

Kittens Halftime-Show Stars on 'Puppy Bowl V'

Fifteen felines filmed for an hour of frolic on miniature gridiron for Animal Planet show.

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A kitten prepares for its close-up during filming of the "Kitty Half-Time Show," part of the festivities during Animal Planet's "Puppy Bowl V." Fifteen felines are set to pounce on a miniature football field at this year's "Kitty Half-Time Show," as part of "Puppy Bowl V," set to premiere Sunday, Feb. 1, on Animal Planet.

The two-hour TV show started in 2005 as an alternative to the Super Bowl. The main action consists of puppies and kittens tumbling around on a scaled-down gridiron about 10 feet wide by 20 feet long, wrestling each other and chasing a mix of toys.

Sandi Buck, American Humane animal safety representative, was on the set of Puppy Bowl V during the filming to monitor the animal antics. She described the halftime scene as a great big play area with dangling cat toys and places for the cats to climb and hide.

For about an hour, four cameras filmed the kittens as they played under flashing lights. "The kittens are essentially allowed to be kittens," Buck said.

Entertainment for the kittens consists of everything from toy balls and pompoms to feather toys and strings tied to a camera for them to run after. For the grand finale, the field gets blanketed with large confetti.

"They seem to pretty much just ignore it," Buck said. "One kitten was almost buried in it as he watched it flutter down."

The footage was edited to about 15 minutes for the halftime show. Buck's job was to make sure the animals were safe at all times. For the fifth year in a row, "Puppy Bowl" earned the American Humane "No Animals Were Harmed" end-credit disclaimer.

The cats and dogs appearing on the show are from shelters and rescue groups that can be found on the national PetFinder.com website.

Like traditional sporting events, the Puppy Bowl kicks off with a version of the national anthem, sung by Pepper the African grey parrot, who has been seen on shows such as "Pet Star." The broadcast starts at 3 p.m. (ET/PT).