



The "Big Sexy" cast

Plus One

Watch out, runway models. The ladies of TLC's new three-part series, "Big Sexy," are making a plus-size impact on the fashion industry. The show follows five real women as they aim to prove that true fashionistas come in different shapes and sizes. And the stars told *Spy* that wearing show-stopping footwear is a must in their respective careers. "Footwear can set the tone for an outfit," said Leslie Medlik (above, second from left). Both Nikki Gomez (far left) and Tiffany Bank (far right) named shoe labels Jessica Simpson and Steve Madden as favorites, but Medlik added that finding footwear isn't always easy. "Many plus-size women have wide feet," she said. "As a New Yorker, I walk everywhere." Despite these extra measures, "Big

Sexy's" curvy women don't let anything stand in their way on the series (which airs at the end of this month). "I love sexy shoes and have quite the collection," Gomez gushed.

Shop Around

There's been plenty of noise surrounding the opening of the New Balance Experience Shop, and not all of it came from

the drummers playing at the ribbon-cutting Thursday morning in New York. At the pre-party the night before, President and CEO Rob DeMartini and other NB execs mingled with celebs including "Captain America" Chris Evans, model Molly Sims and "American Idol" Katherine McPhee. And the next day, more than 200 people — by

Spy's count — were waiting in line for the store's 10 a.m. opening in the Flatiron District (some of the early risers arrived at 1 a.m.). Also on the scene were the first winners of the brand's phone app contest, which rewarded players with free limited-edition kicks and a chance at towing home a gold baton worth \$20,000. And the potential to win provoked many to skip out of the office. "We work for a marketing firm," said a pair from the winning group, "so this is research!"

Go Getter

Jessie Randall is always on the go. "The vast majority of my life is spent running after my kids or hanging out with friends on the weekend," said Randall, president and creative director of Loeffler Randall. "I am at the park or going to the pool or shopping for groceries." Designing for women like herself, Randall is launching Heart LR, a capsule collection for spring '12 featuring nine styles of beach sandals and clogs at a lower price point of \$175 to \$345. "I live in clogs and sandals in the summer," said Randall. "I'm going to be [wearing] them from home to the office and back again." — *With contributions from Jennifer Ernst Beaudry and Natasha Bodily*



A Heart LR style

Louboutin Readies for Round Two

BY MICHELLE TAY

NEW YORK — Christian Louboutin SA is seeing red.

After the brand launched — and lost — a bid to stop Yves Saint Laurent America Inc. from selling red-soled shoes, its lawyer said last week the team is prepared to "fight like hell to the end."

Harley Lewin, partner at McCarter & English, told *Footwear News*, "Deter me? Not at all. It's early on in the game."

Manhattan federal judge Victor Marrero last week denied Louboutin's request for preliminary injunction barring YSL from selling red-soled shoes from its 2011 cruise collection. The judge also implied that if the case continued, he would move to find for the defendant without a full trial.

The next step in the litigation process will be determined on Wednesday. Judge Marrero has ordered that both parties meet that afternoon, when Louboutin must "show cause why the record of this action as it now exists should not be converted into a motion for partial summary judgment canceling Louboutin's trademark."

"If the judge rules sua sponte [referring to a judge's order made without a request by any party to the case], then we would take steps to have that decision reversed," Lewin added.

As Louboutin is seeking at least \$1 million in damages from YSL, the high-stakes suit has drawn immense interest from both industry insiders and consumers.

Patricia Pao, CEO of retail consultancy Pao Principle, told *FN*, "Fashion brands that have created something unique should be able to put their stake in the ground and own them. Whenever I see the leopard print I think of Dolce & Gabbana. When I see a red sole I think of Louboutin."

Carolyn Butler, owner of Foot-



Christian Louboutin

candy Shoes, agreed the red-sole lking should have a case. "When somebody comes up with a great thing, everyone wants to steal it. I say, 'No. Be original.' I'm with Christian," she said. "Is everyone going to have red soles now? It's just, as a woman, I don't want everyone wearing red sole shoes."

Pam Danziger, president of Unity Marketing, a luxury market research firm, disagreed: "I just don't think you can stretch trademarks to cover the red sole," she said. "But all publicity is good publicity. This just brings about even more people knowing about the brand."

Law experts predicted the case could continue for a long time.

"If Louboutin got the injunction, it'd be a good indication of where the judge would go and [could] increase pressure on YSL to settle," said Susan Scafidi, academic director of the Fashion Law Institute at Fordham Law School. "Louboutin just has more of an uphill battle than initially anticipated, but this is not dispositive of a final action. They could appeal denial of the injunction, but all that does is drag things out." — *With contributions from Wayne Niemi*



Sims and McPhee

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