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[News](#) | [Alene Tchekmedyan](#) | January 25, 2012 11:30 am

## Skechers Super Bowl commercial has animal activists growling



Mr. Quiggly, the star of Skechers' Super Bowl commercial this year. Photo courtesy of Skechers

For this year's Super Bowl commercial, Manhattan Beach-based Skechers swapped [Kim Kardashian](#) for a shorter, stubbier star: Mr. Quiggly.

This has animal rights activists growling for change.

In the commercial, [Mr. Quiggly](#), a French bulldog wearing bright red Skechers shoes, races

a pack of [greyhounds](#) at Tucson Greyhound Park.

Greyhound protection organization Grey2K created an online [petition](#) against Skechers and NBC, arguing that the company is supporting dog racing and requesting that they pull the ad. More than 100,000 animal rights activists nationwide have signed.

“At Tucson Greyhound Park, greyhounds are kept confined in small cages which are barely large enough for them to stand up or turn around. They are fed raw 4-D meat, the meat of downed, diseased, disabled or dead livestock,” the petition reads.

The ad is set to air on Sunday, Feb. 5 during the Super Bowl to about 100 million viewers.

Leonard Armato, president of Skechers Fitness Group, said protesters are making assumptions about a commercial they have not yet seen. “Not one single animal lover has done anything but applauded the commercial,” he said, about those who have seen the commercial.

Contrary to what protesters believe, the ad is “about the spirit of the underdog achieving something remarkable in the face of great odds,” Armato said.

Also featured in the commercial is Mark Cuban, owner of the Dallas Mavericks, who himself was an underdog who went from rags to riches, Armato said.

The American Humane Association was on set for the filming of the commercial. “We believe that the Guidelines for the Safe Use of Animals in Filmed Media were followed and that no animal was harmed in the making of this commercial,” wrote Cheryl Kearny, director of post production for the American Humane Film and Television Unit.

Still, animal activists are upset. “By featuring Tucson Greyhound Park in your commercials, you are glorifying this inhumane sport and encouraging your customers to patronize this business,” wrote Kelly Kennedy, on an online forum. “Please reconsider your decision and stand up for the thousands of innocent dogs who cannot stand up for themselves.”

According to a Grey2K report, more than 900 greyhound injuries were reported at Arizona racetracks between January 2007 and November 2009. Injuries include a broken leg, fractures, dislocations, muscle tears and heat stroke, the report said.



Mr. Quiggly, star of Skechers' Super Bowl commercial this year, visits Skechers CEO Michael Greenberg in Manhattan Beach. Photo courtesy of Skechers