

RUGged men get publicity but no cash from Dragons

By CANDICE WARD, Edmonton Sun - March 10, 2011

Bad rugs equaled a great business idea for two Edmontonians, even if their idea hit the floor with the Dragons from the Dragons' Den.



Despite not getting a deal, creators of the RUGged Man hair piece, Richard Korbyl and Terry Syvenky will not let the rug be pulled out from under them.

"This is the perfect situation for us," said Korbyl.

Korbyl said the experience and publicity of the show has boosted interest in their product more than they could have imagined and they are happy not to be sharing the profits. "This gives us more options," said Korbyl.

They asked for \$50,000 for distribution of their product and redesigning their packaging, but were turned down.

The pair pitched their idea to the producers of the popular CBC show Dragons' Den a year ago when the show rolled through. Their episode hit

the airwaves Wednesday night.

The RUGged Man is a tongue-in-cheek take on the age-old problem of hair loss. "It's an advanced hair system, totally a gag gift at people wearing a bad rug," said Korbyl. It's essentially a rug fastened with a chin strap.

The two were selected out of 4,000 hopefuls vying for time in front of the "Dragons" — a panel of wealthy Canadian business moguls looking for lucrative investment opportunities.

"We walked in there thinking it was going to be a good old-fashioned western gunfight and it turned out to be more like a square dance," said Korbyl.

Pitching the idea while sporting the rug, Korbyl was expecting the Dragons not to take them too seriously. "We were the village idiots," said Korbyl. Korbyl said although the pair may have looked ridiculous, they came prepared.

"We wanted people to grill us and make us sweat," said Korbyl.

Joined by a sea of rugs, the pair celebrated their newfound celebrity status at Ceili's Irish Pub for the airing of the episode.

"I totally would have given them the money," said Shannon Monday, a friend of the pair.

The crowd of people who attended the party cheered and laughed at the pair's hijinx during the show and booed the final Dragon decision.

"I am proud of the fact that they got there," said Peter Syvenky, Terry's father.

After the episode was over, the pair ensured the crowd that they are moving forward with their business.

Korbyl did have one warning about wearing the RUGged Man outside of the house. "You could suffer a cougar attack," said Korbyl.

The product is currently available at Chicken Scratch and Coney Island Candy store on Whyte Avenue, online at ruggedman.ca.

-with files from Allison Salz