



Super Bowl Players Talk About Their Heroes for CBS Sports

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While the Super Bowl is, of course, about football, there also are plenty of other stories the players have to tell just behind the scenes.

In the above four-and-a-half-minute short film, CBS Sports partnered with Portland, Ore.-based production company Only Today and Atlanta-based creative and digital agency Definition 6 to create a heartfelt tribute to players' heroes, including their parents, siblings and frontline workers, who sometimes overlap.

The spot, which served as the game open, is set to a cover of "Stand By Me," performed by Jennifer Hudson.

The spot was created, directed and produced by Pete Radovich, senior creative director at CBS Sports, who worked closely with Anthony Cortese, vice president of editorial, Definition 6, and Dan O'Sullivan, vice president of sound, Definition 6. Definition 6 also post-produced a series of promos and interstitial content for CBS Sports that aired before, during and after the game, including bumpers and features with the voices of Viola Davis, Brad Pitt, among other celebrities and sports figures.

"It's no secret that viewers have more choices than ever, which makes the massive audience that the Super Bowl draws all the more special," said Radovich in a statement. "I think CBS Sports has always taken a lot of pride in making this game something people will remember and talk about for weeks afterward regardless of what happens on the field. So, with all that at stake, it's important to me that I only partner with people I can trust on my team. I've collaborated with Anthony for well over a decade now, including five Super Bowls. At this point, we share a sort of shorthand in the edit that not only elevates the idea but also makes the whole process seamless, efficient and as creative as possible."

"CBS Sports approaches its Super Bowl broadcasts unlike any other network, especially in how they go beyond the action of the game with stories that resonate with football fanatics and casual viewers alike," said Cortese, who has created broadcast content for five Super Bowls, as well as countless other major sporting events on the Tiffany Network. "In rallying around Pete's idea of honoring heroes, we were able to celebrate frontline workers while making a meaningful connection to the game through inspiring stories about the people who have impacted the players in Super Bowl LV."

Though planning began nearly a month before the big game, the teams only had two weeks to turn the spot around since they could not start filming until the NFL's AFC and NFC champions were determined.

"Producing these pieces remotely in the cloud - and at lightning speed - required a team effort and some serious technical ingenuity to bring Pete's vision to life," says Cortese. "With shoots happening across the country, we moved a ton of data digitally thanks to our colleagues at Only Today, working with time-coded Zoom recordings until the high-res 4K footage landed. With the final interview happening just 30 hours before kickoff, overcoming these challenges was a big win for our team, but the bigger win for us as filmmakers is always creating stories that can push a brand forward and capture the hearts of audiences."

CREDITS

Client: CBS Sports

Director/Producer: Peter Radovich, Jr.

Associate Producers: David Anerella, Ellis Williams, Jelani Rooks, Yvette Wyatt, Kate Brantley, Alex LoSchiavo, Kayona Ebony Brown

Production Manager: Laurie Zelnick

Music Arrangement: Helmut VonLichten

"Stand by Me" Performed By: Jennifer Hudson

Production Company: Only Today

Director of Photography/Associate Producer: Joyce Tsang

Post-production Company: Definition 6

Editor/Associate Producer: Anthony J. Cortese

Sound Design/Mix: Dan O'Sullivan, Ted Marcus

Editorial Assistant: Benjamin Lapinig

Operations: Andy Solomon

Finishing: Bridge Post

Colorist: Vladimir Kucherov

DIT: Keith Blackmore