

BASEBALL FACTS AND FIGURES

Minor League Baseball—A Marketing Home Run

(NAPSA)—With nearly 39 million patrons in 2002, Minor League Baseball™ is more popular than ever before.

It has come a long way since the first recognized league in Minor League Baseball, the Northwestern League, was organized in the early 1880s with the National League. Today, there are close to 250 teams, and since 1995, 58 Minor League Baseball parks have been completed in the United States, and one in Canada.

Minor League Baseball's popularity stems not only from its affordability and on-field action, but also from clever marketing, including community involvement, player and celebrity appearances and wacky promotions. In Minor League Baseball, entertainment is the name of the game.

What really gets the crowd going is the between-inning entertainment: dizzy-bat racing, sumo wrestlers, dance contests and pie-eating contests and above all, the mascots. Mascots are the centerpiece of fan entertainment. While their antics are amusing, they can be the catalysts for rallying the home team and their fans against the competition. Mascots are part of the sports culture, a vital part of fan interaction and branding for the team.

Savvy brands, such as Unilever's Shedd's Spread Country Crock®, find that Minor League Baseball sponsorship is extremely effective. In fact, this brand has expanded its commitment to Minor League Baseball with the creation of "Country Crock's Junior Mascot Challenge," which gives kids in several Minor League Baseball cities the chance



America's best known mascot, the San Diego Chicken, is crowing about a junior mascot contest that gives kids a chance to win part of a \$10,000 scholarship.

to compete to be a junior mascot for their favorite team and win a part of \$10,000 in scholarships. To introduce the contest, Unilever has enlisted the support of America's best-known sports mascot—the famous "San Diego Chicken" (A.K.A. Ted Giannoulas).

"Country Crock is thrilled to team up with the famous 'San Diego Chicken' and promote the wholesome fun and excitement of Minor League Baseball," says David Burrows, Country Crock Senior Brand Manager. "Quality family time has never been more important and associating ourselves with an affordable and family-friendly activity is a perfect fit for our brand."

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