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## Hey, this is what you get for free

By Milo F. Bryant  
The Fresno Bee  
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I asked, and you sent more than 150 arenafootball2 team names, everything from politics -- the Fresno Fumblin' City Councilors -- to ponies --the Fresno Buckin' Broncs.

The Top 5 are at the end of the column. Don't turn the page yet or you'll miss the names that didn't make the cut.

I enlisted the help of local clinical psychologist Thomas Granata and Laurel Sutton, a partner in the brand development company Catchword and a candidate for a doctorate in linguistics at Cal.

If your name gets dissed, it's not entirely my fault -- actually, it is, but it's easier to pass the blame.

The All-Americans are all boring. We took insect killer to the Fire Ants and doused the Flames. The Reject is second-hand goods, and Fresno has too much love for the He Hate Me's.

The Red Light Runners and the Road Rage were arrested. The Prop 48's couldn't make the grade. The Bullies were beat down; the Hound Dogs outfoxed. The Red Dogs got old and gray, so we waved them bye-bye and had the Insane Dogs institutionalized.

Political correctness took out the Redskins and the Bubbas. The Quake was calmed. Neither the Shock nor the Shockwave electrified us.

The Krispy Kremes, mentioned by several, were too sweet. Brett Askenas of Fresno served up this reason for liking the name: "It would guarantee that hordes of people show up. There will be a huge line for tickets ... and the name would apply as long as the team kept the doughnuts among the faithful and off the scoreboard."

We didn't like ambiguous and abstract. So, the Legacy, Crush, Fury, Rage, Doom, Heat, Fearsome and Force -- which already is taken by a local softball club -- were dismissed.

Sports teams in Louisville, Tallahassee, Richmond, Baton Rouge and Roanoke beat us to Fire, Thunder, Speed, Blaze and Steam. We didn't like them anyway.


A name must be meaningful and unique to the area. It has to be easy to



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understand, spell and pronounce. Remember, the name will become a part of Fresno's identity.

Take the Banana Slugs. UC-Santa Cruz may be a great school in a great area. But the name suggests diarrhea, not fear.

The Arkansas Tech Wonder Boys, from Jonesboro, Ark., aren't much better. What happens with these guys? You go to a football game and a drag show breaks out? The Raisin Backs got a good laugh from Sutton, as did the Fightin' Farmers.

"That's pretty descriptive," she says, laughing. "But do the guys on the team really want to be called that?"

My entrant is the Fresno Rex. I'm picturing a Tyrannosaurus Rex as the mascot. Can't you see teams coming to Fresno and getting wrecked?

"That's a particularly interesting word," Sutton says of Rex. "I like that better than all the other ones. It has this unique quality to it, because it is a singular word but sounds like a plural. And literally, that word in Latin means king. That's why the Tyrannosaurus Rex was the king of the dinosaurs."

I knew there was something I liked about Sutton.

On the other hand: "I think of a crash," Granata says. "I'd probably put the 'T' in front of it, because if the team isn't performing well, then people might put a 'W' in front and call them the 'Wrecks.' "

Consider my bubble busted.

Here are the top five, with comments:

#### 5. Fresno Fog

"It's not a really strong name. If you think literally about it, you can't grab it or hold on to it. You only get lost in the fog." -- Sutton

"They are confused and unclear. Those are the first things that come to mind." -- Granata

#### 4. Fresno Valley Dogs

"Ahh, wow. I think of some cross between a bunch of hound dogs lying around in the Valley heat mixed in with some Valley girls. Maybe a bunch of superficial hound dogs. Plus, it's too close to Bulldogs." -- Granata

"It's OK. The image of the dog implies loyalty and some scrappiness." -- Sutton

#### 3. Fresno Phantoms

"I think of mysteriously here and mysteriously gone. It's probably good for a fighter plane, not necessarily good for an arena football team. I would've picked the Rex, but with the 'T' in front of it." -- Granata



"It's a nice name, but not particularly strong. There's some magic to it, but a phantom is not real. It will scare you but not knock you into the wall." -- Sutton

## 2. Fresno Rex

Hey, it's my column.

## 1. Fresno Frenzy

"That's an interesting name with a lot of energy and activity to it." -- Sutton

"Out of control. High energy. Not necessarily well directed. It seems more the maniacal feel associated with these type teams." -- Granata.

A final thought. If team owner Casey Wasserman doesn't like this free public service, he can always pay Catchword \$25,000 to \$35,000 for something different.

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