

Behind-the-Scenes: Recreating an Iconic Scene from “The Sandlot”

This year, “The Sandlot” celebrates its 25th Anniversary, so we thought it only fitting to pay tribute to the iconic baseball film by recreating a scene from it earlier this spring.

By now, you’ve probably seen the video, which has gone viral (a term I don’t like to use loosely, but in this case, applies), gracing everything from ESPN, Sports Illustrated, USA Today and the Today Show to TMZ, Entertainment Weekly, Men’s Health & PopSugar, but in case you missed it (or just want to see it again), here’s what I’m talking about:

I’ve received messages from friends, family, co-workers and even former Brewers about the video and many have asked the same thing: How did this all come together?

Well, we had a few guys in mind for the characters when we went down to Arizona, but the real challenge was going to be getting nine guys on board and focused.

So, naturally, I started by asking **Brett Phillips**, who I knew would be both 1) a perfect “Smalls” and 2) a willing participant, coming off [last season’s hit tribute to Wayne’s World](#).



Easy-peasy.

It just so happened that catcher **Stephen Vogt**, who sits two lockers over, overhead me. His ears perked up, “The Sandlot? Anything you’re doing with The Sandlot, I want in.”



“Great,” I said. “You were next on my list to talk to.”

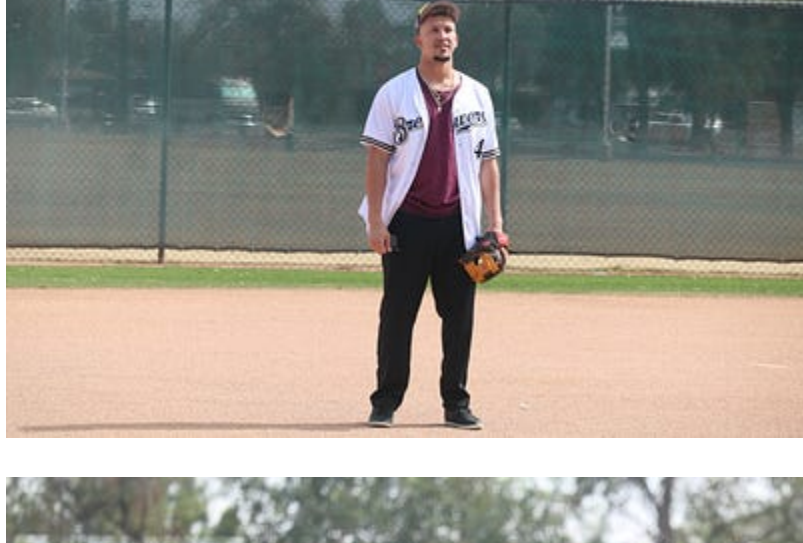
“Can I be Ham?” he asked.

“You beat me to the punch,” I said.

Poor, unsuspecting **Christian Yelich**, whose locker is situated between the two, got roped in by proximity. The new guy on the team, he’d been in the clubhouse for just a couple of days at that point. When he got pulled into the conversation, it was probably very tough for him to say no to the peer pressure, especially once we convinced him he would be the perfect Benny the Jet.

“Wow, that’s a lot of pressure,” Christian said, alluding to the fact that *everybody* loves Benny the Jet.

But he was on board. From there, we rounded out the cast with **Jeremy Jeffress** (a no-brainer for Kenny DeNunez); **Josh Hader** (the guy who calls everybody “brother” was the perfect Bertram Grover Weeks); **Jett Bandy** and **Chase Anderson**, the perfect Timmy/Tommy combo (although, I’m pretty sure Jett agreed to participate just so he could say “Shut up, Chase” on camera); and the surprise breakout star, **Hernán Pérez**, as Yeah-Yeah.



Of course, when we first thought of this idea, we knew that **Eric Sogard** would have to be Squints. The only problem was that I hadn’t had the chance to talk to Eric in person. I had everyone else lined up, but knew that if Eric somehow didn’t want to participate, or was unavailable, the video would be severely lacking... I sent him a message and told him what we were doing.... “We want you to be Squints,” I said. “This kind of hinges on you a bit.”



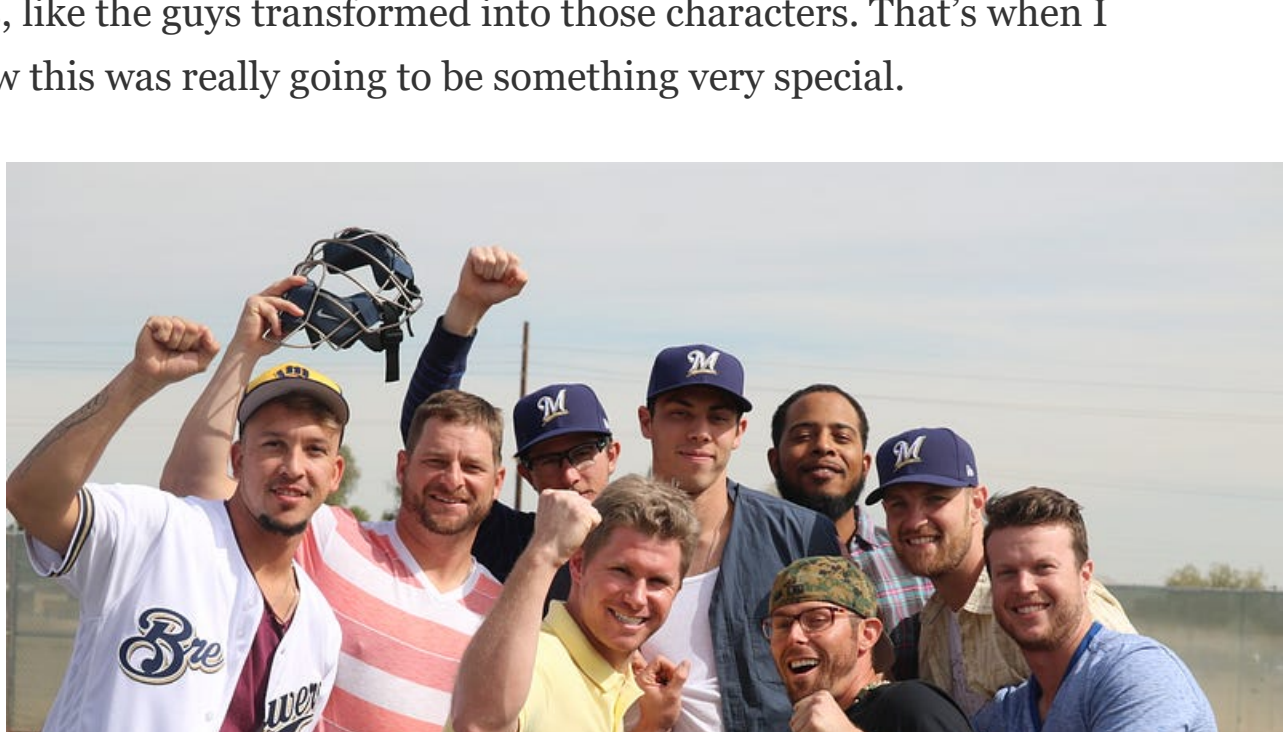
“I’m in,” he replied, with the signature “Nerd” emoji.

From there, myself, along with **Aaron Oberley**, our new media coordinator; **Kelley Sibley**, our motion graphics designer; **Nicole Thompson** and **Matt Gompper**, our videographer/editors; and **Evan Entler**, our director of marketing & brand strategy, worked on finessing the script, putting together shot sheets, and securing props/costumes.

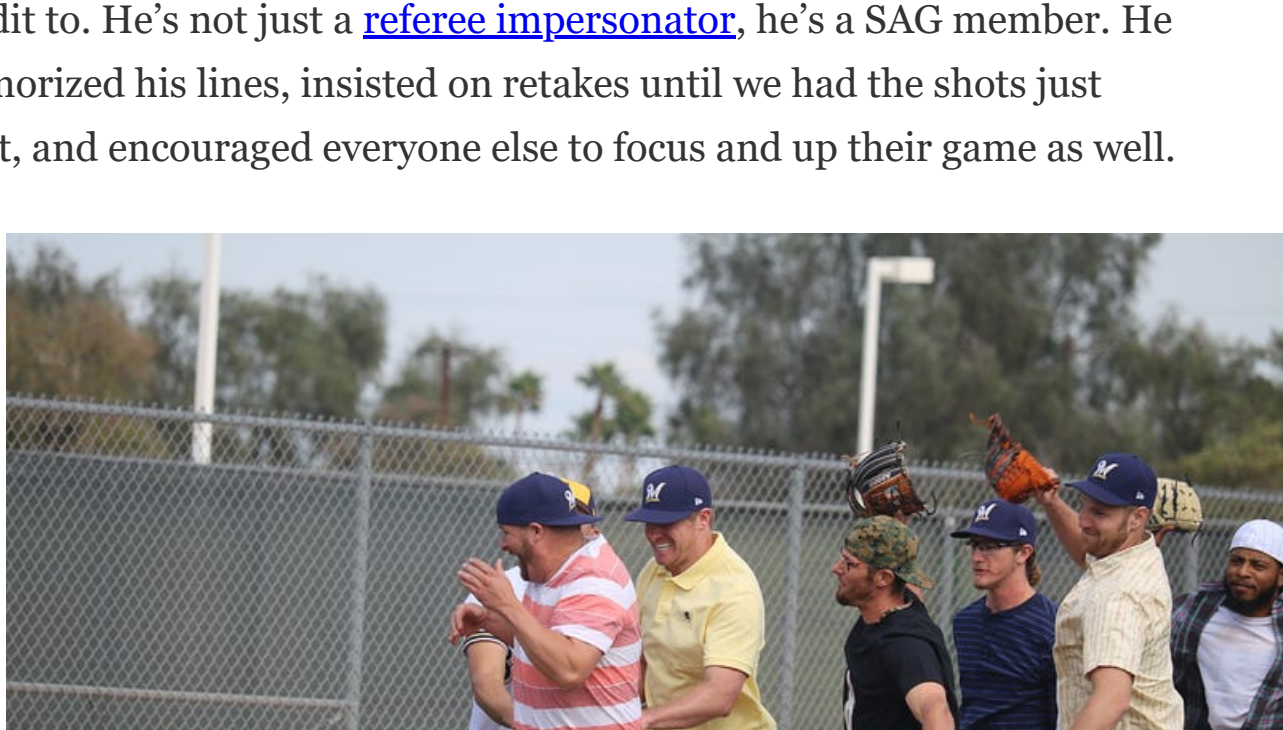
With their busy schedules and heavy workloads, getting two or three guys to commit to something before or after practice can be challenging.... but getting nine guys to stick around and commit to something of this nature was something I almost lost sleep over. What if someone had to drop out? Who would we get as a backup?

But the fact that all of these guys stayed after practice for as long as they needed to in order to nail their parts speaks volumes as to how passionate they were about getting this right and paying tribute to one of the best baseball movies of all time.

I knew that doing something with The Sandlot would resonate very well with Brewers fans because who doesn’t love The Sandlot? But the moment I started seeing guys come out of the clubhouse to their “costumes,” I almost wanted to cry. It was like Smalls, Ham, and Benny the Jet had stepped off the screen and grown up right before my very eyes, like the guys transformed into those characters. That’s when I knew this was really going to be something very special.



I cannot say enough about Stephen Vogt, who I will give the Director’s Credit to. He’s not just a [referee impersonator](#), he’s a SAG member. He memorized his lines, insisted on retakes until we had the shots just right, and encouraged everyone else to focus and up their game as well.



The whole thing took about an hour and forty-five minutes to film and included many laughs along the way (look for some [outtakes](#) to come soon!). There was real-life banter between Vogt and Jeffress, aside from their lines as Ham and DeNunez; Eric Sogard suddenly breaking out into a Southern accent on his “If you were thinking, you wouldn’t have thought that” line; and Jett Bandy and Chase Anderson struggling to get their timing down. Perhaps the moment that earned the biggest laugh was the very first time Hernán Pérez delivered his line.

He was supposed to be out of breath from running with the group to rescue Smalls, so after a little huffing and puffing he delivered that one line with such gusto—and with his thick Venezuelan accent—that there was a long pause after he was done before everyone started cracking up. It was to the point of rolling around on the ground laughing—and to this day you’re still likely to hear an exaggerated “Ja-Ja, troo-lee” coming from some corner of the clubhouse. Hernán took it like a champ though and I personally think his line is one of the best in the skit.

The guys posed for a few photos before they left for the day and I knew the shoot had gone very, very well.



I almost knew our productions team was talented, but when I saw the rough draft, I was blown away. The last thing they had to do was add in “The Beast,” a clip which was filmed back in Milwaukee at Hank’s house.

Adding Hank to the film was the icing on the cake. I was also down in Arizona at Spring Training four years ago when the Ballpark Pup first wandered into Maryvale and our hearts....And, while Hank’s been out of the limelight for a bit, I knew a cameo in this film would be the perfect way to wrap up the piece and “Brewerize” it.



I knew the video had turned out great, but even I have been blown away at the response. I can’t thank the players enough for their time and commitment to their characters and “getting it right,” as well as our talented productions team for the time and effort that this took to produce.

And thank you to you, the fans, for watching, reading and following us! I hope that you’ll continue following us on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) for more fun content all season long.

PS: If you want to “hear” more about this topic, [take a listen here](#).