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# Ben & Jerry's missteps on new Jeremy Lin flavor

Frozen yogurt soured by ethnic faux pas

By **Matt Rocheleau** | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT FEBRUARY 25, 2012

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Ben & Jerry's recently began selling a new flavor of frozen yogurt at its Harvard Square shop in honor of basketball's sudden sensation, Jeremy Lin, a Harvard University graduate who is lighting up the nets for the New York Knicks.

But ever so briefly, the store committed an ethnic faux pas by including "fortune cookie pieces" mixed into its "Taste the Lin-Sanity" frozen yogurt. The ingredient was quickly replaced by waffle pieces.

"There seemed to be a bit of an initial backlash about it, but we obviously weren't looking to offend

anybody and the majority of the feedback about it has been positive,” Ryan Midden, Ben & Jerry’s general manager for Boston and Cambridge, said yesterday in a telephone interview.

Midden said the primary reason for changing the cookie ingredient was because “a couple of [pints] got returned because the cookies got so soggy.”

Lin’s popularity has yielded untold numbers of puns from headline writers and Tweeters and a few unfortunate and offensive comments. An ESPN staff member who wrote an offensive headline was fired. One sign of the increasing sensitivity: The Asian American Journalists Association this week issued guidelines in handling the Lin story, cautioning against references that might draw on stereotypes, including fortune cookies.

Ben & Jerry’s, though, is focused on its frozen yogurt and working Lin into its rotation of pun-filled flavors. The Lin-inspired frozen yogurt is available for a limited time only.


“We are very excited to celebrate the Harvard basketball program, as well as a local celebrity with our limited-time batch,” Midden said in an e-mail.

He said customers can shoot at a basketball hoop set up inside the store located near Lin’s alma mater to try to earn a \$1 discount on a pint of the new flavor.

The Harvard Square location will continue the promotion with the basketball hoop through the remainder of Harvard’s basketball season. A portion of the new flavor’s proceeds will be donated to a Cambridge nonprofit to be named later, Midden said.

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