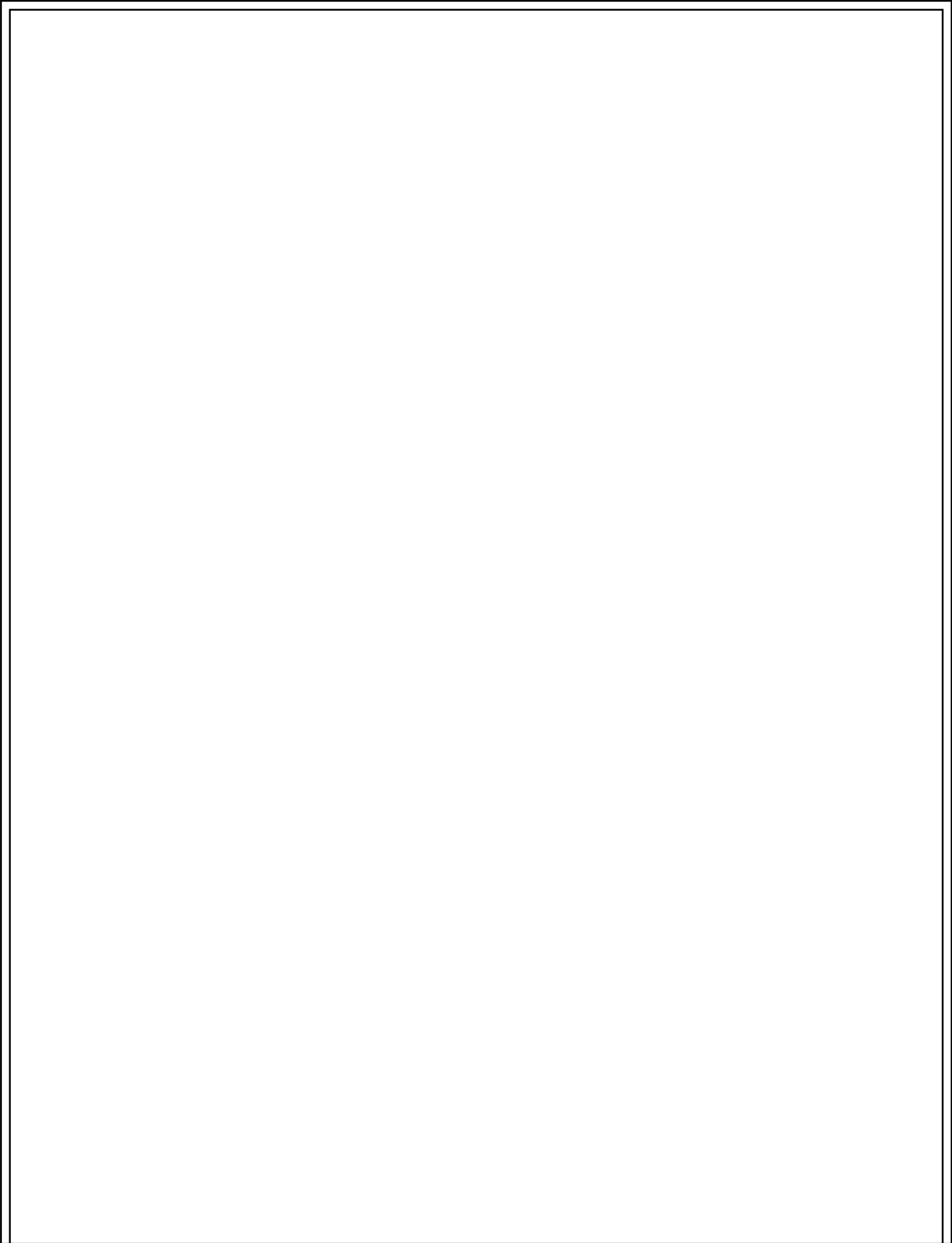


Interview: Breckin Meyer, Mark-Paul Gosselaar Are ‘Franklin & Bash’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on June 4, 2012 - 7:49pm

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CHICAGO – The popular and wacky lawyer/buddy series, “Franklin & Bash” begins its second season on Tuesday, June 5th, with the two leads – Beckin Meyer and Mark-Paul Gosselaar – reprising their roles as the title characters. This year, the duo are challenged by the responsibility of becoming partners in their law firm, but won’t lose their unique edge.





The Boys are Back: Breckin Meyer and Mark-Paul Gosselaar are 'Franklin & Bash'
Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

Mark-Paul Gosselaar and Beckin Meyer are television career veterans. Gosselaar spent seven years (1988-95) starring as Zach Morris in the various incarnations of "Saved by the Bell," the generation-defining Saturday morning sitcom that launched the careers of Dustin Diamond (Screech), Mario Lopez (Slater), Elizabeth Berkley (Jesse) and Tiffani-Amber Thiessen (Kelly). He also played Detective John Clark for four seasons on the cop show "NYPD Blue."

Beckin Meyer made his film debut in 1991 in "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" and was a skateboarding stoner in the teen hit "Clueless" (1995). He is was also a writer/voiceover artist on Adult Swim's "Robot Chicken" and created the recent TBS Network sitcom "Men at Work." His longest stint on television was as the voice of post-adolescent Joseph Gribble on the animated series "King of the Hill" from 1997 to 2009.

The adventures of lawyers Jared Franklin (Meyer) and Peter Bash (Gosselaar) was described in the United Kingdom as "Ally McBeal with balls." It is a show that takes bizarre liberties with the legal system, but also has a lot of fun. It also features veteran character actor Malcolm McDowell as Stanton Infeld, who hires Franklin and Bash for his prominent law firm, Infeld Daniels, and will eventually offer them a partnership. Mark-Paul Gosselaar and Beckin Meyer were in Chicago recently to talk about the second season of "Franklin & Bash" with HollywoodChicago.com.

HollywoodChicago.com: 'Franklin & Bash' has an energy and flow to it that gives it a distinction. How has the direction in production and performance philosophy added to that zeitgeist?



Mark-Paul Gosselaar in Chicago, May 17, 2012

Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

Mark-Paul Gosselaar: When you do a show, you see the components on the page, but the most important component is the relationship between the two guys. You have the law firm, the law and Los Angeles, which is another component. How are you going to put all these things together? [Executive Producer/Director] Jason Ensler has a great eye for that. The composition of the shots that he does creates a blueprint for how the show should look, and makes it consistent.

When we did the pilot, you see what the camera is doing, but you don't know exactly how it will turn out. When I actually saw the pilot, I thought he f**king nailed it. He got it. We need energy not only from the main characters but from the whole production team.

Breckin Meyer: Now that we're in the second season, all the writers have come back, Jason Ensler is back and of course, [Executive Producer] Jamie Tarses. It's that tight-knit family that keeps everything together. It's also important to grow as a second season show, but also to remain consistent with the energy, that's what separates it for me.

HollywoodChicago.com: Given that you are both in show business and have dealt with lawyers and lawyer types in the past in real life, what characteristics have you picked up along the way that you add in to your characters?

Meyer: My stepdad is a litigator. Much different than what we do...

Gosselaar: Yeah, your Dad is smart. [laughs]

Meyer: I think [series co-creator] Bill Chais said it best, if you're learning anything about the law from our show, we've totally screwed up and we apologize. [laughs]

Gosselaar: My 'NYPD Blue' experience got me closer to law and order, but the most important thing for this show is to nail the relationship between these two guys. The law is just a catalyst to look inside the relationship of these two guys. That's what separates us from other shows, and that's what we enjoy.

Meyer: And we always say to Bill, as outlandish as the way these guys circumvent the legal system and get their clients off, just tell us that this is legally able to happen. And he'll tell us, for the most part, yes. For example, if I did some of the things I do in a real court, what would happen. And he'll say, just like what is happening, you'd be thrown in jail. As long as it has one foot in reality, I'm okay.

HollywoodChicago.com: When you go into a series, there is always an expectation in the first season that you walk a tightrope between

popularity and cancellation. Now that you've been picked up, how does the show creators and both of you work toward keeping that popularity but also exploring new elements of the characters and situations?

Gosselaar: This year they made the two of them equity partners in the firm, which gives them more responsibility. You don't want to evolve these guys too much, but you can't remain static. The partnership will give them more responsibility, but also make them look inside themselves. They got into law to help the underdog, but now they have to represent the guy they always fought. In the first episode, we represent a CEO who wants to crush a little guy. We're dealing with those questions, and that's interesting.

But at the same time, we don't want to make these guys too mature, we don't want to push away the audience that likes these guys because of the way they approach the cases. On our end, with more responsibility comes more humor.

HollywoodChicago.com: In watching the second season premiere, I noted a lot of character actor appearances such as Martin Mull and Ernie Hudson. What do both pick up as actors when you work with older pros such as those guys, Malcolm McDowell and the other veterans you've had the honor of working with over the years?

Meyer: When we met Malcolm, we really didn't know what to expect, because he's a legend. The one thing that was reassuring, is that he shows up much in the way that we do. You show up knowing your stuff, because then you can play. But you can't play, unless knowing your stuff doesn't happen. So Malcolm shows up, he's crazy, he's dangerous...he's Malcolm. [laughs] He is that guy, but he knows his sh*t.

There have been one or two times that a guest actor showed up and maybe thought we'd figure it out on set. That can't happen, we have seven days to shoot an hour's worth of TV.

Gosselaar: Just as important, Malcolm really wants to be on the show. He wants to work, he wants to make it a great show. He has pride in it, as we do and the production company does, we just don't phone it in.

Meyer: The one guarantee with can make to anybody who guest stars, it's that they'll have a good time. For that week, it's a fun set, and everybody is in it for the love of the game. We only do ten episodes a season, not a lot of time but we do have a lot of story to tell. So we make it fun.

HollywoodChicago.com: Brecklin, with your work in voiceover as part of the cast in the legendary 'King of the Hill,' did you do the voice of both pre-and-post adolescent Joseph Gribble, and how did you find that post adolescent voice, that so stunningly stayed on the edge of that particular time in life?



Breckin Meyer in Chicago, May 17, 2012

Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

Meyer: Pre-adolescent Joseph was Brittany Murphy [also the voice of Luanne] and when they decided to allow Joseph to make it through puberty, I stepped in for Joseph. I based my voice of Joseph on a ‘Kids in the Hall’ sketch, that Scott Thompson did. He had his mouth in a very funny position [demonstrates], and he would talk through that expression. After about a week of doing Joseph it became that. I’ve always had a raspy voice, so the idea of a 13-year old with a raspy voice was funny to me. It was also trying to imitate whatever Brittany was doing. If you watch those early seasons it was so erratic and crazy, it’s almost like Christopher Walken. [laughs]

HollywoodChicago.com: Mark-Paul, I’m going to ask you the same question I asked Dustin Diamond [Screech on ‘Saved by the Bell’]...

Gosselaar: Oh, I can’t wait...

HollywoodChicago.com: You had the rare opportunity of starting out with a part as a kid and taking it all the way to young adulthood. Did you trust or mistrust the production team with the character and did you get frustrated at times as you were changing and growing, that the character wasn’t following suit?

Gosselaar: One the reasons why the show was so successful is because we were so innocent. I was thankful to have a job at that point, I was 12 years old when it started, it was my show and I was a huge fan of the movie, ‘Ferris Bueller’s Day Off.’ I got to talk to the camera like Ferris, but I wasn’t trying to imitate Matthew Broderick, I was just able to do the camera talk in my own show, and I was just thankful for that. There was a level of innocence on the show that you couldn’t get away with today. The technology was different and there was no paparazzi. I was going into clubs when I was 16, we were all there. I can’t even imagine the ‘Saved by the Bell’ cast in the age of TMZ.

Probably when I got to be 19 years old, and going through the college years, close to the end of it, I was seeing what other actors were doing and I was still on a Saturday morning show. But we were game, we said the words and had fun, it was another set with a good atmosphere.

HollywoodChicago.com: What type of role or TV/film genre do you want to do in the future, that you think the culture of Hollywood and the casting agent haven’t considered you for?

Meyer: It would fun to do a western, and hopefully it would be a good one.

Gosselaar: It would be fun to do a prosthetics part, but everyone I’ve talked to says it becomes a drag after a couple days.

HollywoodChicago.com: If hypothetically, Franklin and Bash were to express their deep love for one another, what type of wedding ceremony would you think they’d plan?

Meyer: It would be a blow out, an absolute blow out.

Gosselaar: I was thinking something else when you said that. [laughs] Who knows, maybe that will be season four or five.

“Franklin & Bash” has its second season premiere on Tuesday, June 5th, 2012, at 10pmET/9pmCT on the TNT Network. See local listings for channel locations. Featuring Beckin Meyer, Mark-Paul Gosselaar, Malcolm McDowell, Dana Davis, Kumani Nanjiani, Reed Diamond and Garcelle Beauvais. Created by Kevin Falls and Bill Chais.



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