

MAKING FAMILY LIFE MORE ENJOYABLE

Skateboarding Pro Insists That Sport Is Good Clean Fun

by Andy Macdonald, 8-time World Skateboarding Champion

(NAPSA)—Ever since I was a kid, skateboarding has had a rough image. As the eight-time world champion and star of my own skateboard video game, I'm one example to the contrary.

I see skateboarding more as an art form than a sport. It's an opportunity for kids to use their creativity, get some exercise and have a good time. That adds up to a lot of fun. So much, in fact, that today there are 13 million skateboarders in the world—more skateboarders than Little League players!

That may be one reason my video game, *Backyard Skateboarding*, is so popular. It won Game of the Year for 2004 from the Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences. Another reason may be that there's no violence or foul language. Instead, the game is packed with creative moves, voice-overs and tricks that are downright funny. In *Backyard Skateboarding* when your player wipes out, he doesn't yell expletives. Instead, he gingerly moans, "Now that's gonna hurt."

One of the things I like most about skateboarding is the creativity it allows for. Some skateboarding tricks have silly names, like the Stale Fish or the Benihana, my trademark trick. The game includes these pro tricks, plus other made-up tricks like the Calculator and the Spatula Master. The tricks are especially fun if they're played in Molasses Mode, the game's term for slow motion.

Safety is crucial in this sport.



Skateboarding is an art form in one new video game.

After twenty years I still land on my head from time to time. So at the beginning of *Backyard Skateboarding*, kids get to pick out their own helmet, like the yellow one I wear, to protect their melon.

Kids also choose a shirt and griptape design and they get to decorate their board. The entire game is about self-expression and fun—just like the sport of skateboarding.

By refusing to include content meant for adults—bad language, graffiti and other questionable activities—games like this can help parents realize that most skateboarders are just your average, healthy kids out to have a good time. When I'm on tour I do my best to prove that skateboarding is good clean fun. By doing so, I hope to shed some light on skating's bad boy image.

For more information on *Backyard Sports*, go to www.backyardsports.com.