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## 'SLAMBALL' HITS PAY DIRT

By LILY OEI

NEW YORK — Spike TV scored Monday night with its second-season premiere of "SlamBall."

Extreme sport, a hybrid of basketball, hockey and football, pits eight teams against each other.

Monday's show, which featured the Diablos against the Slashers, debuted before 2.3 million viewers. Result was an enormous improvement from last year, when sport bowed before an audience of 578,000 and drew a season average of 437,000.

In net's key demo of men 18-34, show earned a 2.4 rating and 604,000 viewers — a 50% surge from last season's average in that demo, and a 33% increase in men 18-49. Delivery nears that of Fox's afternoon Major League Baseball game Saturday between the St. Louis Cardinals and the New York Mets, which brought in 622,000 viewers in the same demo.

"SlamBall" season will run for 16 weeks, Monday nights at 11:05. Show's concept was developed by Mason Gordon and refined by producers Tollin/Robbins and Telepictures Prods.