience as Harvey the Hound, the first mascot in the NHL, I believe a urinating stunt can get you into more trouble than its worth. There are three reasons for this.

First, it could get the opposing teams angry with you personally, causing them to retaliate. Second, it could motivate them to cream your team. Finally, it is inevitable that someone in the bleachers, be it alumni, students, or a general spectator, will consider this stunt to be in bad taste, and launch a complaint about it. Accordingly, I recommend you don't do it.

– Glenn Street, President, Street Characters Inc.

SCI makes dreams come true for Egyptian theme park

Street Characters recently completed a series of characters for the Dreamland Theme Park in Cairo, Egypt. The creation of the characters expanded the range of Street Characters' sales activity to five continents. Previously, the mascot solutions company has created costumes for sports teams and companies in North



America, Europe, Asia and Australia.

The Dreamland project involved the creation of 10 human characters from art provided by the client. Each character was distinctly different from the others. The two shown here are Taakh Tookh (pictured above) and Koheet, (pictured in the right hand margin).



The other characters included a lounge singer, a playboy, a shepherd boy, and a bespectacled nerd.

The project proved quite challenging for Street Characters' creative engineers. For one thing, the artwork that the client provided was not ideally proportioned to having a performer inside. Also, the creative engineers had to factor in the extreme temperatures in

which the mascots would be used.

As a consequence, a lot of extra time and effort went in to tailoring the costume patterns, and to selecting ultra lightweight and breathable fabrics.

The results speak for themselves. They are absolutely dreamy.

