



SUPERFAN SIGHTING

By David Kierski

WE'VE ALL SEEN THEM BEFORE. You're hanging outside of the stadium with your tailgating friends, enjoying that last beer and burger before you head it inside to cheer on your team, when you hear a murmur go through the parking lot. What's going on? They only do the wave inside the stadium. What's with the laughing, the cheering, the catcalls? You crane your neck to get a gander at what has the crowd so worked up, but all you see are camera flashes and the backs of people's heads. And then the crowd parts, and you're face-to-face with him. Or them. They are called different names: superfan, monster fan, crazy nut job. They are the people who make it on television, and on the Jumbotron. They are the painted ones.

If you're like me, your first thought when you see one of these guys is "now what would possess someone to paint their bodies and come to the game like that?" These are the guys who believe in their team so strongly they actually become their team, kind of like an unofficial mascot. These guys are so passionate about supporting their team, are so into what their team is doing, that they're willing to go

to the greatest lengths and break all the social rules to show it. And if I'm being totally honest, I have to admit that I envy these guys sometimes. They're in love, and they don't care who knows it.

To find out exactly what goes on in one of these painted people's minds, I dusted off my reporter skills and went searching for someone to talk to. I searched high and low, to no avail. It's hard to get a painted guy to talk to you for more than a few minutes at a game. They're just too busy kissing babies and posing for pictures! But I finally found him at Home Depot. He had a foam finger on one hand, a crazy hat on another, and he was shaking the cans of bargain mistake paint. I asked him if he was one of "those guys," and sure enough, he was! So here for your enjoyment, is my interview with Reggie McPaint, a hardworking, dyed-in-the-wool, painted superfan.

DK: Reggie, thanks for taking the time out of your busy schedule to talk with me today.

RM: No problem, I take every opportunity I can to spread the love of body painting to my fellow football fans.

DK: So Reggie, who's your team?

RM: Well, I've been following the Springfield Jellyfish ever since I was a little boy. I can see by the way you're rolling your eyes what you think about the 'Fish! But I tell you, this is their season. They've had a few bad ones, it's true, what with the new coaches and the kicker's nervous breakdown, but we've got a strong roster of talented kids waiting to prove themselves.

DK: Reggie, Springfield hasn't been to the playoffs since... well, ever.

RM: Let me tell you something, they're going to be getting their championship ring soon enough, you wait and see. Besides, it doesn't matter if they've won every Super Bowl or if they've never scored a touchdown: they're my team, and I'm gonna support them no matter what happens! No sir, I am no fair-weather fan!

DK: And that is exactly why I wanted to talk to you today, Reggie! Describe your typical game day outfit.

RM: Well, for starters, I have a collection of sportswear for the Jellyfish. It's kind of unfortunate;



Photo by Karen DiEugenio

"Nasty" superfans in Tampa Bay

the team colors are pink and lavender so it's hard to track down stuff in my size. It's usually in the women's section, and I'm a big guy- the ladies' sizes just don't fit me like they used to! So what I've done is hit up eBay for some authentic used merchandise. I am the proud owner of the actual game day jersey worn by Travis Fumbleston, the 'Fish's starting quarterback in the 80s! So I'll usually be sporting that when I'm at home watching the game. But when there's a home game and it's tailgating time, I go all out! I'll usually put on my game jeans- they're the ones with the expandable waist 'cause I like to eat- and I'll paint my torso and my face with some pink and lavender body paint.

DK: Could you tell me a little more about the paint?

RM: Sure. When I started, I thought I could just pick up any old can of house paint. I knew better than to get



the oil paint because that stuff takes forever to dry, so I got a couple cans of latex interior house paint and let her rip. Boy, was that a mistake. The stuff got in my eyes, it tightened when it dried, and it took forever to get it off! I went in to work Monday morning all pink and lavender! So I hit the message boards and started asking around and found out the other guys were all getting their stuff at sillyfarm.com. I ordered a bunch of tubs of pink and lavender paint. It's greasepaint, which is basically colored powder mixed with grease. The

stuff never dries and it doesn't run when I sweat, which is a good thing, 'cause like I said, I'm a big guy.

DK: Reggie, what gave you the idea to slather yourself with paint in the first place?

RM: Growing up I was influenced by the greats, like Barrelman, Crazy Ray, and DolFan Denny, but I'd say it was the Hogettes who really freed me to express my own style, you know? They're these crazy Redskins fans who dress up as a cross between my grandma and, well, pigs. They're such an inspiration, with all the charity work they do. So I thought, if they can make people smile, so can I! I thought, if I could make people smile like they do...

DK: So what else goes into your game day outfit?

RM: Well, aside from the paint, a couple of years ago I made this really sweet Jellyfish hat. I took a bunch of those coonskin caps- the kind that Davy Crockett wore- and I cut the tails off of all of them and glued the tails around one hat to make tentacles. Then I spray painted the whole thing pink. So I've got my Jellyfish hat that I wear to every game.

DK: How do people react when they see you?

RM: Well, usually they laugh. I'm asked quite a few times every game to get my picture taken with someone. If the game is being televised, I usually make it on the Jumbotron and on TV- much to my wife's dismay.

DK: Final question: What tips can you give to someone considering doing what you do and painting themselves for the game?

RM: Two things: invest in good paint and be sure you love your team! I think my skin's permanently stained from all the paint, but I don't care, because aside from my wife and kids, there's nothing in the world more important to me than my team. Go 'Fish! 🔥

Disclaimer: This interview is obviously fake. I made up Reggie, but we know you are out there and we'd love to tell your story. Get in touch, send in some photos and a brief bio and you just might get featured in the next issue of Tailgater Monthly!

AWESOME PAINTS



Snazaroo Body/Face Paint
37 colors available at \$8.99 (bodypainting.com)

Water-based body paint that is easy to use and will not break your bank. Easy to use, apply and wash up afterwards. Good strong colors with quick emulsification.



Pro-Palette Body/Face Paint
\$160 (bodypainting.com)

Want to add some fun to your tailgating party? Kids and adults will love you for it. Huge plastic tray with protective lid covers. 48 of our best colors in the 2ml size and 6 of the 30ml paints of the colors you use most. Neatly arranged by color and shade so you can easily pick the right shade.



High Density Sponge
Pack of 10. \$8.50 (bodypainting.com)

These High Density sponges work great for face painting. These sponges are extremely durable and easy to clean. Each sponge is 2.25" in diameter and 1.1" thick.



Collegiate Temporary Tattoos
\$3 (proamsports.com)

Sheet of up to 10 tattoos. Available in for many teams in many sports, pro and college.