

“Bouncing Bulldogs: Training to be the Best”

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Comm 135 – Documentary Production

“Hap” Kindem

COMM 135
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Proposal
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Bouncing Bulldogs: Training to be the Best

STATEMENT

“Bouncing Bulldogs: Training to be the Best” (working title) is a ten minute documentary video that will introduce the viewer to the relatively unknown world of competitive Rope Skipping. The video will demonstrate that while the sport is unique and developing, the Bouncing Bulldogs’ team spirit is universal and timeless.

very good

Rope skipping has evolved from a backyard pastime, to an internationally competitive sport. A number of the most talented Rope Skippers in the world are located right here in Chapel Hill, Hillsborough and Durham, North Carolina. The Bouncing Bulldogs Rope Skipping Demonstration Team is comprised of 100 boys and girls, ranging from the ages of 6 to 21. Their coach, Ray Fredrick, Jr. has trained national and world champions. He has also boosted the confidence of approximately 3,200 boys and girls who have been a part of the team over the years. Fredrick’s thoughtful approach to coaching not only produces champions, but also fosters the social development and confidence of the all kids on the team.

“Bouncing Bulldogs: Training to be the Best” will show the team at work; practicing, performing and competing. The video will explain the different elements of the sport, and share the team’s unique culture via interviews with jumpers, their parents, and Coach Fredrick.

Although Rope Skipping is now featured on ESPN and requires marvelously athletic and acrobatic skills, the sport is not well known. Many people are surprised to learn that Rope Skipping is even a competitive sport. This is probably due to the sport’s relative newness and lack of media visibility.

AUDIENCE

The intended audience for this program is Rope Skipping enthusiasts and anyone who is interested in learning more about rope skipping and the Bouncing Bulldogs. We plan to complete this documentary by December 9, 2003. At this time we will submit the video to PBS, and possibly other outlets. We hope that PBS will choose to air the ten-minute program on Carolina Visions, and also sponsor the project to continue being developed for an hour-long show. A one-hour documentary would follow the team as

they prepare for the 2004 National and World Championships. Last year, the Bouncing Bulldogs placed second overall, only to be outdone by a team that includes adult competitors (over 30 years old). Despite the fact that the Bulldogs do not have adult jumpers, Coach Fredrick believes that this year, the team will be number one.

BACKGROUND AND NEED

Rope Skipping has been a leisure activity enjoyed by people for generations, but during the past few decades its popularity has increased dramatically in the realm of competitive sports. In the 1970s, Rope Skipping caught on along with the fitness craze of that decade. Various forms of Rope Skipping were developed and taught throughout the world due to the efforts of the International Rope Skipping Organization. goal

While there are many instructional videos on Rope Skipping, very few have taken a documentary approach. *Black Magic*, PBS 1984, by Kirk Wolfinger follows a Double Dutch team from inner city Hartford on a trip to London. *Pick Up Your Feet--The Double Dutch Show*, 1981, by Skip Blumberg, covers the Eighth Annual World Invitational Double Dutch Championship, in New York City on June 13, 1981. *The Double Dutch Divas*, featuring that team, was made by Nicole Franklin in 2000.

A lot has changed since these earlier videos were made. Enthusiasm for expanding and standardizing the sport grew tremendously during the 1990s. In 1993, a number of Rope Skipping organizations came together to standardize the sport's rules and regulations for the first World Invitational Rope Skipping Championship. In 1995, the United States Amateur Jump Rope Federation (USAJRF) was formed. goal

Impressed by this dedication to enriching the sport, the Amateur Athletic Union invited the Rope Skipping organizations to compete in the Amateur Athletic Union Junior Olympic Games of 1995 in the Aerobics division. That was the year that Rope Skipping was officially respected as a sport. Today, the International Olympic Committee is perusing interest in the sport, giving hope that Rope Skipping may become a certified event in the Summer Olympics as soon as 2012.

The sport of Rope Skipping has continued to grow through conventions, camps, workshops, tournaments, and judging clinics at the state, regional, and national levels. Rope Skipping teams have cropped up in numerous places worldwide and still have tremendous potential for growth, since anyone can apply to start their own team. The sport is accessible to anyone physically able to participate, and does not discriminate based on gender, race, class, or age.

Competitors are divided by age into five common divisions: 11 years old and younger, 12-14 years old, 15-17 years old, 18-29 years old, and the senior division of 30 years and older. Rope Skipping is one of the few sports in which males and females compete directly against each other in certain events.

As the sport has increased in popularity, the standards of athleticism have been raised. Through dedicated training, the Bouncing Bulldogs have gathered an arsenal of more than 400 tricks, including flips and other acrobatics, using single and double dutch ropes. Rope Skipping is growing in recognition as a truly worthy sport through its leaders' dedication to implementing regulatory standards, its physical demand, and its open acceptance of participants. Rope Skipping enriches its participants with the benefits of physical fitness, confidence, discipline, responsibility, and leadership

There is unquestionable value in documenting a local championship team that excels at a little known, but rapidly growing sport. It is likely that viewers either may not be aware of Rope Skipping's status as an organized competitive sport, or who hold false prejudices about the level of physical demand, creativity, and commitment that is actually required to excel in the sport.

This entertaining and educational video will be a contemporary, personal document of the hard work, dedication, and benefits of jumping with the Bouncing Bulldogs team. The Bouncing Bulldogs have competed at the highest levels, currently boasting 34 national champions and nine world champions in single and double dutch events. They have also traveled all over the world to perform for sports fans, health and fitness professionals, students, educators, and the general public. Their aim is to broaden support for the growing sport, to introduce an overlooked, but challenging and enjoyable way to get fit, and to provide incredible entertainment to everyone. This documentary will be an instrument effectively serving to aid in the Bouncing Bulldogs' goal of promoting the sport of Rope Skipping.

*very good -
this statement
could also
be part of your
opening statement*

APPROACH, STRUCTURE AND STYLE

This documentary on the Bouncing Bulldogs will fall mostly under the heading of the observational mode. The footage we gather during time spent following the team to practices and demonstrations will be very much about the subjects involved and little will be seen of our interactions with them. We will try to be "flies on the wall" and observe our subjects as unobtrusively as possible as. Though we will be prompting responses and actions through questions and our very presence, we want to minimize our effect on the film and focus on the athletes and their stories.

The style of this documentary will be somewhat traditional, making use of head shot interviews, inter-cut with action that demonstrates what is being talked about. We would like to make use of some narrative fiction techniques in filming if possible. Since so many documentaries incorporate hand-held camera movements when recording action and then use a stationary camera when filming interviews, we want to try to vary these techniques somewhat.

When recording the live action we would like to use ^{stationary?} two cameras. One will be used for getting a master shot of the action being filmed, while the other moves in for interesting details such as close ups of kids' faces as they concentrate on performing, or shots of the coach giving instructions and encouragement from the sidelines. The use of a steady-cam or glide-cam will help to smooth out the inherent roughness of many handheld shots. If the subjects feel comfortable, incorporating some small camera movements during interviews would help to make the video more visually intriguing. We would just need to be careful not to let the camera techniques draw attention away from our subjects.

good

We will explain that Rope Skipping is far more than just a pastime enjoyed by grade school girls. We will attempt to show how Rope Skipping has become a serious competitive sport and how the lives of children and young adults are affected by being a part of the Bouncing Bulldogs team. We will follow the team through their demanding practices and exciting demonstrations, on their quest to being the best that they can be, in the sport of Rope Skipping and in life.

We will conduct interviews with the head coach of the team, as well as parents of the kids, in order to see how they feel Rope Skipping has had an impact on their children's lives. We will then interview some of the members of the team in an effort to learn how being a part of the Bouncing Bulldogs team has affected them.

Most importantly, we hope that this will be a truly collaborative project. We will continually seek creative input from Coach Fredrick and team captains. We want to be certain that the Bulldogs feel that this video accurately represents their sport and team culture.

I have potentially interesting - perhaps think about + further develop this.

BUDGET AND EQUIPMENT LIST:

(IN-KIND):

<u>EQUIPMENT</u>	<u>PER UNIT</u>	<u>UNITS</u>	<u>TOTAL \$</u>
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Production:

Sony PDR-150 DVCAM/MiniDV 3CCD Camera (w/ lenses)	\$175/day	7 days	\$1225
Bogen Tripod w/ Manfrotto fluid Head	\$100/day	7 days	\$700
2 Sony NP-F750 InfoLITHIUM Batteries	\$75/day	7 days	\$525
1 Sennheiser MKH 416 RF Condenser Shotgun Mic (w/ boom pole)	\$50/day	7 days	\$350
1 Sony ECM-66B Uni-directional Electret Condenser Lavalier Mic	\$20/day	3 days	\$60
Glide Cam V8 Stabilization System	\$175/day	4 days	\$700
1 Light Kit	\$175/day	3 days	\$525

Post Production:

Editing w/ Final Cut Pro 4	\$100/day	10 days	\$1000
G4 Power Mac Computer	\$280/day	10 days	\$2800

TOTAL IN-KIND EXPENSES = \$7885.00

(OTHER EXPENSES):

<u>EQUIPMENT</u>	<u>PER UNIT</u>	<u>UNITS</u>	<u>TOTAL \$</u>
10 MiniDV Tapes	\$7/tape	10 tapes	\$70
Food	\$20 per day/ per person	7 days/ 3 people	\$420
Travel	\$10 per day/ per person	7 days/ 3 people	\$210

TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES = \$700.00

SHOOTING SCHEDULE

10/5/2003 shoot rope-skipping demonstration at Festifall, 3pm
9/29-10/10 visit practices, arrange interviews
10/14-10/30 shoots to be completed:
2 practices
interviews with: Ray Fredrick (coach), 3 team members, 3 parents
11/1-11/2 shoot invitational workshop at East Chapel Hill High School
by 11/11 rough cut

by 11/25 final edit
by 12/7 add music, titles, graphics
12/9 screening of final project

PRODUCTION TEAM

Stephanie Johnes is a second year M.A. student and Park Fellow in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at UNC, Chapel Hill. Prior to attending graduate school, Stephanie worked as a production assistant at Inca Productions, a television documentary production company based in Mill Valley, California. At Inca, she contributed writing and research to four different projects, including, *2001: Hal's Legacy*, which aired on PBS. At Carolina, Stephanie was a segment producer for *Waiting for the Rain*, a half-hour documentary about the worst drought in North Carolina's history. She has also contributed news packages to *Carolina Week*, the school's weekly student television newscast.

Kristina Borus is a Senior Communication Studies-Media Studies and Production major at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Kristina has completed numerous short independent film, video, and audio production projects spanning the genres of documentary, narrative, and experimental. Through these various projects, Kristina has honed her skills in all aspects of the production process, including producing, shooting, editing, and working both independently and cooperatively.

Sam Hargrave is a Senior Communication Studies-Media Production Major at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He has made numerous short films, one of which was accepted into the Apollo Film Festival, and has worked on the set of five independent feature films. This past summer he was involved in making two independent features, *Minimum Force*, and *Fight Circle*. He co-directed and starred in *Minimum Force*, and served as the film's fight choreographer. He also played a lead role in *Fight Circle* and was the fight choreographer for the film. On other films he has worked as Assistant Lighting Technician, and Best Boy Grip. He has a strong working knowledge of Final Cut Pro and has edited all of his own short films, as well as the fight scenes for *Minimum Force* and *Fight Circle*.

TREATMENT

The video opens with a shot of a group of young girls skipping rope on the sidewalk; the scene that comes to most people's minds when they think of rope skipping. This opening scene ends with a shot of a girl skipping rope. She is only doing very basic moves, smiling happily as she skips. Dissolve to a shot of a teenage boy doing an amazing freestyle routine in a gymnasium. Over this transition commentary from either Coach Fredrick or one of the kids can be heard describing the difference between people's initial perceptions of Rope Skipping and the intense competitive sport that the Bouncing Bulldogs are a part of. There is a cut to a wide shot of the entire gymnasium filled with

good opening

children of all ages, both boys and girls, jumping in unison. As the camera moves between various groups of jumpers, voices of young athletes describe the complexity of the trick they are working on. The camera cuts to a close up of a six year old, whose face is intently focused on timed speed jumping.

Coach Fredrick disciplines and inspires his kids, a balanced mix between caring teacher and hard-core coach. A young jumper who has just joined the team gives her impressions and explains how she has found camaraderie and challenge in the environment that Coach Fredrick provides for the team. Interviews with Joseph, 17, the team's captain, who has been training with the Bouncing Bulldogs for ten years, and other team members of various ages demonstrate the diversity of the team and show the many different voices represented by the Bouncing Bulldogs. Parents like Dana Carvalho, who became a certified judge for the sport after her daughter joined the team, will also be introduced.

good

Anticipation builds as the jumpers and parents look forward to the Bulldogs' invitational workshop on November 1 & 2, 2003. The team awaits scores of jumpers who will travel to Chapel Hill from across the country and even around the world to participate in this event. The participants meet at East Chapel Hill High School to be coached by the renowned Bouncing Bulldogs team. It is one of the biggest events of the year for the Bulldogs and an important step along the way to becoming the best that they can be in the sport of Rope Skipping and in life.

A/
H This is an excellent, well-written and well thought-out proposal. It is extremely readable and would give any potential sponsor a clear idea of what they should expect and a strong argument for why they should support your efforts.