

Comic finds way back home again

Hickory native and 'Last Comic Standing' winner Jon Reep likes McGlohon's intimacy.

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When comedian Jon Reep was scouting locations for his first hourlong special for Comedy Central last February, the 37-year-old Hickory native didn't look far from home.

Warner Brothers told him he could shoot it wherever he wanted, Reep said. "At first I wanted to do something crazy and big that no comedian's done before. I told them I want to shoot it on an aircraft carrier for the troops with some nice city skyline behind me. Then when I finish with the big standing ovation I walk over to a rope ladder and climb up as the spotlight follows me to a hot air balloon of my face and I slowly drift off.

"They said: 'We can't do that.'"

Charlotte was second to a hot air balloon.

"I performed at (McGlohon) Theatre in the past. It's an old church. I really like the look of it. It's really intimate. It seats a lot of people, but they're right up on you. Even the balcony is right up on you. It's perfect for TV and it's an hour from where I was born and raised," he says. Reep returns to McGlohon on Friday and Saturday.

Reep's rise to fame began when he was thrown out of a Panthers game at Clemson University for dancing on the field with mascot Sir Purr. That goofiness and a seemingly endless collection of wacky stories about his father made him a front-runner on NBC's "Last Comic Standing."

He won the show's fifth season in 2007 and has since appeared in "Harold & Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay" and CBS's "Rodney." He released his first comedy DVD, "Metro Jethro," in October. The Comedy Central special and bonus features include plenty of material about his dad, a bailiff and former police officer. He still provides Reep with new material.

"I feel like I could do just a special about family. My dad would be the main focus, but I have tons of wife material now," says Reep who married two years ago. He hopes his next venture will be a family-oriented sitcom of his own.

"Since lot of my comedy is focused around my dad it would be me playing my dad and my wife would be (based on) my mom and two kids that will be (based on) me and my brother," he explains. The first episode would recount his father's near-drowning during David Reep's infamous attempt to repair a hole in the bottom of the family pool.

"In my act I say it was a sack of rocks that he strapped on his back to keep him from floating up. Actually he says it was one of our backpacks, a military-style backpack that had a belt that you would loop around and pull back so he wasn't able to take it off. And it wasn't just rocks. It was a dumbbell and a couple of bricks. It's worse than I remember."