

Distribution:

Production:

Devon Cody
Meghan McCarthy
Jayson Thiessen
Ashley Irving-Scott

The HUB:

Donna Ebbs
Carin Davis
Tegan Molloy
Laurence Braun
Patrick Callan

Hasbro Studios:

Stephen Davis
Michael Vogel
Brian Lenard
Kathy Page
Robert Fewkes
Sophia Hussain

Hasbro Brand:

Mark Wiesenbahn
Matt Mattus
Donna Tobin

MY LITTLE PONY IV
"Equestria Games"
Episode 424
Written by: Dave Polsky

Outline: December 18, 2012

Premise: November 16, 2012

TEASER**1) INT. TRAIN – DAY**

RAINBOW DASH paces up and down the center aisle giving a pep talk to the entire Ponyville delegation of the Equestria Games. Her speech is upbeat, rousing and inspirational, saying how proud she is of all these pony athletes competing, including her teammates FLUTTERSHY and BRUTUS. She urges all the ponies to give it their all, as every one of them has a chance of winning. Well, except maybe herself, Fluttershy and Brutus, because they're up against the Wonderbolts... but certainly the rest of them all have a chance of winning... not to say that Dash's team doesn't have a chance of medaling... they could win a bronze... or a silver... well, maybe a silver's a bit of a stretch, but... but the main thing is to give it your all!

SCOOTALOO then zips over to Dash's side and adds encouragingly that the Cutie Mark Crusaders are in the very same boat because they don't have a chance of winning either. Rainbow Dash reminds them that's because they're carrying the flag for Ponyville in the opening ceremony... which is a non-competitive event... there are no winners. Scootaloo: "Winners or not, we still have the chance to be awesome!" Scootaloo, APPLEBLOOM and SWEETIE BELLE all cheer. Dash (inspired): "That's the spirit. You hear that, everpony? Winners or not we all still have the chance to be awesome!" Everyone on the train cheers. Dash: "But uh... let's still try to win lots and lots of stuff anyway, okay."

ACT ONE**2) EXT. CRYSTAL EMPIRE TRAIN STATION – LATER**

TWILIGHT, at the front of the train, gets a warm greeting from PRINCESS CADENCE and SHINING ARMOR. Cadence then asks where's Spike, she just assumed he'd be with her. Twilight looks around, uncertain, but assures her Spike will be along momentarily. ANGLE ON ponies disembarking the same train a few cars further back. Spike, pulling a cart full of bags, wishes the CMCs luck, and asks if they're nervous. When they admit they are, Spike says he relates. After all, he's got lots of really, really important bags to carry for the Ponyville athletes. It's a lot of pressure (what if he drops one??), so he's really got to step up his game. (Note: as he walks along, bystanders see Spike and whisper to one another excitedly in the b.g. Spike doesn't seem to notice.) Spike (continuing): "The key with carrying an important bag is not to choke. If the pressure's too much, I just set the bag down and count to ten to calm myself, and then pick it up without dropping every time. Easy peasey cider squeezezy." Spike then, seeing Twilight, rushes off to catch up with her, letting her know that he has her bags. Seeing Cadence and Shining Armor, he stops to bow... but then a FOOTMAN takes Spike's cart of bags away. Incensed and embarrassed, Spike gives chase. The Footman is mortified to discover he's upset the Great and Honorable Spike the Brave and Glorious. Spike (dumbstruck): "Whowhatnow?" Bewildered, he looks back over at Twilight, Cadence and Shining Armor, who look on with knowing smiles. What the heck is going on??

3) INT. CRYSTAL PALACE – DAY

Spike continues to be waited on hand and foot, and he still doesn't completely understand. So yes, he did help save the Crystal Empire by bringing the crystal heart to where Cadence could use it to defeat Sombra, and yes he can see why some may consider that to be incredibly and stupendously awesome, but in his mind he was just on reflex... sensing danger and pretty much acting without thinking. He's not sure he deserves all this special treatment... though (as he's fed jewels one after the other) he assures them he can be persuaded. Cadence counters that since this is the first time Spike is back in the Crystal Empire since then, he clearly isn't aware of how the legend of his bravery has grown. The details of what he did, though remarkable, are almost incidental since now he is the stuff of legend. Spike (beat): "Okay. Persuaded. More jewels,

please.” Cadence: “Then perhaps you will grant our kingdom a very special honor?” Spike (noshing): “Sure. Shoot.” She then solemnly asks if he would stand in the center of the stadium before the finest athletes and dignitaries from throughout all of Equestria to light the flame to begin the Equestria Games. Spike (gulp): “Uh... you’re asking... me?”

4) INT. EQUESTRIA GAMES STADIUM - CORRIDOR – LATER

MS. HARSHWHINNY, the taciturn organizer of this Equestria Games, practically fawns over Spike the Celebrity as they head toward the field together. She goes over the finer points of his role as torch lighter. First the flag bearers will finish their routines, then right afterwards he merely has to step over to the center of the stadium and light the torch. Spike’s kind of blown away by this. No one ever expects anything great from him... maybe from Rainbow Dash, maybe even from the CMCs... but for an entire Kingdom to choose him from among all the ponies in Equestria for this very special responsibility? He’s never had an honor like this! Right at that moment, they...

5) EXT. EQUESTRIA GAMES MAIN STADIUM – FIELD – CONTINUOUS

... step onto the field and the noise and pageantry absolutely overwhelms Spike. The magnitude of what he’s about to do really sinks in. Ms. Harshwhinny (continuing, oblivious): “So that’s all there is to it. Really quite simple, don’t you think.” Spike (sweating, nervous): “Easy... peasy... cider... squeezey.” He mentions that he’s glad Ms. Harshwhinny is so nice because without someone like her to lean on he doesn’t know what he’d do. But Ms. Harshwhinny didn’t hear a word of this, as she has already walking off snapping harshly at all the people around her doing everything wrong with the last minute preparations. Spike’s head is spinning as the CMCs approach to say how excited they are for him. They point out where all the other ponies are... Twilight up in the royal box with Celestia, Luna, Cadance and Shining Armor... then, elsewhere, the rest of the Mane 6, with APPLEJACK and RARITY in particular waving excitedly at their little sisters. The CMCs are stoked, but Spike keeps getting more and more intimidated by the situation to the point that he’s quite literally choking - on the fire in his throat! He keeps pep talking himself: this is his moment, he’s waited all his life for his moment, now all he has to do is stay calm. The CMCs remind him of his advice to count to ten, and then rush off.

6) EXT. EQUESTRIA GAMES MAIN STADIUM – FIELD – LATER

Spike looks on as the different flag ceremonies come to a conclusion, including the CMCs (Scootaloo sticks the landing of her “flying” perfectly). We hear Spike’s thoughts as he reminds himself to stay calm, everything’s gonna go smoothly, nothing to worry about, etc. Meanwhile, he fails to notice Ms. Harshwhinny behind him throughout, clearing her throat to get his attention. (The crowd grows uncomfortable, and Twilight up in her box registers concern.) Tapped on the shoulder, Spike snaps out of it and the crowd cheers as Spike makes his way toward the climactic lighting of the flame (Twilight registers relief). He’s ready to light the flame, but finds himself so nervous that he can’t breathe fire. Spike reminds himself to relax and count to ten. Spike: “One, two... one, two... wait what comes next, I know this... one, two... one two...” The crowd fidgets as Spike inexplicably still won’t light the flame. (Twilight: “Oh no.”)

ACT TWO

7) EXT. EQUESTRIA GAMES MAIN STADIUM – FIELD – LATER

Spike still stands there frozen, but before things can get out of hand Twilight subtly lowers her horn and send a blast of magic to light the flame, which immediately begins blazing as though Spike had lit it himself. Spike registers surprise, but no one else seems any the wiser. The Games may now begin!

8) EXT. EQUESTRIA GAMES MAIN STADIUM – THE STANDS – LATER

Applejack, Rarity, Rainbow Dash, Fluttershy and PINKIE PIE– although excited for Spike – are all curious what was going wrong down there. They see him approaching, and he seems to be in a daze. Just then, Twilight rushes over and tells the Mane 6 just to focus on the positive, make it seem like they didn't notice anything... this was a really big deal for Spike and they don't want to give the impression that anything went wrong. Sure enough, when Spike joins them, they have nothing but praise for the great job he did. But Spike (in a soft voice) "All I wanted is for this to be my big moment... little did I know that... (brightening) it would be even more incredible than I ever imagined!" Everypony, relieved, quickly agrees it was incredible, but Spike interjects: "Don't you get it? I just lit fire... with MY MIND." The other ponies: "Huh?"

9) EXT. CRYSTAL KINGDOM – GAMES PREP AREA – DAY

Crystal Ponies keep coming up in droves to have their picture taken with Spike the Hero. Spike gladly obliges, but then can't resist topping it off with another lighting-stuff-on-fire-with-the-power-of-his-mind stunt. The poor Crystal Ponies must stand around awkwardly waiting for Spike to accomplish this. When he inevitably fails, Spike shows no trace of embarrassment. He's so excited about the discovery of this "power" that he's determined to keep trying to replicate it until he gets the hang of it. ANGLE ON the Mane 6. Applejack tells Twilight she must tell the truth that she lit the flame for him with magic, but Twilight counters that she's afraid it will take away Spike's pride in his Big Moment. They then look on as Spike approaches Rainbow Dash, Fluttershy and Brutus, who are about to race. He wishes them luck but apologizes for not being able to attend, since he's afraid that he'll want them to win so badly he might accidentally set fire to the Wonderbolts with THE POWER OF HIS MIND. Yes, he adds soberly, his gift is a blessing however with great power comes great responsibility. ANGLE ON Twilight agreeing with Applejack that it's time to let Spike know the truth. She proceeds to do so, and Spike is crushed.

10) EXT. EQUESTRIA GAMES MAIN STADIUM – THE STANDS – LATER

Spike sits in a mooney daze with Applejack, Rarity and Pinkie Pie, about to watch Dash and Fluttershy and other Pegasi race. Spike comforts himself with the thought that at least now the Wonderbolts are no longer at risk of spontaneously combusting if he watches. (Meanwhile, Rarity complains about the spell put on her horn when she came in, which is meant to ensure that nopony uses magic to influence race results.) As Ponyville proceeds to win silver in this event, Spike continues to get approached by Crystal Pony admirers, but he can no longer enjoy being treated like a superstar, because now he feels like a numbskull and a fraud. Every bit of praise he gets now stings like a dagger, reminding him of his failure during his Big Moment. Eventually it becomes crystal clear to Spike that he won't ever feel comfortable again with being lionized here till he does something really and truly and outstandingly right. He'll just have to figure out a way to do that... but how? Just then, Ms. Harshwhinny announces to all that heats in the track and field competition will begin shortly. This seems to give Spike an idea. Meanwhile, Earth Ponies take the field for the Track and Field heats, and, since it's not a final and none of them are in this competition, the Mane 6 – including Twilight – decide to take a break from all this spectating. They invite Spike to come along with them, but he declines... he's got something important to do...

11) INT. EQUESTRIA GAMES STADIUM - CORRIDOR – A LITTLE LATER

Spike runs as fast as his little legs can carry him, but he's stopped at the checkpoint before entering, as the heats are beginning and only authorized pony athletes may enter. But Ms. Harshwhinny happens to be there and, fawning over the great hero Spike, lets him pass.

12) EXT. EQUESTRIA GAMES MAIN STADIUM – FIELD – LATER

A bunch of Earth Ponies are set to begin a race, just as Spike wanders onto the field, waving to the cheering crowd. The race begins, the ponies take off... and Spike, to the puzzlement of everyone, gives chase! He runs after the ponies, trying to catch them, convinced that if he gives

it his all he'll make a good showing... and a dragon keeping pace with the fastest Earth Ponies in all of Equestria? If that doesn't give him a big moment he doesn't know what will! Seeing this, though, Ms. Harshwhinny races over to get him off the track, showing her stern side. Even though Spike lags inconsequentially behind the pack, this is completely unacceptable, Big Hero or not! But Spike pleads, he's just trying to have his Big Moment. Ms. Harshwhinny counters, he saved the entire Kingdom not too long ago, wasn't that a big moment enough for him? But Spike's insistent that he's no hero, he just did what anypony would have done in that situation. He wants to do something truly worthy of all this admiration. Ms. Harshwhinny softens... but then Spike asks: "Say, how many laps is this race, anyway?" Ms. Harshwhinny: "Two. Why?" They turn and, still on the track, they see the fastest Earth Ponies in all of Equestria stampeding in their direction. Spike and Ms. Harshwhinny then proceed to do what anypony might do in that situation: jump into each other's arms and scream... only to get pulled out of the way in the nick of time... but not soon enough to keep the admiration of Spike by the Crystal Ponies from evaporating. Ms. Harshwhinny resolves to not let Spike out of her sight for the rest of the games. Poor Spike – he just wanted to feel worthy of the admiration he'd been granted, but now he's made it so nopony seems to admire him anymore at all.

ACT THREE

13) EXT. EQUESTRIA GAMES MAIN STADIUM – THE STANDS – NIGHT

Night has fallen on the Games, so consequently, in the Royal Box, Celestia and Luna ceremoniously trade places so that Luna may officially preside over the events. There is much excitement, as this is one of the most popular events of the games: Ice Archery. Unicorns must compete firing blue magic at targets and encasing them in ice. The targets must be hit dead center to completely encase them as quickly as possible... and the first pony to completely encase their target in ice wins.

Meanwhile the Mane 6 sit together in the stands while a mortified Spike gets "babysat" by Ms. Harshwhinny. She's got him on lockdown, determined to not let him leave her side. It seems Ms. Harshwhinny's the one pony left who still thinks he's special: a special problem. The Mane 6 protest that they still think he's special, and in the good way. Spike (mopey): "Yeah, for sweeping floors and carrying bags." The Mane 6 protest, but Applejack advises them to let it go for now. He's still feeling too awful about things and just can't hear them right now no matter how hard they try. They agree to do something nice for him back in Ponyville when all of this is mercifully behind them.

But then something goes horribly wrong with the Ice Archery competition. An Ice Archer slips and falls, firing ice at another unicorn, causing that unicorn to start encasing in ice. The stricken unicorns then, as her temperature drops, continuously and involuntarily fires her own ice spell, causing the ice encasing her to get thicker and thicker. Panic strikes. Nothing like this has ever happened before, and the unicorns on the field are only enabled for icing spells.

Meanwhile, the unicorns in the stands have the usual disabling spell on their horns to prevent cheating. Ms. Harshwhinny races away to find a way to reverse the disabling spell so some unicorn can help before it's too late! But the stricken unicorn won't last in the block of ice much longer! Then, in a moment, Spike is breathing fire on the ice, heroically melting it all and saving the stricken unicorn in the nick of time. Spike gets celebrated as a hero once again! Even Princess Cadence comes down to honor him herself.

But Spike insists he doesn't deserve it. He just ran to aid somepony in trouble, if any other dragons were here they'd do just the same thing. The Mane 6 get exasperated with Spike, but Twilight cuts in. She understands. If you don't feel special and deserving on the inside, no amount of praise on the outside will change that. Twilight asks: "What would make you feel special and deserving on the inside, Spike? As special as we all already think you are?" Spike: "Getting a chance to do that Opening Ceremony all over again so I can do it right this time, but

that'll never happen." A beat... then Cadence asks: "Well, we can't turn back time, but would you like to take my place at the Closing Ceremony then? Could that maybe make up for it?" Spike brightens: "You mean, that could happen?" Cadence: "It would be my honor."

14) EXT. EQUESTRIA GAMES MAIN STADIUM – FIELD – NIGHT

Spike takes center stage at the Closing Ceremonies in front of the capacity crowd, stepping into the role meant for the ruler of the host Kingdom. Spike, despite his nerves, fill his role in the closing ceremonies flawlessly, and thus fills-to-bursting with pride, finally feeling himself to be the admirable dragon everypony in the Crystal Empire believes him to be.

END.