



NEWS RELEASE

Hitting The Road In Style

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Meet the artist behind the Sports Matter Giving Truck's fresh look

The Sports Matter Giving Truck features fresh art as it goes on an 8-city tour to deliver gear to under-resourced baseball and softball players

The DICK'S Sporting Goods Foundation's Sports Matter Giving Truck has hit the road on an 8-city tour to deliver another 10,000 gifts of equipment to under-resourced baseball and softball athletes across the country. And we're doing it in style.

After a successful tour in the fall, the Giving Truck will have a new look with eye-catching artwork produced by Atlanta-based artist **George F. Baker III** as we safely hand out baseball and softball gear in each city throughout March.

The Giving Truck will make stops in Charlotte, Atlanta, Tampa, Mobile, Houston, El Paso, Phoenix and Los Angeles. As a bonus, the Houston stop will celebrate the partnership between the DICK'S Sporting Goods Foundation and Little League Baseball and Softball, after the Foundation committed \$500,000 over a five-year period that has supported more than 35 leagues and helped 18,500 young athletes.

The young athletes will be surprised by virtual guest appearances via the truck's built-in video screens from some of their favorite athletes, including Walker Buehler, Andrew McCutchen, Haylie McCleney, Cat Osterman and Joey Gallo.

But the first thing they will see is the captivating artwork of George F. Baker III.

Artwork, sports and morning cereal

The work of art that wraps around the Giving Truck gives off a vibe of pure childlike joy. It features the hallmarks of George's work including vivid images and profound messages in the simplest of terms. In short, he's quite good at creating art that looks simple and has a positive impact on anyone who sees it.

"When we can distill truth down to something so simple that kids can grasp it, everybody can," said George. "Something like, 'Just be you.' That's enough. It doesn't need to be that complicated because the things that move us are not complicated."

A self-professed lover of art, sports and sweet breakfast foods, all of that comes together in the new wrap.

"When you see it, I want it to feel as good as having a bowl of cereal in the morning," George said. "Everyone can relate to that and how good it feels. My stuff is really colorful and joyful. I want it to bring out everyone's inner child and create a wondrous type of mystery. I really want people to wonder what's inside when they see it rolling up."

The diverse art features baseball and softball players calling their shots, lighting up scoreboards and blowing bubble gum, along with motivational message like "Knock it out the park!" George even watched classic baseball movies to get their poses down. There's also little hints and shout-outs to each city carefully crafted into the work.

"Once I started drawing, it just felt right," said George. "It feels like something kids would be attracted to and kids would want to take pictures in front of. And maybe it inspires them to knock it out of the park in their daily life and do something they thought they couldn't do."

A perfect combination

George is a lifelong sports fan who has produced art for Nike and the NFL, and many more clients. He was raised in Detroit and has lived in Omaha and Hilton Head before settling in Atlanta with his family.

George and The DICK'S Sporting Goods Foundation both know the importance of sport and how it can shape young athletes for the rest of their lives and make people better.

"I'm a huge sports fan," said George. "You listen to any great athlete, and it just relates. The amount of will to commit to doing something like that...it just translates to everything you do. That's why I love it."

George recalls meeting his childhood hero, former Detroit Lions running back Barry Sanders, a few years ago and telling the Hall of Famer how his creativity on the football field inspired the artwork that George produces to this day.

Now George's artwork, sparked by watching his own childhood sports hero, will come full circle as it motivates the next generation of athletes.

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