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Kim Kardashian replaced by dog in Skechers Super Bowl ad

By Bruce Horowitz, USA TODAY

Updated 7h 1m ago

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Kim Kardashian isn't being thrown a bone from Skechers on **Super Bowl** Sunday — but a dog is.



Skecher

Kim Kardashian was featured in her first Super Bowl ad last year for Skechers Shape-Up shoe.

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Kardashian, the reality TV mega-star who was featured in the sneaker maker's racy Super Bowl commercial last year, has been dropped and will be replaced by a French bulldog.

The move comes about two months after Kardashian filed for a divorce from basketball star [Kris Humphries](#). But Skechers executives insist that negative PR cycle following the divorce filing has nothing to do with their decision. [Mark Cuban](#), the owner of the [Dallas Mavericks](#), also has a cameo in the new spot.

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"Kim got us more attention than we ever dreamed," says Leonard Armato, president of Skechers Fitness, who notes that Skechers is launching a high-tech running shoe business. "We have to establish Skechers as more than a lifestyle company."

In the spot, the tiny dog — bedecked in Skechers new GORun shoes — races a pack of greyhounds. But that, too, is raising eyebrows from an animal rights group Grey2K USA, which is petitioning to ax the ad. It claims that the greyhounds were mistreated and kept in tiny cages at Tucson Greyhound Park.

"Skechers using Tucson Greyhound Park as the backdrop for an ad is akin to Hertz calling back O.J. Simpson as a spokesperson," says Christine Dorchak, president of Grey2K.

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But Tom Taylor, CEO of the track, says the cages are among the largest in the country. "Animal activists would like the cages to be 12 feet by 12 feet, with couches and TVs."

The American Humane Society says no animals were harmed in the making of the ad. Armato says Grey2K's complaints are unrelated to the purpose of the ad. The spot does not glamorize dog racing, he says. "It is simply a metaphor for a remarkable, underdog achievement."

While Skechers' contract with Kardashian expired at the end of 2011, her effect on the brand has been huge, Armato says. Two months before the 2011 Super Bowl, Skechers' Facebook page had 100,000 fans, but it now has 400,000 — much of which he attributes to Kardashian.

Kardashian could not be reached.

Mark Cuban, who appears briefly in the ad, knows that he and the ad's dog star have a tough act to follow. "I'm not Kim Kardashian," he says. "But one of the things I do know is high technology and how to use it."

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