

***THE* BENCHWARMERS**

In Revolution Studios' comedy *The Benchwarmers*, three underdogs (Rob Schneider, David Spade and Jon Heder) form a three-man baseball team to challenge a full squad of elementary school baseball bullies. Their success leads to a high-stakes, winner-take-all game with the best kids in the state. If they win, they will become an inspiration for every kid who has ever been a benchwarmer.

SYNOPSIS

Gus (Rob Schneider), Richie (David Spade) and Clark (Jon Heder) are three underdogs who spent a great deal of time on the bench when they were kids. Now, they're getting a second chance.

Mel (Jon Lovitz) is a local billionaire whose son Nelson (Max Prado) is always being intimidated by the other kids. One day, Gus and Clark rescue Nelson from a bunch of bullies on the baseball field. When Max tells his father about the incident, Mel makes Gus, Clark and Richie a tantalizing proposition: He will put up the money for them to travel and play in a tournament against the young baseballers as a way of helping his son and other nerds like him to exact revenge against the bullies of this world. It will be called "Mel's Tournament of Little Baseballers and Three Older Guys."

The winner will get the greatest stadium ever built — at Mel's expense.

In order to prepare Gus, Richie and Clark for the tournament, Mel hires baseball legend Reggie Jackson to train them. Reggie works with them on timing by having them sit in the back of a truck as it drives down the street, swinging a bat and demolishing mailboxes. He also teaches them fielding by tossing a hot potato at them, which they catch barehanded and toss quickly to one another.

Amazingly, the training pays off and they become an inspiration to benchwarmers everywhere.

Revolution Studios Presents A Happy Madison Production *The Benchwarmers* starring Rob Schneider, David Spade and Jon Heder, a Columbia Pictures release. The film also stars Jon Lovitz, Craig Kilborn, Molly Sims and Tim Meadows. The film is directed by Dennis Dugan and written by Allen Covert & Nick Swardson. The producers are Adam Sandler and Jack Giarraputo. The executive producers are Barry Bernardi and Allegra Clegg. The director of photography is Thomas Ackerman, ASC. The production designer is Perry Andelin Blake. The editors are Peck Prior and Sandy Solowitz. Mary Jane Fort is the costume designer. The co-producers are Nick Swardson and Derek Dauchy. The music is by Waddy Wachtel. The music supervision is by Michael Dilbeck and Bryan Bonwell.

The Benchwarmers has been rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association of America for Crude and Suggestive Humor, and For Language.

The Benchwarmers will be released by Columbia Pictures on April 7, 2006.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

"Adam Sandler had this idea," explains Rob Schneider, "for a movie about three older guys, who weren't really that great at sports when they were kids, who get a

chance to play against other young baseballers and beat up on them.”

Director Dennis Dugan says, “I got involved with *The Benchwarmers* when Happy Madison, Adam Sandler's company, sent me the script. I had done two comedies for them and they knew I was a huge baseball fan. So they thought it would be the perfect marriage.”

Dugan admits he related to the concept of being a benchwarmer because he was one when as a kid. “A benchwarmer is the athletic kid who isn't an athlete, someone who really wants to play and be included, but who always gets picked last — if he gets picked at all — and always sits at the end of the bench.”

Glad to be working with Happy Madison again, particularly on a movie about baseball, it was only when he was in production that Dugan realized “how difficult it is to shoot a movie about baseball, because the field is so vast. It's not a linear sport like basketball, hockey or football, which basically work on one line. Baseball is different. It starts here and then the ball goes there and someone runs there to get it, and if he does, someone cheers way over there somewhere. So it's composed of thousands and thousands and thousands of shots. So there's one line in the script that basically says ‘Nelson hits a double down the right field line,’ and I suddenly realized it was going to take four hours to shoot that one line. So, I had to make an account for every shot. I had to be part director and part CPA.”

As a former actor, Dugan had a special facility for communicating with his cast. “Having been an actor, now that I'm working behind the camera, I can empathize with the desire in each and every cast member to find their character and the most appropriate line reading. It helps that I understand the language of how to get them there. It makes for a truly collaborative process. On this movie, everybody had a voice and everybody came up with stuff. My job was to be the shepherd and keep them all going down the same path.”

"Dennis Dugan was great. He had more energy than anyone on the set, which is how it should be," says Schneider. "He constantly had fresh ideas and if you got stuck, he was right there to help you. Also, his son is an incredible baseball player, so he has a real appreciation and love of the game. He loves comedy and he loves the game."

"Dugan is a genuinely nice guy. He's peppy and he's been around comedy for a long time with some hit movies under his belt," says David Spade. "It was wonderful to have someone on the set who was upbeat and in a good mood and up to changing things if he had to."

Jon Heder agrees, "Dugan was a lot of fun to work with, like a big kid. He'd get out there and kind of goof around and do funny voices. He was full of energy and excitement and he had a good handle on what kids' baseball is like."

For co-screenwriter Nick Swardson, Dugan was a welcome, encouraging presence. "He gave me a lot of freedom, which writers rarely have on the set," he explains. "He really respects and loves comedy, so he welcomed any new jokes or line changes. It made for a really productive creative process."

Dugan also had support from Sandler, one of the producers on the film who, throughout production, served as a combination booster, inspiration and comic benchmark.

"Adam's presence was always felt, whether he was on the set or not," according to Schneider, "because this was a story he had always had in his mind and I was playing the role he might have played. That was a big responsibility for me, because I think of Adam like a brother and I wanted to make sure that we were doing the movie in a way that would justify his enthusiasm for it. It certainly has the anarchy of all his movies – maybe even more. For me it was like a master's

thesis on the form of a quintessential Adam Sandler comedy."

Like Dugan, production designer Perry Andelin Blake also got involved with *The Benchwarmers* because he's such a huge baseball fan. "Some of my favorite movies of all time are baseball movies like *The Natural* and *Field of Dreams*. So when I was able to do a movie about kids' baseball, I got really excited."

"Adam visited the set all the time," says Blake. "He had a good sense of the kids who were playing because, in many ways, he's a big kid himself. I think he can still remember what it was like to be a kid and what it was like to play baseball. He's a naturally good athlete, but he still probably remembers the times that he struck out and what that felt like, or being booed or being a member of a bad team. He had a really good sense of the heart of the movie and the fun and humor of the subject. He was there to give everyone encouragement to make the movie fun, lively and colorful."

Co-screenwriter Swardson, who had previously worked with Sandler on *Grandma's Boy*, received a call from the actor one day. "He said, 'I have this idea I just sold and you're going to write it. It's about three guys who sorta play ball against other kids when they're older because they got picked on when they were younger and didn't get to play. You're going to write it and it will be great.' And he was right. It was a great idea. It was original and cool and fun and I was thrilled to be working (with Allen Covert) on it."

"Adam is great because he hangs out and watches a lot," recalls Spade. "Sometimes, when you get into a rut, you can almost hear him thinking, 'Hey Spade, make something up.' And soon you find yourself asking the director if you can do another take or try something different. It encourages you to work on your feet."

Napoleon Dynamite's Jon Heder says Sandler's comedic style is palpable throughout the film. "It was cool to have Adam as the producer because it's just his kind of comedy," says Heder. "It was nice having him around as backup to make sure it was all running at a smooth comedic pace. A lot of the jokes are very much his style. Even though he's not in the movie and just on the sidelines, you can still kind of sense his presence — as if he's a ghost hovering in every scene."

Actor Jon Lovitz saw classic Sandler themes in the story. "Adam is always fighting for the underdog and these kids are odd men out," he says. "My character is financing the games because his son always gets picked on by bullies, and I want to put an end to it for once and for all. That's the true heart of the story. Adam came to me, Spade and Schneider and offered us our parts. He's a really great guy that way, very loyal to his friends, which is almost unheard of in show business. In fact, the only time I've heard of it is with Adam Sandler."

In addition to getting input from their director and producers Sandler and Jack Giarraputo, *The Benchwarmers'* cast developed a strong interpersonal camaraderie. "Lovitz, Spade and I were friends from stand-up and 'SNL' almost 20 years ago. And Heder is a natural comedian," says Schneider. "So you had guys who really knew how to be funny. It was the ideal situation."

"Even the smaller roles in this film were funny," says Spade. "Having Jon Heder around was great because it kind of mixed things up a bit and he's a genuinely hilarious guy — a great match for the three of us. We needed a really good goofy guy."

Adds Lovitz: "Jon Heder's a great guy, very smart and articulate. He's really funny. He has his own style and timing. He's just naturally gifted that way."

Heder returns the compliment. “It was exciting to work with all these guys, to be around the ‘Saturday Night Live’ gurus,” he says. “They’ve all been around the business much longer than I have and I learned a ton from them — about the business of comedy, about acting, all sorts of stuff. Spade, Lovitz and Schneider are all very different comedians, so it was really great — like attending comedy camp.”

“Schneider and Spade are both great comedians. You can give them anything and they will pretty much deliver on it,” says Swardson, “which makes it so much easier to write for them. “Spade has got sarcastic down better than anybody — he even has his own cadence. Schneider is more the straight guy in this. He is more serious. His jokes are just in a different tone from David’s. And Heder’s got this great timing and rhythm.”

ABOUT THE CHARACTERS

“Schneider’s character, Gus, is the leader of the band, and he has a real, real deep, American love for baseball,” explains director Dugan. “He feels that no matter what, you should enjoy the sport rather than just if you win, though he proves to be a really tough competitor. Richie (Spade) and Clark (Heder) are two kids who were never even allowed to walk on a baseball diamond. So they are not only terrible baseball players, they have no knowledge of how to play. They’re terrible athletes who fear it, because of the pounding they took as kids. If they would even try to get on the baseball field, they’d get a wedgie, get ridiculed and chased off the field. It’s a deep childhood scar for them.”

According to Schneider, his character is married, owns his own landscaping business and is not prepared for what lies ahead, such as having a family and becoming a mature adult. “I think he really misses a certain part of his childhood and this tournament, in which he plays all the mean-spirited kids baseball teams, kind of brings him back to a simpler more enjoyable time in his life.”

“Unlike Richie and Clark, who are supposed to be bad players, Schneider had to have good form and know what he was doing,” explains Heder. In preparation, Schneider trained for three months with his coach Mike Cicione. “Mike is an amazing coach. He used to play professional ball for the San Francisco Giants, so he is a heck of a ballplayer, one of those uber athletes,” says Schneider. “We’ve got uber nerds and uber athletes. Playing baseball every day has been so much fun and I really had a great time working with him. It’s fun to be able to pitch and hit really well, an art form really, and I want people who play baseball to be able to watch this movie and believe it.”

“There are a lot of 38-year-old guys who have that insane notion that they can still play the game,” Schneider continues. “So I think for Gus, if he has kids, there is no chance, it’s over. Then he’s just a dad, he is locked in and that part of his life is over. Baseball and this tournament are what keeps him hanging on.”

“Richie is a nerd with a funny Pete Rose haircut,” says Spade. “He is a chess player extraordinaire who grew up getting kicked around and now works at a video store. He’s just an older version of the nerdy guy who still hangs out with his buddies. Since I’m the catcher on the team, I get to talk to the kids, to taunt them and get them mad. I wear a lot of heavy equipment but I don’t know what I’m doing. I can’t throw a ball back to the pitcher, so I roll it.”

Heder describes his character, Clark, as a total nerd. “He is the local paperboy who always wears a bike helmet and kneepads for protection. He still lives at home with his mom and goes nuts whenever she makes him macaroni.”

“Clark freaks out a little bit when he hears about baseball because he’s scared of sports, like any nerd would be,” he continues. “He initially doesn’t want to play, not because he has never experienced doing anything that’s fun. It turns out that he enjoys hanging out and being part of a team. He loves it when they get

uniforms but he doesn't really have a lot of faith in his talents — mainly because he has no talent.”

Mel, the eccentric billionaire played by Lovitz, is one of the few nerds in his neighborhood who grew up to be successful. He lives in a mansion decorated with “Star Wars” memorabilia and has a robot named Number 7, who serves as his English butler and is his son Nelson’s best friend. He rides around his grounds on a Segway and collects cars like the Batmobile and the talking car from “Knight Rider.”

"Mel's son gets picked on by these other young baseball players and Gus helps him by chasing the kids off," explains Lovitz. "Later, Gus returns to the field with Richie and Clark to play catch and the same team shows up and tries to throw them off. They challenge each other and the three older guys defeat the entire team. I invite them to my house and suggest a tournament in which the three of them will play against all the notoriously mean spirited teams in the state. They're playing for the benchwarmers, the kids who just sat while others got to play and have all the fun."

As one of the film’s writers, Swardson says he was able to tailor a role for himself. “I was trying to think of a part and Adam said, ‘Who do you want to be?’ And I just figured Spade’s brother, Howie, because he and I kind of look similar and have the same dry sense of humor. I thought it would be a good fit and Adam agreed. So I wrote this weird character who lives in the closet of their apartment and is afraid to go outside. Over the course of the movie, he becomes more comfortable and ends up joining the team.”

Despite being primarily an all-boys' club, two females vie for the attention of *The Benchwarmers*. "When we first meet my character, Liz, she is somewhat obsessed with getting pregnant," explains Molly Sims. "She and her husband, Gus, are in two completely different places. Gus's goal is to play baseball while

Liz's sights are set on starting a family. A bit of a dreamer, Liz goes to the doctor relentlessly in search of quirky getting pregnant "how-tos". In one scene she tells Gus, 'You know, Dr. Klein told me that if we watch Tom Hanks movies together, we increase our chances of having triplets.'

The other female character is Sarah, played by Erinn Bartlett, whom the main characters meet at the salad bar of the local Pizza Hut and Richie tries to impress. They refer to her as "The Salad Girl."

Also making brief appearances in the film are actor Amaury Nolasco ("Prison Break"), who inadvertently helps Gus and his team to victory, and actress Rachel Hunter.

THE COACHES

"There are some casting processes where people actually audition for the parts," says Dugan. "But for the coaches, most of it was us sitting around going, 'Who do we like? Who do we know who'd be good for this?' Then we'd call them up and they'd say, 'Yeah, I'll do it.' That's how we got Craig Kilborn, Tim Meadows and, from *The Longest Yard*, Sean Salisbury and Bill Romanowski.

Kilborn plays a coach named Jerry, whom he describes as "the bully, the antagonist. He intimidates people, a little like Bobby Knight. He likes to yell, to belittle, to be condescending — all those fun, entertaining things. He's not about to lose, especially not to nerds."

"This is my second evil character," says Meadows, who portrays coach Wayne. "He's the owner of Wayne's Hardware and coaches one of the better kids' teams. All the coaches are a little bit crazy, but I think I'm the sanest of the bunch. My goal is to beat 'The Benchwarmers' by any means necessary. He wants to win the game, honestly, but then he realizes that he needs a little 'help.' The coaches

band together because 'The Benchwarmers' are beating them. They've already lost a few games and my game's a semi-final, so it's really important."

Describing coach Brad, Salisbury says, "He appears to be very macho. His team's named after the sporting goods store I run called Brad's Sporting Goodies. My character is bossy, but he can deploy his will on little kids and on adults as well. He's very rarely in a good mood. He's always angry and fierce."

Similarly, coach Karl, played by Romanowski, is also angry and obsessed with winning. "After appearing in *The Longest Yard* with him, Adam found me a part in this movie as well. I'd played quite a bit of baseball as a kid, so it kind of came natural to me to know what coaches do. They tend to get a little over-excited at times, so all I had to do is think back to when I was a kid and about some of the coaches I had."

Besides Reggie Jackson, other real-life sports notables in *The Benchwarmers* include the NFL's Terry Crews and sportscaster Dan Patrick.

THE BASEBALL FIELDS

"The filmmakers wanted to make a movie that was timeless and didn't feel like it was any specific period," says production designer Perry Andelin Blake, "so you could watch it in ten or 20 years from now and it wouldn't seem dated and even though it's set in California, it feels like it could be anywhere. So we really tried to make the town and each field that we played on feel classic and keep the tone very warm and friendly."

He achieved this, he says, "by using a lot of primary colors. We wanted the film to feel sort of kid-friendly and very American. Our reds and blues and other colors were very bright and eye-catching against the big green backdrop of the

baseball fields. We wanted colors that would pop out, no pastels, nothing too designer. The look I was going for was one that made my work unnoticeable, like they just went out onto local baseball fields, found kids and started shooting — natural but at the same time, fun.”

The progression of the games was consciously designed, Blake continues. “We started out at one end of the spectrum and finished at the other. The first game is on a small hometown field and we ended up in a big stadium. The progression was from dirt field, kind of a sand lot, and as the games progressed, each field was a little nicer with more bleachers, more fans, more ‘Benchwarmer’ paraphernalia like hats, banners and flags. And each time the stadium became more decorative, the intensity level of the playing was ramped up.”

The final championship game was played at Big League Dreams, a baseball complex in Chino Hills, California. It consists of several fields, each designed as an homage to a different major league park. “We took one of field and turned it into Schmegmer Field,” says Blake. “The story's setup is that there's this tournament, and whoever wins the tournament gets the stadium built as their home field. Dugan and I did some research and decided that this old stadium should have parts from all our favorite stadiums. We have Fenway Park's green monster. We have the kind of brick you see in Wrigley Field. We have the arches from Yankee Stadium along the outside. We combined these elements and tried to create a field with the feel of an old-time stadium and then just shrunk it down to this miniature park. It was a great deal of fun to design, a very collaborative process. Dugan would call me up at eleven at night to say, ‘How about a swimming pool at the Schmegmer Field, at the final baseball diamond?’ And I'd say, ‘Cool’ and, ‘How about a slide?’ He had a real youthful energy to him, which was especially appropriate for a kid's movie.”

The scale of the stadium looked larger than it actually was, Blake continues, which fit perfectly with the film's concept, about benchwarmers who are out of scale with the other kids, especially Heder, who stands six foot two.

ABOUT THE CAST

ROB SCHNEIDER (Gus Matthews) is continuing his collaboration with Happy Madison Productions following last year's *Deuce Bigalow: European Gigolo*. He has worked on ten of the company's films. He most recently co-starred in *Fifty First Dates* with Adam Sandler and Drew Barrymore and starred in *The Hot Chick*. As with *Deuce Bigalow: Male Gigolo*, Schneider co-wrote *Deuce Bigalow: European Gigolo*, as well as co-writing and starring in *The Animal*. He narrated the animated comedy *Adam Sandler's Eight Crazy Nights*.

Schneider was on "Saturday Night Live" from 1990 to 1994.

DAVID SPADE (Richie Goodman) was nominated for a 1999 Emmy Award for his memorable role as Dennis Finch, the wise-cracking, power-hungry assistant on "Just Shoot Me." Spade was previously best known for his five-year stint as a cast member of NBC's "Saturday Night Live." Nominated for a Golden Globe in 1999 and 2000, and an American Comedy Award in 1999, for his work on "Just Shoot Me," Spade's film career also continues to grow.

Last year, Spade created his own Comedy Central show, "The Showbiz Show with David Spade," which he executive produces, hosts and writes along with pal Hugh Fink (à former "SNL" writer). The show is a half-hour comedy spoof on Hollywood, à la Spade's famed "Saturday Night Live" sketch "Hollywood Minute." With Spade's biting comedy and quick wit, he has once again become a favorite with critics and industry peers alike. The show premiered last September and has

climbed the ratings ever since. Comedy Central just began airing a second season in March.

Spade also lent his familiar voice and flair for comedy to the movie *Racing Stripes*. He and Steve Harvey play two horse flies that happen to be brothers. Their collective conversations provide this touching family film with a little comic relief. Whoopie Goldberg and Dustin Hoffman also lend their voices to the film. *Racing Stripes* premiered #1 at the box office opening weekend.

Spade was last seen starring in Paramount's *Dickie Roberts: Former Child Star*, which he co-wrote with Fred Wolf. Happy Madison produced the film, which enjoyed a #1 opening weekend slot at the box office. In it he plays a struggling actor who hasn't seen the light of fame since puberty. He fixates on a movie role that will bring his career back to life, but in order to get it, he has to re-live his childhood. He proceeds to rent a family in order to learn how to be a normal kid. *Dickie Roberts* has the same smart, dry comedy as all of Spade's movies, but also has an incredible heartwarming effect as you watch him grow with and learn from his "rented" brother and sister.

Spade previously starred in Columbia Pictures' *Joe Dirt*, which he also co-wrote. In this Happy Madison production, Spade portrays Joe, a man searching for his parents who abandoned him as a baby at the Grand Canyon. *Joe Dirt* enjoyed enormous success at the box-office and continues to be a top selling DVD.

Spade is the lead voice in the animated holiday Disney classic, *The Emperor's New Groove*. Eartha Kitt, John Goodman, and Wendie Malick join Spade, and the soundtrack was composed and performed by Sting. *The Emperor's New Groove* grossed more than \$150 million worldwide.

Born in Birmingham, Michigan, and raised in Scottsdale, Arizona, Spade began his career by performing stand-up comedy in clubs, theaters and colleges across

the country. He made his television debut on “SNL” and was soon named the “Hot Stand-Up Comedian of the Year” by Rolling Stone magazine. Some of Spade’s memorable characters on “SNL” — where he served as both a writer and a performer — included the sarcastic “Hollywood Minute” reporter on “Weekend Update” and he also started the catch phrases “And you are...?” and “Buh-Bye.”

In addition to “SNL,” Spade has guest-starred on the critically acclaimed “The Larry Sanders Show” and appeared in HBO’s “13th Annual Young Comedians Special.” In 1999, he headlined his own HBO special, “David Spade: Take the Hit.”

Spade co-starred with “SNL” alumnus Chris Farley in the films *Tommy Boy* and *Blacksheep*, and the pair won a 1996 MTV Movie Award for Best On-Screen Duo for the former. His other feature credits include *Reality Bites*, *Light Sleeper* and *Coneheads*. In 1999, Spade starred in the romantic comedy *Lost & Found*, for which he also co-wrote the screenplay.

JON HEDER (Clark) is perhaps most widely recognized for his critically acclaimed performance as the title character in the 2004 independent hit *Napoleon Dynamite*. In the film, Heder portrayed an alienated teen helping his new friend win the class presidency in a small town high school while also dealing with his bizarre family. Premiering at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival *Napoleon Dynamite* was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize. After a major bidding war, Fox Searchlight and MTV Films partnered up to distribute the film, which grossed more than \$40 million domestically, became a top selling DVD and a pop culture phenomenon. At the 2004 U.S. Comedy Arts Festival, *Napoleon Dynamite* was named Best Feature Film and has also garnered several additional awards for Heder. At the 2005 MTV Movie Awards, Heder went home with the Best Musical Performance for his “Election Dance,” as well as the award for Breakthrough Male. The film also won for Best Movie.

Heder was most recently seen in *Just Like Heaven* with Reese Witherspoon and Mark Ruffalo. This summer, Heder will star in *School for Scoundrels* opposite Billy Bob Thornton for director Todd Phillips. He will also be heard as part of an ensemble cast in another summer release, Columbia Pictures' animated fantasy *Monster House*, along with Steve Buscemi, Kathleen Turner, Catherine O'Hara, Fred Willard and Maggie Gyllenhaal. Upcoming for Heder are *Mama's Boy* opposite Diane Keaton and another animated project Columbia Pictures' *Surf's Up*.

Raised in Salem, Oregon, part of a family of six children, Heder recently relocated to Los Angeles with his wife. A graduate of Brigham Young University with a degree in 3-D Animation, Heder began his college career in the Film Studies program. There, he also acted in several student productions and was the lead in the award-winning short film *Peluca*, which was written and directed by *Napoleon Dynamite* helmer Jared Hess.

JON LOVITZ (Mel) gained notoriety as a series regular cast member on "Saturday Night Live" between 1985-1990. Since then, he has starred in more than 35 feature films including the recent musical film version of *The Producers*. Other credits include *Big*, *A League of Their Own*, *City Slickers 2*, *Happiness*, *Small Time Crooks*, *The Wedding Singer* and *Rat Race*. He was the voice of Tom Baltezor in *Adam Sandler's Eight Crazy Nights* and Calico in *Cats & Dogs*.

Next, Lovitz stars in writer/director Richard Kelly's follow-up to *Donnie Darko*, entitled *Southland Tales*, as well as Amy Heckerling's *I Could Never Be Your Woman* opposite Michelle Pfeiffer and Paul Rudd.

On television, he voiced the title character of the cartoon "The Critic" and has performed recurring voices on "The Simpsons."

Lovitz started on a new avenue of performing stand-up comedy two years ago, fulfilling a life-long dream. He now has his own show every Wednesday at the Laugh Factory in Los Angeles and is currently performing his act all over the country, including a recent engagement in Honolulu.

CRAIG KILBORN (Coach Jerry) has, after a successful five-year run as the host of CBS' "The Late Late Show," been busy making movies starting with Disney's *Shaggy Dog* starring Tim Allen. He will also star in *The Life and Lies of Sam Leonard*. In 2003, he made a memorable turn in DreamWorks' *Old School* with Vince Vaughn, Luke Wilson and Will Ferrell.

During his run as host of "The Late Late Show," Kilborn created such signature pieces as "Five Questions," "Yambo" and "Sebastian: the Asexual Icon." According to critic Steve Johnson of the *Chicago Tribune*, "Kilborn is, unlike any of the late-nighters except Letterman, a natural host. He's smooth and obviously comfortable on TV, playing to and with the cameras."

Previously he spent three years at Comedy Central where he launched and hosted "The Daily Show." Prior to that, Kilborn was a popular host on ESPN's "Sports Center."

At 6'4", Kilborn earned a Division B basketball scholarship to Montana State University. He took his first paid broadcasting job as a play-by-play commentator for the Savannah Spirits of the Continental Basketball Association. Kilborn moved on to become sports director for KCBA-TV in Monterey, California, before being tapped by ESPN.

MOLLY SIMS (Liz Matthews) is currently in her third successful season of the hit TV series "Las Vegas," in which she plays the manipulative Delinda Deline. Successfully transitioning from supermodel to actress, Sims made her big screen debut in the hit motion picture *Starsky & Hutch*.

Sims' acting career began after she landed the coveted role as host on MTV's "House of Style." She gained further recognition after signing an exclusive, multi-year contract with CoverGirl Cosmetics and Michael Kors. The Southern beauty also received much attention for her Old Navy commercials and appearances in the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue for four years running.

A native of Murray, Kentucky, Sims attended Vanderbilt University with aspirations of becoming a lawyer until her roommate persuaded her to submit photos to New York modeling agencies. Before she knew it, Sims was signed by NEXT Models and soon began gracing the covers of Mademoiselle, French and Spanish Vogue, Tear Sheet, French Cosmopolitan and British Marie Claire. In the meantime, Sims was working with some of the most prestigious photographers in the fashion world including Carter Smith, Michael Thompson and Raymond Meier.

TIM MEADOWS (Coach Wayne) holds the record as the longest-running cast member in the 29-year history of "Saturday Night Live." The versatile comedian crafted some of the series' most memorable characters during his 10 years on the popular late night show, including Leon Phelps, The Ladies' Man and Lionel Osbourne, host of the fictional public affairs show, "Perspectives" — as well as delivering uncanny impressions of OJ Simpson, Ike Turner and Sammy Davis Jr.

Born in Highland Park, Michigan, and raised in Detroit, Meadows studied television and radio broadcasting at Wayne State University before performing improvisational comedy at the Soup Kitchen Saloon. In 1985, he relocated to Chicago where he first joined Improv Olympic and, subsequently, the legendary comedy troupe Second City. During his three years at Second City, he wrote and starred in productions of "The Gods Must Be Lazy" with Chris Farley, "It Was Thirty Years Ago Today" and "Flag Smoking Permitted in Lobby Only," gaining a loyal following for his sharp comedic skills. In 1991, Meadows was asked to join

“SNL” as a featured player. Nominated for an Emmy as part of “SNL’s” writing team, he quickly made the transition to regular cast member.

Several years after appearing in a string of films based on “Saturday Night Live” sketches including *Coneheads* and *Wayne's World 2* (both in 1993), Meadows starred in a film version of *The Ladies' Man*. After leaving “SNL,” he became a regular cast member on “The Michael Richards Show.” In 2002, he joined the cast of the NBC sitcom “Leap of Faith.”

Meadows played a school principal in the comedy hit *Mean Girls* starring Lindsay Lohan and written by fellow “SNL” cast mate Tina Fey. He also starred in the comedy *The Cookout* with Queen Latifah and Danny Glover.

Meadows currently lives in Venice, CA.

AMAURY NOLASCO (Carlos) exudes talent, charm and humor in each character he portrays, which is quickly establishing him as one of the most sought-after actors in Hollywood. Nolasco currently co-stars in the hit FOX series “Prison Break,” which was recently nominated for a Golden Globe for Best Television Series – Drama. His character, Sucre, is an inmate who learns of an elaborate plan to break out of a high security prison and insists on joining in.

A native of Puerto Rico, Nolasco was busy as a full-time student studying biology at the University of Puerto Rico. Initially, he was looking to get his degree in medicine, but as fate would have it, he was approached by a director and immediately cast in his first television commercial. After several acting gigs, Nolasco moved to New York where he trained at the American British Dramatic Arts School. Classically trained in Shakespearean drama, the young actor focused on dialect technique, character work and stage presence.

Shortly thereafter, Nolasco began guest starring on various hit television shows such as "Arlis\$\$," "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation," and "ER." He received his first supporting actor role in a studio film as Orange Julius in the hit sequel *2 Fast 2 Furious*. He went on to co-star opposite Bernie Mac in *Mr. 3000*.

Nolasco continues to guest star on hit television shows such as "George Lopez," "Eve," and "CSI: NY." He is looking forward to moving to Chicago and taking on the role of Sucre full-time. In addition, every year he returns to Puerto Rico and works at the local orphanages.

When not on location in Chicago, Nolasco resides in Los Angeles and enjoys golf and tennis.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

DENNIS DUGAN (Director) is a talented filmmaker whose diverse career in entertainment spans over two decades. Dugan is considered one of the industry's top feature film comedy directors, earning his reputation with such hits as *Big Daddy* and *Happy Gilmore* (both of which starred Adam Sandler), *Saving Silverman* starring Jack Black, Steve Zahn and Amanda Peet and *Beverly Hills Ninja* starring Chris Farley. Most recently, he directed *National Security* starring Martin Lawrence.

On the small screen, Dugan has directed dozens of television projects including "Hope and Faith," "NYPD Blue," and "Ally McBeal," as well as the telepics "Columbo" and "The Shaggy Dog."

Dugan is an actor turned filmmaker who began his career in the New York theater scene and first made his mark in Hollywood in front of the camera. He starred in his own NBC television series. "Richie Brockelman, Private Eye," and

also guest starred on such award-winning television programs as "M*A*S*H," "Columbo," "The Rockford Files," "Hill Street Blues" and "Moonlighting." It was during a guest-star stint on "Moonlighting" that he first stepped behind the camera, directing the final season of the critically lauded show.

In addition to small, yet memorable, acting roles in his own films, the most recent being "the reluctant trick-or-treat giver" in *Big Daddy*, Dugan's feature film credits include roles in *Parenthood*, *She's Having A Baby*, *Can't Buy Me Love* and *The Howling*.

ALLEN COVERT (Written by) has co-starred in every Adam Sandler movie except *Billy Madison*. He also produced, co-wrote (with Nick Swardson and Barry Wernick) and starred as Alex in the comedy *Grandma's Boy*. Covert served as executive producer on *The Longest Yard* starring Adam Sandler, Burt Reynolds and Chris Rock, as well as *Anger Management* starring Sandler and Jack Nicholson. He produced and co-wrote *Adam Sandler's Eight Crazy Nights* with Brooks Arthur and served as associate producer on *Big Daddy*, *Little Nicky* and *Mr. Deeds*.

Covert has also collaborated on five comedy albums, as co-writer and producer, with Sandler and Brooks Arthur for Warner Bros. Records.

NICK SWARDSON (Written By/Co-Producer/Howie) started doing stand-up comedy in 1996, at the age of 19. During his first year he appeared at the U.S. Comedy Arts Festival as one of the top new comedians in the country. In 2000, at the age of 22, Swardson was given his own half hour comedy special on Comedy Central, which became one of the highest-rated specials in the channel's history. After moving to Los Angeles, he appeared on "The Tonight Show," "Conan O'Brien," "The Late Late Show" and "Jimmy Kimmel Live."

In 2003, Swardson's script *Malibu's Most Wanted*, which he co-wrote with Jamie Kennedy, was green lighted and went on to gross three times its cost at the box office. He is currently developing several projects with Happy Madison and starred in *Grandma's Boy*, which he co-wrote with Allen Covert and Barry Wernick. He's also developing his own show for Comedy Central, "Gay Robot," and has signed an album deal with Warner Bros. Records to release his own comedy album.

ADAM SANDLER (Producer) has enjoyed phenomenal success in the entertainment industry as an actor, writer, producer, director and musician. He first gained international recognition as a cast member of television's "Saturday Night Live."

His recent film roles include *The Longest Yard*, starring with Chris Rock and Burt Reynolds, James L. Brooks' *Spanglish* opposite Téa Leoni, the romantic comedy *50 First Dates* with Drew Barrymore and *Anger Management* with Jack Nicholson. Upcoming for Sandler is the comedy *Click*.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, and raised in Manchester, New Hampshire, Sandler's first brush with comedy came at age 17, with a spontaneous performance at a Boston comedy club. From then on he was hooked, performing regularly in comedy clubs throughout the state, while earning a degree in Fine Arts from New York University.

Sandler made his motion picture debut in *Coneheads*, opposite Dan Aykroyd and Jane Curtin. He has gone on to become an almost self-contained mini-studio involved in all aspects of film production. *Happy Gilmore* was one of the most successful movies of 1996. With a budget of just \$12 million, it grossed more than \$40 million at the box office and \$35 million on home video. *The Wedding Singer* was the first box office hit of 1998, with an opening weekend gross of more than \$22 million. His next film, *The Waterboy*, had an opening weekend of

almost \$40 million. Other recent \$100 million-plus-grossing Sandler films include *Big Daddy*, *Mr. Deeds*, *Anger Management*, and *50 First Dates*. Sandler was nominated for a Golden Globe for his performance in Paul Thomas Anderson's *Punch-Drunk Love*.

Sandler collaborated with writer Tim Herlihy on the screenplays for *Happy Gilmore*, *Little Nicky*, *Billy Madison*, *Big Daddy*, and the smash hit, *The Waterboy*. *Billy Madison* has become a cult classic for college students across the country, with "Billy" nights and "Sandler" festivals.

Sandler served as executive producer through his Happy Madison Productions on *Deuce Bigalow: Male Gigolo*, *The Animal*, *Joe Dirt*, *The Master of Disguise*, *The Hot Chick*, *Dickie Roberts: Former Child Star*, *Deuce Bigalow: European Gigolo* and *Grandma's Boy*.

Sandler also has several comedy albums on Warner Bros. Records that have gone multi-platinum. Collectively, they have sold more than six million copies to date. Several years ago, Sandler launched AdamSandler.com.

JACK GIARRAPUTO (Producer) began his film career as associate producer on *Heavyweights* directed by Steven Brill. He then teamed up with his college buddy Adam Sandler to associate produce *Billy Madison* and the hit comedy *Happy Gilmore*.

He later went on to produce *The Wedding Singer*, *The Waterboy*, *Big Daddy*, *Little Nicky*, *Mr. Deeds*, *Anger Management*, and *50 First Dates*. With Happy Madison producing partner Sandler, he executive produced *Deuce Bigalow: Male Gigolo* and *Deuce Bigalow: European Gigolo*, as well as *The Hot Chick*, *The Adventures of Joe Dirt* and *Adam Sandler's Eight Crazy Nights*. Giarraputo also produced *Dickie Roberts: Former Child Star* and last year's hit film *The Longest Yard* starring Sandler, Chris Rock and Burt Reynolds.

Most recently, he executive produced *Grandma's Boy* starring Allen Covert, Linda Cardellini, Doris Roberts, Shirley Jones and Shirley Knight and served as producer on Sandler's new comedy *Click*.

Giarraputo grew up on Long Island. He attended New York University before graduating from the Fordham University School of Law.

BARRY BERNARDI (Executive Producer) most recently served as executive producer on the box-office hits *The Longest Yard* starring Adam Sandler, Chris Rock and Burt Reynolds and as producer on *Anger Management* starring Adam Sandler and Jack Nicholson. He also produced *Deuce Bigalow: Male Gigolo*, *The Master of Disguise* and *The Animal*. As executive producer, Bernardi worked on the features, *The Haunted Mansion*, *Double Take*, *Inspector Gadget*, *My Favorite Martian*, *Deep Rising*, *Tom and Huck*, *Cabin Boy*, *The Adventures of Huck Finn* and *Devil's Advocate*. His other producer credits include *Poltergeist III*, *Honey*, *We Shrunk Ourselves*, and *Starman*. Upcoming for Bernardi is the Adam Sandler comedy *Click* on which he also served as executive producer.

Beginning his career as a story editor and producer's assistant after attending the California Institute of the Arts, Bernardi teamed with director John Carpenter in 1979 to associate produce *The Fog*, *Escape from New York*, and *Christine*. He remained with Carpenter to co-produce *Halloween II* and *Halloween III*.

From 1987-1989, Bernardi served as senior vice president of production at New World Pictures, where he oversaw the development, production and release of such films as *Heathers*, *Meet the Applegates* and *Warlock*.

Bernardi went onto co-found Steve White Productions. With White, he produced more than 25 tele-films. Among their credits are "Amityville," "The Evil Escapes,"

“Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?,” “She Said No,” “The Carolyn Warmus Story,” “She Stood Alone” and “A Mom for Christmas.”

ALLEGRA CLEGG (Executive Producer) has produced several films for Revolution Studios, including *America’s Sweethearts*, *13 Going on 30*, and *Christmas with the Kranks*. Prior to *The Benchwarmers*, she produced two other films for Happy Madison and Revolution Studios, *Anger Management* and *Master of Disguise*.

Prior to her tenure at Revolution Studios,. Clegg worked on such films as *Galaxy Quest*, *American President* and *City of Angels*.

Currently, Clegg is working on the DreamWorks production *Transformers* directed by Michael Bay.

THOMAS ACKERMAN, ASC (Director of Photography) is a graduate of the University of Iowa. His first experience in the motion picture industry came as an officer in the United States Air Force. While assigned to the 600th Photo Squadron in the Republic of Viet Nam, Ackerman commanded a combat documentation unit, achieving the rank of Captain before his discharge in 1971.

Ackerman then took a position with Charles Guggenheim, the Oscar®-winning documentary filmmaker based in Washington, D.C., with whom he spent three years working on political spots, culminating in the McGovern for President campaign.

In 1974, Ackerman joined Mike Robe to form Robe/Ackerman, Inc. The Hollywood-based company grew quickly to offer a wide range of services in commercials, corporate film production, and television.

Beginning in early 1980's Ackerman devoted himself to commercial shooting and the emerging phenomenon of MTV. Before the end of the decade he amassed a list of music video credits that included Bob Dylan, Ashford and Simpson, Stevie Nicks, Heart, Bob Seger, Linda Ronstadt, the Pretenders, Stevie Wonder, Michael Jackson, Aaron Neville, Carlos Santana, Eddie Money, Pat Benatar, Chaka Khan, the Manhattan Transfer, and many others.

To date, Ackerman's international commercial credits include Coca-Cola, Diet Coke, Chevrolet, Kodak, BMW, Sprite, Budweiser, Corona Beer, Michelob, McDonald's, Toyota, Nestea, Fanta, Lipton's Tea, Hertz, Yamaha, Pepsi, Revlon, Nike, Brooklyn Gum, Johnson & Johnson, Bose, Parmalat, Eastern Airlines, Aloha Airlines, Mountain Dew, Benson & Hedges, and Black & Decker Tools. He has also photographed special venue productions such as "Water," the 65mm 3D attraction at Expo 84 in New Orleans as well as 2nd unit work on Disneyland's 3D extravaganza, "Captain IO."

But Ackerman is best known to movie audiences worldwide for his accomplishments as a cinematographer. His filmography lists titles such as *Jumanji* and Tim Burton's classic *Beetlejuice*, as well as an earlier Burton short *Frankenweenie*. His credits also include *Roadhouse 66*, *Girls Just Want to Have Fun*, *Back to School*, *Dennis the Menace*, *Baby's Day Out*, *True Identity*, *My Favorite Martian*, *Eighteenth Angel*, *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*, *George of the Jungle*, *The Muse*, *Beautiful Joe*, *The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle*, *Rat Race*, *Snow Dogs*, *Dickie Roberts: Former Child Star*, and *The Battle of Shaker Heights*. Ackerman's work has recently been seen in the boxoffice hit comedy *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*, starring Will Ferrell and Christina Applegate. His most recent credits are Revolution Studio's hit comedy *Are We There Yet?* starring Ice Cube and Albert Brooks' *Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World*. He just finished shooting *Scary Movie 4*.

In a departure from feature films, Ackerman photographed “Cinemagique” for Disney Studios Paris. Directed by Jerry Rees, this innovative film starring Martin Short and Julie Delpy, is the cornerstone of the new Disney “Parc II” which opened in March 2002. He also shot the award-winning feature documentary “Los Zafiros,” for director Lorenzo DeStefan. Set in Cuba, the film had its premiere at the 2002 Havana Film Festival.

In 1999, Ackerman took the helm as director/cameraman on *The Spirit of Evolution*, for Zenturio Group UK. The industry’s first 360 x 220 degree “Dome Format” production, it opened as the featured attraction of the Autostadt Grand Pavillion inaugurated in May 2000 by Volkswagen A.G. in Wolfsburg, Germany. Shot in the Czech Republic, Italy, and South Africa, the film represents a benchmark achievement in special venue exhibition technology.

Ackerman lives in Santa Barbara, California, with his wife Paula and two children Caitlin and Alex. He is a member of the American Society of Cinematographers, The Directors Guild of America and the Motion Picture Academy of Arts and Sciences.

PERRY ANDELIN BLAKE (Production Designer) began his design career by receiving a Master of Architecture degree from Harvard University, where he met the noted architect Frank O. Gehry. After working with Gehry as a design architect for several years, he opened his own architectural and design office in Los Angeles. Blake soon began designing not only homes and offices but also sets for commercials, working on more than 100 commercials for such clients as Coke, Pepsi and Nike.

Blake’s first feature film was *Billy Madison*, starring Adam Sandler. He went on to design many of Sandler’s films, including *Mr. Deeds*, *Big Daddy* and *The Wedding Singer*, where he met the director, Frank Coraci, for whom he designed *Around the World in 80 Days*. He also worked with director Steven Brill on

Without A Paddle. He most recently worked with Happy Madison on *Grandma's Boy*, *The Longest Yard* starring Sandler, Burt Reynolds and Chris Rock and Sandler's upcoming *Click*.

Blake's work also includes such eclectic design projects as the rock-and-roll stage set for Ozzy Osborne's "Ozzfest" and the animated holiday feature film *Adam Sandler's Eight Crazy Nights*. In 2002, he made his directorial debut with the Dana Carvey feature *Master of Disguise*. Blake's work has been published in numerous magazines and periodicals.

PECK PRIOR (Editor) began his career as an apprentice at Universal Studios where he worked on *Blues Brothers*, *Continental Divide* and *Conan The Barbarian*. He has a strong comedy background, having worked on such projects as *Joe Dirt*, *Without a Paddle*, *Ray*, *The Hot Chick*, *Master of Disguise*, and *The Animal* for Happy Madison Productions. He also edited *Dating Games People Play* and worked as an editor on John Hughes' *Planes, Trains & Automobiles* and was the supervising film editor for *Curly Sue*.

SANDY SOLOWITZ (Editor) has worked with Peck Prior for years on such projects as *Deuce Bigalow: European Gigolo*, *Ray*, *The Hot Chick*, *Joe Dirt*, *The Master of Disguise*, *I Still Know What You Did Last Summer*, *Universal Soldier: The Return* and *At The Hands of Another*. He also edited *Dating Games People Play*.

MARY JANE FORT (Costume Designer) most recently designed the costumes for the comedies *Surviving Christmas* starring Ben Affleck, James Gandolfini and Christina Applegate and *Mean Girls* starring Lindsay Lohan, Rachel McAdams and Tina Fey.

Fort's other film credits include *Like Mike*, *Scary Movie 2*, *Get Over It*, *Bring It On*, *Infinity* and the 1995 film *Kicking and Screaming*.

Among her television credits are ABC's "Blind Justice," the WB's "Grounded For Life," UPN's drama "Dying to Live," USA Network's "My Husbands Secret Life," and NBC's "Shattered Mind."

Fort graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree from Auburn University in Alabama. She currently lives in Los Angeles.

WADDY WACHTEL (Music) is a prolific session musician and producer, noted for his guitar work. He has appeared on hundreds of albums and been a mainstay of the Los Angeles music scene since the late 1960s. Among the artists and bands he has worked with are The Everly Brothers, Carly Simon, The Rolling Stones, Kim Carnes, The Church, The Motels, Bonnie Raitt, Linda Ronstadt, Don Henley, Jackson Browne, Keith Richards, Stevie Nicks, Melissa Etheridge, Carole King, James Taylor and Warren Zevon. Wachtel co-wrote several songs with Zevon, including "Things to Do in Denver When You're Dead" and "Werewolves of London." He currently tours with Stevie Nicks, serving as her bandleader, music director and lead guitarist.

Wachtel previously scored such films as *Dickie Roberts: Former Child Star*, *Joe Dirt* and *Up in Smoke* and the upcoming *The Last Request* and *Alabama Love Story*.

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