Things have really come a long way with this website in the 17 months we've been up and running. We've put together an incredible roster of writers. Improved the site aesthetically. Guys like Tony Lastoria and Todd Dery have been asked to do TV spots. We've been able to attract legitimate talents like Brian Windhorst, Steve Buffum, and John Hnat. We've become partners with Sportstime Ohio. And now ... I land an interview with the vivacious, gorgeous, and talented Nicole Cuglewski ... the Cavs in game host for all home games at The Q.

**Swerb:** Nicole, first off, thanks for taking the time. Your last name ... Cuglewski, what is that, Italian?

**Nicole:** I'm proud to say that I am 100% Polish. My fiancé is Italian so I guess you could say Italian is in my future!

**Swerb:** What's your story? Where'd you grow up? Where did you go to school, and what did you major in?

**Nicole:** I grew up in Brook Park. I attended St. John Bosco Catholic school from Kindergarten through the 8th grade. The first sport I was introduced to as a kid was soccer, but I really got hooked on basketball and fast pitch softball. In fact, I played competitively until my senior year at Midpark High School. Obviously, I'm a huge sports fan!! I have to give credit to my dad for that.

Aside from being an athlete, I've always been a performer as well. I was in several

musical theatre productions at the Beck Center in Lakewood, Huntington Playhouse, and at Baldwin-Wallace. I've also been featured in several television commercials. I guess you might say my job with the Cavs combines a few of my favorite things: sports, performing, and interacting with many different types of people.

I graduated from Baldwin-Wallace College with a BA in Broadcasting and Mass Communications. I made the most of my time there by getting involved in everything from intramural sports, to the radio and television stations, to theatre. I also completed a few unique internships: one in Los Angeles, CA with Sony Pictures and one in Nashville, Tennessee with Sony Music.

**Swerb:** You're now finishing up your second season as the Cavaliers in game hostess at The Q. How did you land the gig?

**Nicole:** I auditioned for the job two seasons ago. The initial process consisted of a large open call at St. Edward's High School in Lakewood. We were basically given a script that we needed to bring to life. I was then called back along with four other people. We went through a mock game, and I got the job!

**Swerb:** Did you actually interview with Dan Gilbert before getting the job? What kind of boss is Dan?

**Nicole:** With Mr. Gilbert's schedule, it would be difficult to go through the normal interview process, but from what I understand, his final approval is what sealed the deal. To me, he seems to be the kind of boss everyone would like to have: he truly cares about all of his employees and he wants you to enjoy what you're doing.

**Swerb:** Unless I'm losing my mind, I also remember you as doing something with the Indians at the Jake a 3-4 years ago, no?

**Nicole:** You have quite the memory! I was a scoreboard host at the Jake right out of college. In fact, it was right after that season that I got the gig with the Cavs.

**Swerb:** In November, you appeared on the popular television show "Deal or No Deal". How'd you go about getting on the show?

**Nicole:** That seems to be the rumor that's been going around. Ha! To make a long story short, that phrase of being at the right place at the right time couldn't have been more precise. I had waited outside for hours in the freezing cold down in the Flats but was told to come back the next day because there were too many people. I couldn't come back because the Cavs were at home the following day.

Sure enough, after the auditions, a casting director from the show decided to go to the game, came up to me after one of my hits on the scoreboard, and invited me to the second round of taped auditions. Six months later I got a call, and the rest is history!

**Swerb:** You walked away with $247,000. First off, I'm dying to know ... how much did Uncle Sam take?

**Nicole:** To be honest, your guess is as good as mine. I have to file taxes for 2008. I'll need to get back to you on that one. :)

**Swerb:** What did you spend the money on?

**Nicole:** I have to say that being on the show was truly a blessing. My dad has had quite a few major medical problems over the past 8 years. In that time, it has really taken a large toll on my family. Family is my first priority. Depending on how things go, my fiancé and I are looking to buy a house.

**Swerb:** If you would have picked one more case, I believe the bankers offer would have been over $500,000. Any regrets?

**Nicole:** You know what? The glass is half full. Had I picked the million dollar case, my offer would have plummeted.

**Swerb:** I know that I've seen you on Mr. Hero commercials. What else do you have going on professionally right now?

**Nicole:** You're correct! I am currently a spokesperson for Mr. Hero. I also work full-time as a video and event producer at EventWorks, Inc. in Cleveland. In my spare time, I also freelance as an actress, singer, and reporter for local television stations.

**Swerb:** Do you consider yourself an avid sports fan? Do you watch all the Cavs

road games?

Nicole: I'm a huge sports fan! I try to watch as many road games as possible.

Swerb: Since the Cavs selected LeBron James, The Q has celebrities on hand almost every night. Who are some of the more notable celebrities that have taken in games over the last couple seasons?

**Nicole:** Lets see…Kid Rock, Jay-Z, Beyonce, Eva Longoria, Jimmy Kimmel, oh…and Rich Swerbinsky!

**Swerb:** What is the end game for Nicole Cuglewski? What do you see yourself doing 5-6 years from now?

**Nicole:** This is just the beginning! You never quite know where life will take you. I love what I'm doing; the interaction, the fans, the excitement! This is what I'm most passionate about.

**Swerb:** Nicole, thanks again. Looking forward to seeing you at The Q Saturday night for game six. I can't wait for this game. The place should be ROCKING.

**Nicole:** No problem Rich. And yes, the atmosphere should be incredible Saturday night. Keep up the great work with the site. It's really starting to become pretty mainstream!