

GOOD SPORTS

TEN MINUTE PLAY

By Mike Willis

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PUBLISHED BY

**HEUER PUBLISHING LLC
P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406
TOLL FREE (800) 950-7529 • FAX (319) 368-8011**

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SYNOPSIS: *Good Sports* is a satirical comedy about the retail business. John B. Good is the cynical owner of Good Sports, a small town sporting goods store. The store advertises that it supplies sporting goods for all sports. Problems arise when John is visited by three unlikely athletes/customers requesting strange athletic equipment, including poker chips. John is met with resistance when he explains to the customers that the store doesn't carry poker chips nor any of the other items mentioned, because he doesn't consider them sports. The customers debate the issue and decide, "If it's on ESPN, it's gotta be a sport."

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 MEN, 1 WOMAN)

JOHN B. GOOD (m) Owner of Good Sports, a sporting goods store in Smalltown, Arizona. He is generally relaxed in nature and possesses a cynical wit. He dresses in athletic wear, but apart from his clothing, he does not appear to be athletic.

BODE (m)..... An athletic looking young man prone to using colloquialisms consistent with a young beach crowd. He is dressed in khaki shorts with sandals and a loud print shirt.

LILITH (f)..... A woman, twenty to forty. She possesses a domineering presence. She feels right at home dressed in camo-green or khaki and wearing hiking boots.

BUBBA (m)..... A frail man, twenty to forty. He wears thick glasses and has a bookish appearance.

SET

Good Sports, a sporting goods store in Smalltown, Arizona.

TIME: The present.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

Good Sports was first performed by the Lonetree Theatre Ensemble in Cassville, Wisconsin with the following cast:

John.....	Ian Barnes
Bode.....	M. Swailes
Lilith.....	Emily Hadorn
Bubba.....	Ren Kieler

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SETTING:

We are in Good Sports, a sporting goods store in Smalltown, Arizona. The stage is bare except for a counter UCS. Sports posters are taped to the front of the counter and there are several sports magazines and equipment catalogues, along with a telephone on the counter. There is a stool behind the counter.

AT RISE:

It is mid-morning. Seated on the stool behind the counter, reading the sports section of a newspaper, is JOHN GOOD. He is dressed in sweatpants, a sweatshirt, and running shoes. "Good Sports" is written across the front of the sweatshirt. Apart from his clothes, he does not look athletic. The phone rings and JOHN reluctantly puts down his paper and answers it.

JOHN: Good Sports . . . Yes, this is John . . . No, I'm afraid we don't carry poker chips or decks of cards. Why? . . . Well, we're a sporting goods store. We handle sports equipment and I don't really think poker is a sport . . . Yes, I know they have it on ESPN, but I still don't believe it is a sport. . . . I'm sorry, but I don't know why they would have poker on a sports network if it wasn't a sport. I guess maybe they, ESPN, think it is a sport, but I don't. . . . No, I do not think I am smarter than ESPN . . . What? Do we carry darts? Yes, we do stock darts and dart boards . . . Have I ever seen darts played on ESPN? Well . . . no, but we have customers who want someplace to go to get darts. . . . I see, you're a customer and you want someplace to go to get poker supplies. *(Sighs.)* I'll order your poker chips; they'll be in next Friday. Goodbye.

JOHN hangs up the phone and picks up a pad and pencil off the counter, writing down the order for poker chips as he mutters to himself.

JOHN: *(To himself.)* Where am I gonna get poker chips? Maybe I should call ESPN, the sports authority.

JOHN goes back to reading his paper. The bell on the shop door sounds and BODE enters from SL. He is a young man in good shape.

JOHN: Good morning. If there is anything I can help you with, let me know.

BODE: Sure, dude. I'm just gonna look around awhile, check the space, ya know.

JOHN: Yeah, fine. Check the space.

BODE: Sports store, huh?

JOHN: Yeah.

BODE: I'm an athlete.

JOHN: I can see that.

BODE: Ya can? How? You, like, psychic or somethin'?

JOHN: You look like an athlete.

BODE: I do?

JOHN: Yeah, you do.

BODE: Wow. That's, like, good for me, right, since I'm in a sports store, huh?

JOHN: *(Still reading.)* Yep, good for you.

BODE: Yeah, it's good to be an athlete in a sports store.

JOHN: It certainly helps.

BODE: Whoa . . . Hey man, you got darts over here.

JOHN: *(Putting down his paper.)* What?

BODE: Darts. You got darts over here on a shelf.

JOHN: Can't fool you, can I?

BODE: How come, man? Darts isn't a sport. It's never been on ESPN.

JOHN: I've heard that.

BODE wanders around the stage, browsing the store. JOHN goes back to his newspaper. BODE moves about the store and begins humming "Surfin' USA" by the Beach Boys. JOHN, distracted, looks up from his paper. BODE sees JOHN looking at him and crosses to the counter.

BODE: You got any surfboards, man?

JOHN: This is Arizona.

BODE: Yeah, like, I know, but this is a sports store and surfing's a sport.

JOHN: I know. I saw it on ESPN.

BODE: Then why don't you have any boards?

JOHN: *(Putting down his paper.)* Well, the main reason is that . . . Arizona is not really a hotbed of surfing activity.

BODE: Why's that?

JOHN: I guess it could have something to do with the fact that Arizona is mostly desert. Surfing is usually done in the ocean and the nearest ocean is over two hundred miles away.

BODE: *(Thinking.)* I don't know if that's it or not . . . Maybe. Say, you plan on getting any in?

JOHN: Any what?

BODE: Surfboards.

JOHN: Hadn't planned on it.

BODE: Can you order me one?

JOHN: Sure. It'll be in next Friday with the poker chips.

BODE: Awesome, man.

BODE resumes looking around the store and JOHN goes back to his newspaper. After a few moments, BODE starts humming the Beach Boys song again. JOHN looks at BODE, annoyed. BODE keeps on humming. Finally, JOHN puts down his newspaper.

JOHN: You like the Beach Boys, huh?

BODE: *(In awe.)* Wow! How did you know? Like, man . . . you really are psychic. Here, let's see if you know this one. All right, what's my favorite song? Bet ya don't know that.

JOHN: "Surfin' USA."

BODE: No way! That's right, how'd you do that, man?

JOHN: It's a gift.

BODE: Who gave it to ya?

JOHN: What?!

BODE: The gift. Who gave it to ya?

JOHN: My mother, I guess.

BODE: Awesome. With a gift like that, you should be doin' somethin' besides runnin' a sports store, man.

JOHN: I'm thinking that myself right now.

BODE: "Surfin' USA," wow . . . That was good. What day can I get my surfboard then?

JOHN: Friday.

BODE: That's right, Friday! Man, you know everything. See ya Friday, then.

JOHN: Looking forward to it.

BODE exits the store and JOHN takes out his pad and pencil and writes down the order for a surfboard.

JOHN: *(To himself.)* One surfboard. Thank you, ESPN.

JOHN resumes reading his newspaper. The bell on the shop door sounds and BUBBA and LILITH enter. BUBBA is thin and frail and LILITH is a strong, physical-looking woman.

JOHN: Good morning. Just let me know if I can be of any assistance.

LILITH: Thanks, we'll just look around for awhile, if that's all right.

JOHN: Sure, looking's fine, take your time.

LILITH and BUBBA begin wandering around the store, browsing. After a few moments, LILITH begins to hum "Surfin' USA" by the Beach Boys. JOHN looks up from his newspaper in amazement. LILITH turns to see JOHN staring at her.

LILITH: *(To JOHN.)* "Surfin' USA" . . . by the Beach Boys.

JOHN: Yup. I recognized it.

LILITH: You like the Beach Boys?

JOHN: Can't say as I do.

LILITH: Too bad. They're really popular, you know.

JOHN: Today they are.

LILITH continues humming and crosses to BUBBA.

LILITH: (To *BUBBA*.) You find what you're looking for, dear?

BUBBA: No, but he has to have some. This is a sporting goods store.

LILITH: I don't see what I'm looking for either. Maybe he has some in back. Keep looking while I talk to the man.

LILITH crosses to JOHN, who comes out from behind the counter.

LILITH: You got any dogsleds?

JOHN: What?!

LILITH: Dogsleds. They have runners on them and are pulled by a bunch of dogs. Dog-sledding, it's a sport.

JOHN: Let me guess . . . you saw it on ESPN.

LILITH: How'd you know?

JOHN: Psychic.

LILITH: Really! So, you got ESPN?

JOHN: That, and ESP.

LILITH: Well, do you have any dogsleds? I don't see any.

JOHN: We're in Arizona. There isn't much call for a dogsled in Arizona.

LILITH: But this is a sporting goods store. Your sign says you have equipment for all sports and dog-sledding is a sport.

JOHN: So is poker and I don't have any poker chips, either. I won't have any until Friday.

LILITH: (Calling to *BUBBA*.) Don't waste your time, hon, he won't have any poker chips in until Friday.

BUBBA: No poker chips?

LILITH: Not until Friday.

BUBBA: What kind of sports store is this? No poker chips in stock, but they've got darts. (To *LILITH*.) Look, sweetheart, darts. Darts in a sporting goods store, what do you make of that?

LILITH: (To *JOHN*.) You've got darts? Darts isn't a sport. I've never seen darts on ESPN. You've got darts, but you don't have a dogsled?

JOHN: (With a sigh.) I'll have one on Friday.

LILITH: Great. (To BUBBA.) He can order me a dogsled and it will be in on Friday. You want me to have him order you some poker chips?

BUBBA: Yeah. That'd be great.

JOHN: One dogsled and an order of poker chips, got it.

The door opens and BODE reenters the store and crosses to JOHN.

BODE: What time on Friday?

JOHN: What?

BODE: Like, what time on Friday will my surfboard be in, man?

LILITH: (To BODE.) You getting a surfboard?

BODE: Yeah.

BUBBA: I didn't know surfing was a sport. (To JOHN.) Is that a sport?

JOHN: Must be, it's on ESPN. (To BODE.) Check at the end of the day, around five.

LILITH: (To JOHN.) What about my dogsled? What time can I pick that up?

JOHN: Same time as his surfboard.

BODE: You getting a dogsled? Is that a sport?

LILITH: It's on ESP.

JOHN: N . . . it must be a sport, then.

BODE: Gotta be a sport, then . . . Wow, I wouldn't have thought that.

JOHN: Probably a lot of things you wouldn't have thought of.

BODE: What?

JOHN: Nothing.

BUBBA: How about my poker chips? When will they be in?

JOHN: Same time.

BODE: (To BUBBA.) You getting poker chips? (To JOHN.) How can you order him poker chips? I thought this was a sporting goods store. Poker isn't a sport.

BUBBA: Is too.

BODE: Is not.

BUBBA: Is too! It's on . . .

JOHN: (Quickly interjecting.) ESPN!

LILITH: That's the sports channel. ESP wouldn't have it on if it wasn't a sport.

BODE: Wow, I guess . . . (To JOHN.) Can you order me some poker chips, too?

JOHN: (*Disbelieving.*) Sure. They'll be in on Friday.

BODE: I would have gotten some sooner, but I didn't know poker was a sport.

JOHN: I know. Who would have thunk?

BODE: Not me. (To LILITH and BUBBA.) Thanks for tellin' me that, I never would have guessed poker was a sport. Man, ya come into a sporting goods store and look what ya learn, ya know?

LILITH: (To JOHN.) Can you get me that dogsled in a medium?

JOHN: (*Surprised.*) They come in more than one size?

LILITH: I don't know. I think so.

BUBBA: You're the sporting goods store owner, don't you know?

BODE: Yeah, don't you know?

JOHN: No, I don't. I'll have to check.

BODE: Check on my surfboard too, man. I want that in a medium, also. What about poker chips, do they come in more than one size?

BUBBA: No, I think one size fits all.

JOHN: Maybe I should check with ESPN.

LILITH: You'd do that?

JOHN: No.

LILITH: Well, that's not being very helpful.

BUBBA: Yeah, we're the customer and the customer is always right, you know. You should treat us with more respect.

BODE: And try to help us.

JOHN: (*Calmly, with sarcasm.*) Ah, help you? Yes, you are right. Here is what I am going to do. (*Holding the phone in one hand but not speaking into it.*) After you leave, I am going to call up my supplier and say, "This is John B. Good from Good Sports in Smalltown, Arizona, and I would like to place an order for one medium surfboard, one medium dogsled . . . Yes, I believe they must come in more than one size. Excuse me, what's that? Uh, yes, we are in Arizona, and yes, this part of Arizona is mostly desert. Now, don't interrupt. I also want four sets of poker

chips . . . But we are a sporting goods store. *(Pause.)* I am ordering poker chips because . . . poker is a sport. *(Shouting.)* Is too, it's on ESPN!" *(JOHN hangs up the phone.)*

BUBBA: Now, you're being helpful.

BODE: Yeah, for a minute there I thought you didn't want to be bothered, man.

JOHN: *(Giving up.)* No bother.

LILITH: Well, that's settled. I can't wait to get my dogsled. *(To JOHN.)* I'll be thinking of you as I'm mushing on my sled.

BODE: Yeah, I'll ride a wave for ya, man.

BUBBA: And I'll tell all my poker buddies to come here for chips.

JOHN: Thank you, but there is no need . . .

LILITH: Nonsense. You've been such a good sport, ordering special for us, it's the least we can do.

JOHN: Well, that's us . . . Good Sports.

LILITH, BUBBA and BODE begin to leave.

BUBBA: Thanks, see you Friday.

LILITH: Don't forget, I want that dogsled in a medium.

BODE: *(Slapping JOHN on the back.)* Awesome, man. Can't wait until Friday.

As they start to exit, BODE and LILITH both start to hum "Surfin' USA". JOHN looks after them, then sits on the stool behind the counter with his head in his hands. The phone rings, and JOHN reluctantly answers it.

JOHN: Good Sports, sporting goods for all sports, John speaking . . . You are looking for a cesta, a long curved wicker racket used for jai a-lai? This is Arizona. Isn't jai a-lai played mostly in Spain and Latin America? . . . But sir, you need a special court called a fronton and three other players to play a game of jai a-lai . . . You want to order four cestas, then. One second, just let me check something.

JOHN holds the phone away from his ear for a few seconds then resumes the phone conversation.

JOHN: Oh, you're in luck, I have four cestas coming in this Friday along with an order for a surfboard, a dogsled and some poker chips . . . What do you mean, poker isn't a sport? It's on ESPN!

BLACKOUT.

THE END

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