

= Competition (The Spectacular Spider @-@ Man) =

" Competition " the fifth episode of the animated television series The Spectacular Spider @-@ Man , which is based on the comic book character Spider @-@ Man , created by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko . In it , Spider @-@ Man must face the Sandman , a former petty thug who now can manipulate his sand body at will .

" Competition " was written by Kevin Hopps and directed by Troy Adomitis . Hopps and Adomitis each had their respective roles previously in " Interactions . " Victor Cook , a developer , producer , and supervising director for The Spectacular Spider @-@ Man , was thrilled to use Sandman because he felt he was " a perfect character for animation . " " Competition " aired on March 29 , 2008 , on the Kids WB ! block for The CW . The episode received warm reviews from television critics - IGN wrote that the fight scenes were the greatest of the series at the time .

= = Plot summary = =

Peter , as Spider @-@ Man , effectively defeats two common thugs - Flint Marko and Alex O 'Hirn - and puts them in prison . While discussing their outrage towards Spider @-@ Man , their bail is paid and they go into a limousine outside . Inside the limousine , Hammerhead tells them he has big plans for them , taking them to a secret base .

The next day , Peter practices his web slinging in his bedroom , when Aunt May walks in . He stops and she suggests he takes their neighbor Mary Jane Watson to the upcoming Fall Formal . Peter cringes at the idea and heads off to school . There , it is announced football practices will be held that day and Harry wants to try out . Peter passes on joining him as he feels it will reveal his abilities . When he hears Flash Thompson planning on specifically going after Harry during tryouts , he decides to keep him safe and try out anyway . They each do good at tryout - Harry impresses the coach and the other player , while Peter does the same using his extra abilities .

Meanwhile , Norman Osborn arrives at the warehouse to supervise an experiment on Marko . Restrained Marko will be given subdermal silicon transplants giving him a hardened untraceable silicon armor . Dr. Octavius says that the experiment has too many flaws but Osborn commands him to go with it anyway . The experiment malfunctions and the silicon violently mutates him . His body evaporates into sand and Octavius , terrified , thinks he has just killed him . Suddenly , Marko reshapes himself , still made of sand , and viciously thrashes against the walls for them to let him out . Hammerhead and Osborn take him outside in their limousine , where Marko is able to reform himself in his old appearance . When they tell him he will work for " the Big Man , " but he decides to go alone and leaves . Hammerhead is fine with that as it means they will now have a distraction for Spider @-@ Man .

Now codenamed " Sandman , " Marko robs a bank and Spider @-@ Man arrives immediately . He is overpowered by Marko 's new powers and finds himself out of web fluid . After defeating Spider @-@ Man , Sandman escapes through a sewer drain , after accidentally mentioning the " Big Man 's " name . The next day , Peter goes to tryouts again , doing well once more and being invited for the last day of tryouts along with Harry . Harry is upset that he outshined him and invites the other players to hang out at a soda shop . Meanwhile , Peter goes on the city bus and sits next to Gwen , whom he apologizes to for ignoring her lately and she accepts . She also hints that he should take her to the fall formal , but he does not get the clue and tells her he is going to ask Betty Brant , J. Jonah Jameson 's secretary at the Daily Bugle .

After departing from the bus , Peter goes off as Spider @-@ Man to an armored truck , which Sandman is robbing . In their struggle , the truck goes out of control and lands in a construction site . When Spider @-@ Man tries to web him up , it proves to be ineffective as Sandman can slip through them ; the villain then starts to attack Spider @-@ Man with girders . Meanwhile , at the soda shop , Harry tries to impress the jocks , catching Kenny 's girlfriend Glory 's attention . Kenny plays a prank on Harry , which enrages Glory and she asks Harry to take her home . Back on the construction site , Spider @-@ Man gets out from the pile of girders and gets the head on Sandman . He lures him up to the roof and encasing him in cement from the nearby cement maker .

That night , Harry comes home to tell his father that he 's tried out for the football team , but he is unimpressed . Harry walks off , darkly remarking that he will " show them tomorrow . " At final tryouts the next day , Harry makes the team , and Peter purposely does terrible so he doesn 't outshine his friend . Gwen then cheers him up with ice cream .

= = Production = =

Hopps and Adomotis had written and directed the episode " Interactions , " respectively , which featured the introduction of the villain Electro . The crew were very excited about working with Sandman . Victor Cook , supervising producer and story editor of the series , thinks that he was " designed for animation . " Hopps " love [s] the ordinary @-@ ness [sic] of the motivation for [him] " and finds that he is " just basically a crook who suddenly finds himself with super powers . " John DiMaggio provided his voice for the character .

Thomas F. Wilson , known for playing the character Biff Tannen in the Back to the Future films , began his recurring role as policeman Stan Carter . In the comic books , Stan Carter was a vicious serial killer by the name of Sin @-@ Eater . Due to the show being for youth @-@ oriented audiences , it is highly unlikely the series will make him the murdering alter @-@ ego .

" Competitions " originally aired on March 23 , 2008 , on the Kids WB ! block for The CW .

= = Cultural references = =

The title of the episode is referent to economics - the title scheme was used for the arc the episode fell inside and was pitched by Greg Weisman , story editor and producer for The Spectacular Spider @-@ Man . It also refers to the episode 's theme of people competing for glory . Several scenes from the episode were taken directly from the film Spider @-@ Man 3 . Spider @-@ Man does a leg @-@ sweep on Sandman in the same manner as in the film . Flint Marko 's transformation into the Sandman was also based executed in the same manner as it was in the film 's version of his transformation . A main focus in the episode features Peter and Harry trying out for high school football . The origin of this incarnation of sandman shares similarities to his ultimate counterpart version while sharing similarities to the comics and the film .

= = Reception = =

" Competition " was well received by television critics . Eric Goldman of IGN gave the episode an 8 @.@ 6 . (" Great ") Goldman enjoyed Sandman 's nonchalant behavior , favoring using his newfound powers for money over getting his revenge on Spider @-@ Man . He wrote that the episode " delivered some of the best fight scenes yet , " including the Spider @-@ Man punching Sandman only to discover he is made of sand , which he called his favorite fight scene in the entire episode . On Peter 's personal life being portrayed , Goldman wrote that he " had to deal with the age old superhero conflict regarding whether he could use his powers to help himself in everyday ways ? not just whether it was ' right ' but whether it might give him away . "