

Slip 'N Slide makers sue 'Dickie Roberts'

LOS ANGELES, California (AP) -- The makers of the Slip 'N Slide filed a lawsuit Monday over a scene in the hit movie "Dickie Roberts: Former Child Star" that shows actor David Spade skidding to a painful halt on the summertime water toy.

Wham-O is asking a judge to order the film out of theaters as long as it contains the Slip 'N Slide scene, or for a disclaimer to be added urging viewers not to try the maneuver made by Spade.

In the movie, Spade jumps belly first on the yellow plastic sheet without first inflating it with air and water. He then coats the slide with oil and crashes into a fence.

The scene has been used heavily in television and theater ads to promote the film, which was No. 1 at the weekend box office.

The lawsuit, filed against Paramount Pictures and Happy Madison Productions, charges the filmmakers violated its trademark by using the product without permission.

Wham-O also claims the scene violates the product's safety guidelines, which limit the use of Slip 'N Slide to children between the ages of 5 and 12 weighing less than 110 pounds and under 5 feet tall.

Guidelines also state the slide must first be inflated and wet and that users should also be wet before diving on the plastic. The company is concerned that the scene might prompt adults to imitate Spade's action, which could lead to injury and lawsuits.

"Paramount believes the claims are entirely without legal merit," said studio spokesman Rob Friedman.

Representatives of Happy Madison did not immediately return calls Monday seeking comment.

The product was taken off store shelves in the 1990s after a series of adult accidents. Wham-O became a privately owned company in 1997 after being put on the market by its former owner, Mattel.

When the product was reintroduced in 1997, the new owners added an inflatable bumper and other safety features, Wham-O said.

Monday's lawsuit mentions one legal action brought by a Wisconsin adult who became paralyzed after diving onto the slide while intoxicated. The plaintiff in that case was awarded \$12.3 million in damages, according to Monday's lawsuit.

Wham-O, based in Emeryville, California, also makes the Frisbee, Hula Hoop and Super Ball.