

= Dream Team (The Office) =

" Dream Team " is the twenty @-@ second episode of the fifth season of the television series The Office , and the 94th overall episode of the series . It originally aired on NBC in the United States on April 9 , 2009 . In the episode , Pam and Michael try to keep each other motivated as the two form their new paper company together . Michael recruits Ryan for the company , which sets up a new office in the same building complex as Dunder Mifflin . Meanwhile , Jim tries to impress new boss Charles Miner by claiming to be a soccer enthusiast , but it backfires when Dwight convinces the two to face each other in a game .

The episode was written by B. J. Novak and directed by Paul Feig . It included a guest appearance by Idris Elba , who played new Dunder Mifflin vice president Charles Miner . The episode aired the same day as the Office episode " Michael Scott Paper Company " ; the debut episode of the new NBC show Parks and Recreation was shown between the two episodes . " Dream Team " marked the return of Ryan , who had not appeared on the show since the November 2008 episode " Frame Toby " . The episode received generally positive reviews and , according to Nielsen ratings , was watched by 7 @.@ 2 million viewers and captured the most viewers in its time slot for adults between the ages of 18 and 49 . " Dream Team " received a Primetime Emmy Award nomination for Outstanding Single @-@ Camera Picture Editing for a Comedy Series .

= = Plot = =

In the cold open , Kevin struggles to correctly transfer phone calls , after having been moved to reception by Charles .

Michael (Steve Carell) , having left Dunder Mifflin with Pam (Jenna Fischer) to form his own company , is having trouble starting his first day as president of the Michael Scott Paper Company . Pam tries to keep things together and suggests they create a list of things to do to maintain a positive working atmosphere . Michael sets up a meeting with a potential investor and makes a list of potential salesmen to join the company . He receives a letter from his realtor saying that running a business from his condominium is in violation of his residence agreement , so he needs to find office space for the company . Michael and Pam leave to find potential salesmen and then have their meeting with the potential investor .

Michael 's first stop is his old part @-@ time telemarketing job to pick up Vikram . Next , they stop at a bowling alley , where Ryan (B. J. Novak) , with bleached blond hair , is now working the shoe counter . Michael asks Ryan to join them , despite heavy protests from Pam . Ryan is convinced and steals two pairs of bowling shoes on the way out . They head to the meeting with the investor , who turns out to be Michael 's " nana , " at a nursing home . Michael gives her his pitch , but she does not believe his new venture will yield success and refuses to fund his company .

Meanwhile , at the Dunder Mifflin office , Charles Miner (Idris Elba) is revealed to have an obsession with soccer , and the rest of the employees pretend to feel the same way about it . When Jim (John Krasinski) tries claiming to be an experienced soccer player , Dwight (Rainn Wilson) , attempting to humiliate Jim , suggests that the staff play a game after work in the parking lot . During the game , when Charles kicks the ball towards Jim , he ducks and the ball hits Phyllis (Phyllis Smith) in the face . Charles berates Jim for ducking , and Dwight mocks him .

In the car leaving the nursing home , Vikram asks to be brought back to the telemarketing job after he learns " nana " is a term for grandmother . Back at Michael 's condo , a frustrated Pam loses her composure and tells Michael she made a mistake leaving Dunder Mifflin and only did it because she was tired of being a receptionist . Michael calms her down , telling her the reality is they both quit and that their only option is to continue trying with the new company . Michael purchases office space in the Scranton Business Park , where Dunder Mifflin is located ; it turns out to be a large closet directly underneath the Dunder Mifflin office . Michael and Pam put their company name in the office lobby directory where they encounter Charles . Michael taunts Charles that he cannot kick them out of the building now because they own their own space .

= = Production = =

" Dream Team " was written by B. J. Novak and directed by Paul Feig . It originally aired on April 9 , 2009 , the same day as the episode " Michael Scott Paper Company " ; the debut episode of the new NBC show Parks and Recreation was shown between the two episodes . It marks the first appearance of Novak as Ryan since " Frame Toby " in November 2008 , when Novak briefly left the show to film his role in Quentin Tarantino 's Inglourious Basterds . Mindy Kaling , an Office writer who also stars as Kelly Kapoor , thought of the idea of Ryan dying his hair blond . Novak wore a baseball cap in public between the times his hair was dyed and when the episode aired , in order to make the reveal a surprise , and even kept the cap on when he and the rest of the cast and crew did a public forum and Q & A session . " Dream Team " was the third of six episodes guest starring Idris Elba , best known as Stringer Bell from the television series The Wire . Elba said he did not watch the episode when it aired because " I 'm hypercritical about my work , so I try not to torture myself . "

Prior to the episode airing , NBC set up a web site for the new Michael Scott Paper Company at michaelscottpapercompany.com , which included a mission statement for the company , photos of the new office space and a downloadable copy of the coupon for " unparalleled customer service " featured in the episode " Michael Scott Company " . Another official NBC site , dundermifflininfinity.com , created a Flash game inspired by the episode , in which the viewer attempts to kick a soccer ball past Jim in the office parking lot and hit Phyllis in the face .

The official The Office website included two cut scenes from " Dream Team " within a week of the episode 's original release . In one minute @-@ long clip , Andy continues brown @-@ nosing to Charles ; during a documentary interview , Andy says he was not the teacher 's pet in school , but that he " walked the teacher 's pet , and fed it , and bathed it " . A second one @-@ minute clip involves the soccer game itself : Dwight excitedly sets up the game , Jim tries not to show Charles he does not know what " offside " means and Creed picks up the ball and hurls it at Kelly .

= = Cultural references = =

Michael refers to his old telemarketing job where he met salesman Vikram ; this is a reference to the fourth season episode " Money " , in which Michael briefly works a second job as a telemarketer . The bowling alley Ryan works at is Idle Hour Lanes , an actual bowling alley in Dickson City , Pennsylvania , which is just outside the show 's setting of Scranton . When Michael discusses song parodies , he names " My Stumps " in a reference to The Black Eyed Peas song " My Humps " and " Achy Breaky Fart " in a reference to the Billy Ray Cyrus song " Achy Breaky Heart " . In discussing the formation of the new paper company , Pam refers to the early years of Apple Inc . , which she said began in a garage . The seniors at the retirement center where Michael discusses his business are watching Maury , the talk show hosted by Maury Povich , in the background .

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast on April 9 , 2009 , " Dream Team " was watched by 7 @.@ 2 million overall viewers , according to Nielsen ratings . The episode earned more ratings than the Parks and Recreation pilot that immediately followed it (which had 6 @.@ 8 million viewers) but had less than " Michael Scott Paper Company " , which came right after Parks and Recreation and had 8 million viewers . " Dream Team " , as well as " Michael Scott Paper Company " , had the most viewers in its time slot among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 .

" Dream Team " received generally positive reviews . Alan Sepinwall of The Star @-@ Ledger said he was enjoying the new paper company storyline and that " Dream Team " was funnier than " Michael Scott Paper Company " . Sepinwall said the final scene with Michael trying to comfort Pam in the car was a " good payoff " which was well acted by Steve Carell and Jenna Fischer , and " yet another reminder that Michael does know what he 's doing some of the time , which means Pam wasn 't a complete idiot for following him out the door . " He also liked Kevin 's struggle with the

phones in the beginning , but said the storyline between Jim and Charles was getting repetitive and , " It would help if the writers ever gave Idris Elba something funny to do . " Steven Mullen of The Tuscaloosa News called the episode " stellar " , said the Charles Miner soccer subplot ended " perfectly " and said , " Watching [Michael 's] fears bubble beneath the surface and slowly erode Pam 's confidence was a masterwork . "

Travis Fickett of IGN said he was happy with the new , unpredictable direction The Office was taking . He particularly praised the Michael / Pam relationship in the episode , as well as soccer subplot involving Jim and Charles and the return of Ryan ; he said Ryan 's new bleached blond hair and his theft of bowling shoes were particularly funny moments . Will Leitch of New York magazine said the episode has provided a change the show needed , and said , " Considering how unlikely it was that The Office was going to allow Michael and Pam to degrade into homelessness and squalor , the show has handled the predictable transition as well as possible . " Keith Phipps of The A.V. Club said the episode included a good exploration of Michael and Pam 's relationship ; he said " they 're weirdly good together " . Phipps , who gave the episode an A- grade , also said the Dunder Mifflin material worked well , " although Idris Elba has been so good at portraying a heartless professional it almost doesn't seem right for anything to break through his icy exterior . "

Margaret Lyons of Entertainment Weekly said the episode had " strong moments , and some interesting character play [but] I didn't get quite the same buzz from this week 's installments as I did from the previous episode . " She said " Dream Team " lacks the usual group interactions between the office co-@-@ workers , which she said are normally the funniest parts of the show . However , she praised Michael 's pep talk to Pam in the final scene , and said the episode was " the best showcase Jenna Fischer has had in years " . Entertainment Weekly listed Michael 's pep talk to Pam at the end of the episode as one of the 13 highlights from that week in television .

In her list of the top ten moments from the fifth season of The Office , phillyBurbs.com writer Jen Wielgus ranked Michael 's formation of the Michael Scott Paper Company in the downstairs storage closet as number one , citing the " Dream Team " , " Michael Scott Paper Company " and " Heavy Competition " episodes in particular . She also said she specifically enjoyed the attempt to solicit investments at the retirement home from " Dream Team " . Ryan 's return to the series , along with his brief return as a temp in the episode " Weight Loss " , ranked number 5 in that list . " Dream Team " was voted the fifteenth highest @-@ rated episode out of 26 from the fifth season , according to an episode poll at the fansite OfficeTally ; the episode was rated 8 @.@ 00 out of 10 .

Claire Scanlon received a Primetime Emmy Award nomination for Outstanding Single @-@ Camera Picture Editing for a Comedy Series . " Dream Team " accounted for one of the ten Primetime Emmy Award nominations The Office received for the show 's fifth season at the 61st Primetime Emmy Awards , which were held on September 20 , 2009 .