

## Skechers In Doghouse For Super Bowl Ad

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While the Big Game is still a few weeks away, it looks like Skechers has already stepped in something with its 30-second spot. The sneaker company is in the doghouse with animal-rights activists, who say its ad promotes greyhound racing. So far, more than 47,000 consumers have signed a change.org-organized petition, urging the sneaker company to jettison the spot, filmed at a Tucson greyhound racetrack.

The group, called GREY2K USA, started a 'Boycott Skechers' Web site about a month ago, and says it is planning a protest at the Skechers store in Tucson later this month. The ad, which Skechers says is scheduled to run in the two-minute warning period before the first half of the game, features a sassy French Bulldog named Mr. Quiggly, and also stars Mark Cuban, the outspoken owner of the Dallas Mavericks. While Cuban is best known for his role in sports, he has also appeared on ABC's "Dancing With The Stars," HBO's "Entourage" and ABC's "Shark Tank."

But while the pooch -- positioned as the underdog of shoes in the sports performance arena -- may have all the personality of Spuds MacKenzie, the animal rights group says the ad promotes greyhound dog racing, which it says is now banned in 38 states.

"Skechers should not be partnering with Tucson Greyhound Park, which has an extensive record of cruelty," says GREY2K USA president Christine Dorchak in the group's statement. "Tucson Greyhound Park is perhaps the most infamous dog track in the country, and multiple cases of neglect occurred only weeks prior to the shoot. We are hopeful that the company will hear our concerns, realize its mistake, and withdraw this misguided promotion of dog racing."

Skechers did not respond to queries about whether it would yank the ad.

The spot promotes the Manhattan Beach, Calif.-based company's new GORun shoe, "a radically lightweight, minimal running shoe that features mid-foot strike technology and GOimpulse sensors for enhanced sensory feedback." It marks the brand's first foray into the \$13 billion global running shoe business, dominated by Nike and Adidas.