

Dirk puts on his game face

Battlestar Galactica, A Team hunk is back in show business



- 24 hours file photo

Dirk Benedict is in Toronto shooting a new sci-fi film for TV, *Earth Storm*.

"The Face" is back, but not without mixed feelings.

Professional handsome guy Dirk Benedict, who played Face on *The A Team* in the '80s (as well as Starbuck in the original *Battlestar Galactica*), was in Toronto last week co-starring in *Earth Storm*, a TV movie for the U.S. Sci Fi channel. It breaks a nine-year TV hiatus for Benedict.

He credits his son George, 17, for talking him into it. "I said 'I miss acting, George. But if I resurrect my career, I'm going to have to spend time in L.A. with stupid producers saying things like 'Didn't you used to be blond?'"

And the next thing you know, we'll be having big conversations about my hair."

"And George said 'Dad, your hair was your career.'"

Still impossibly good-looking at 60, Benedict's life changed in 1995 with a divorce in which he got custody of his boys, George and Roland (the latter a member of the under-18 Western American Olympic Soccer Team). He took them home to Montana where he raised them in a 900-square-foot log cabin, feeding them "beans, greens and vegetables" (Benedict contracted prostate cancer in his 20s

and says he treated it with a macrobiotic diet — an experience detailed in his book *Confessions Of A Kamikaze Cowboy*.

"People think I'm a macho guy because I smoke cigars and drink scotch," he says. "But for the last nine years I've been Mr. Mom. All my friends are soccer moms."



Benedict as Starbuck in *Battlestar Galactica*.

His comeback actually began last year in Germany after he appeared at a sci-fi convention in Bonn. "There was a writer-director there, 32 years old, who saw me and said 'That's who I want to be in my movie.' The movie was *Goldene Zeiten* by Peter Thorwath, a black comedy about a crooked celebrity/charity golf tournament where the celeb — an '80s American TV star — is replaced by a drunken German lookalike. Benedict plays both roles, and ended up having to learn 53 lines in German.

"It's the greatest part I ever played," he says. It motivated him to act again in *Earth Storm*, in which he co-stars with Stephen Baldwin in a tale of astronauts fixing the Moon after it gets cracked by a meteor impact. Ironically, the man who was Starbuck is Earth-bound in this film,

playing a nasty, misguided government official.

Speaking of Starbuck, Benedict's soccer-mom status didn't protect him from accusations of chauvinism when the new *Battlestar Galactica* series started, with his old role given to a woman (Katee Sackhoff).

"People kept asking me about Starbuck being a girl and I finally wrote what I thought for a British magazine called *Dreamwatch*. It was called *Starbuck: Lost In Castration*, and a lot of people got really angry — 'this chauvinist pig, this angry bitter old actor, how dare he?' It was about why you can't have a character like Starbuck in a show today — a cigar-smoking, drinking, womanizing lovable scoundrel. The feminist movement got rid of those guys. In the war against masculinity, the only way that character could work was to make him a woman."

"Why do you think *The A Team* is not a film? The only way they could do it today is with four girls kicking ass.

"Dwight (Schultz, who played *A Team*'s Howling Mad Murdoch) and I are doing a radio show in Montana. We're calling it 'Dirk and Dwight's one-man show.' I play piano, he sings, we do a few songs and we discuss the politics of *The A Team* — how the liberal left went after us, how the National Education Association and teacher's unions tried to get us off the air.

- Jim Slotek, 24 hours

The other A Team members

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



SGT. BOSCO "B.A." BARACUS

Now 53 years old, the non-drinking Mr.

T won a six-year-battle with cancer in 2001. After that, he appeared as the Wise Janitor in *Not Another Teen Movie* in 2001, and was last seen doing commercials for 1-800-COLLECT in July of 2002.



COL. JOHN "HANNIBAL" SMITH

George Peppard, who had his big break as Audrey

Hepburn's romantic interest in 1961's *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, passed away in 1994 at the age of 66. His last movie was as Sid Slaughter in a little-known movie called *The Tigress* that garnered just 36,694 viewers in Germany, the only country in which it was released.



CAPT. H.M. "HOWLING MAD" MURDOCK

Dwight Schultz, now 57, has fifteen years of theatre experience under his belt and it shows — he currently enjoys a bustling career as a voice-over specialist for video games, including the video game adaptations for the *Chronicles of Riddick* and the *Fantastic Four*. For *EverQuest II*, he did the voice for no less than 24 characters.

- Keith MacKenzie, 24 hours



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