



## COMEDY CENTRAL UK & CHANNEL FIVE GREENLIGHT 'IMPRACTICAL JOKERS' FOR UK SERIES

**London, Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April:** Comedy Central UK and Channel 5 have green-lit production on a UK version of smash hit U.S. prank show **Impractical Jokers** – the first joint project between the two channels following Viacom's takeover of Channel 5.

The two channels will co-fund a 9 x 30 minute UK series of the prank show to premiere on Channel 5 with further broadcasts on Comedy Central. The series is being produced by Yalli Productions (a Warner Bros. Television Production UK Ltd company) following a successful pilot commission by Comedy Central earlier this year.

The UK version will follow the format of the U.S. series and feature four British comedian friends: Lee Griffiths, Matt Ralph, Paul Biggin and David Moon. The quartet has previously been seen together in the award-winning sketch group *Late Night Gimp Fight* (Foster's Edinburgh Comedy Award nominee).

In the show, the real-life best friends challenge each other to some of the most outrageous dares and uproarious stunts ever to be caught on hidden camera. During each prank, the joker must do whatever his three friends tell him via a secret earpiece and if he refuses, he loses. Filmed in various locations, each prank makes a mockery of one of the four friends as he attempts to pull off unbelievably awkward scenarios with members of the public, while the remaining three watch behind the scenes in fits of laughter at their friend's expense.

The U.S. version of **Impractical Jokers** is Comedy Central UK's number one show, with the highest rating episode to date attracting an audience of 267K.

Ben Frow, Channel 5's Director of Programmes, said: "Impractical Jokers has been a huge hit for Comedy Central and it feels like the perfect project for Channel 5's first foray back into funny with Comedy Central at our side."

Jill Offman, Managing Director, Comedy Central UK, added: "Our UK 'Impractical Jokers' have the same brilliant chemistry that has made their U.S. counterparts such a success and I can't wait to see what pranks they pull on the unsuspecting British public."

Robert Gray, Creative Director, Yalli Productions, commented: "I'm thrilled to be working with Jill and Ben, and very excited that the show will be on both Channel 5 and Comedy Central UK. It's a fantastic format and I think the nation will love watching our 'Impractical Jokers' squirm in television's funniest hidden camera show."

The two channels have ambitions to co-fund further shared comedies including a sketch-show and a sitcom, while Comedy Central will continue to commission its own bespoke originations including **Russell Howard's Stand Up Central, Drunk History, Brotherhood and I Live With Models.**

**Impractical Jokers** is being developed by David Howarth and executive produced by Robert Gray for Yalli Productions. Executive producers for Comedy Central and Channel 5 are Jill Offman and Lourdes Diaz, VP, Head of Global Production and Development, Comedy Central International. Joe McVey, new Head of Development of Comedy Central UK, will also oversee the project.

**Ends**

#### **Notes to Editors**

Viacom International Media Networks wholly owns Channel 5 Broadcasting and majority owns and operates Comedy Central in the UK as a joint venture with Sky.

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#### **About Channel 5**

Channel 5 launched as Britain's fifth public service TV channel in March 1997. It reaches 4 in 5 of the UK viewing public each month with a broad mix of popular content. Sister channels 5\*, 5USA and Spike, launched in April 2015, complement Channel 5 with a mix of original commissions and acquired entertainment and U.S. drama, while Demand 5 is a free catch-up service available across multiple platforms and devices. In 2014, Channel 5 was the only major commercial free-to-air network to grow audience share across the most valuable TV audiences. Since September 2014, Channel 5 has been owned by Viacom International Media Networks. For more information follow @Channel5Press on Twitter.

#### **About Comedy Central UK:**

Comedy Central is a leading Pay TV General Entertainment channel and is part of Viacom International Media Networks (VIMN). A joint venture between VIMN (75%) and BSkyB (25%), Comedy Central airs on the Sky and Virgin Media platforms. Comedy Central launched in the UK in April 2008 and has since grown by a phenomenal 53%. The channel broadcasts a mix of hit US acquisitions and original UK productions targeting a 16-34 year-old audience. Popular shows include *Two and a Half Men*, *Mike and Molly*, *The Middle*, *The Daily Show*, *South Park* and *Friends*. In 2012 Comedy Central aired its first local commission *Threesome* which received both critical acclaim and high ratings. A subsequent series followed as well as the channel's second commission *Alternative Comedy Experience*. In 2014 Comedy Central greenlit series production on two international commissions, *Brotherhood* and *I Live With Models*, and went into UK series production on *Drunk History* and *Russell Howard's Stand Up Central*. In addition to the main Comedy Central channel are Comedy Central +1, Comedy Central Extra and Comedy Central Extra +1 providing audiences with more viewing opportunities and more fantastic content.