

## The Crystal Ball - June 1 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, May 31 2007 7:00 PM -

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In this week's Crystal Ball, Mitch admits it's hard to think movies with the backdrop of last night's departing of the Pistons. But being the good soldier he is, he trudges forward and reviews this week's new releases on DVD and at the theater. "Knocked Up" and "Mr. Brooks" are this weekend's big theater releases. And Mitch also updates us on the latest M. Knight film, "Oceans Eleven" for women, and the retirement of legend Paul Newman. Enjoy.



I don't know about all of you...but I'm still too stunned about that game last night to think that much about movies. Trust me on one thing; there isn't a single plot of a single movie out there that would be as incredulous as someone saying prior to last night that LeBron was going to score 29 of the Cavs' last 30 points in a double overtime win.

In the words of Mike Brown; "Wow";

OK...time to stop acting like a giddy fan and get to work.

### ***News & Rumors:***

~ Keira Knightley as Princess Diana? Look for it, as a movie is in the works about the fairy tale life and tragic death of an icon. I guess they

figured if they could have a huge hit with a movie about an old, dowdy queen, they can really rake in the bucks with one about a beautiful princess.

~ An "Ocean's Eleven" for women? That's what this one sounds like. Meg Ryan, Annette Bening, Eva Mendes, Jada Pinkett Smith, Debra Messing, and Candice Bergen are teaming up to remake the classic 1939 comedy "The Women"...sort of a cross between "The First Wives Club" and "A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy". The original starred Joan Crawford, Rosalind Russell, Norma Shearer, Paulette Goddard and Joan Fontaine. I get the feeling a certain person in my household will not give me permission to miss this one.

~ Most of the readers of this column (all six of you) know of my recent disdain for the only man with more ego than Brian Billick, M. Knight Shyamalan. Well dammit, I have to admit that this idea and casting intrigues me. "The Happening" will follow a man who takes his family on the run when an apocalyptic natural crisis threatens to end civilization. What could it be? I'm thinking it might be a championship for a Cleveland pro sports team that upsets the time-space continuum...but that's just me. Anyway, the film will star Mark Wahlberg and the smokin' hot Zooey Deschanel...the other reasons for being optimistic.

~ What week would be complete without the announcement of another comic book to be made into a movie? This week: "The Teen Titans". I'm just waiting until I hear a remake of "Howard the Duck" has been approved.

~ From the &quot;You Have GOT To Be Kidding Me&quot; department, a prequel is being considered for the worst movie of the year, &quot;[S mokin' Aces](#)&quot;. Despite the fact that it sucked rotten eggs, and made very little at the box office, it's been popular as a rental, hence the desire to make more money by producing another piece of crap. Ugh.

~ A television note as it references two of the best shows on TV; &quot;The Sopranos&quot; and &quot;Heroes&quot;. Dania Ramirez, last seen as AJ's girlfriend Blanca, has been added as a regular to NBC's hit superhero show. For now, her powers are being kept under wraps, although I for one can tell you that she has the ability to make guys drool.

~ Another TV note: it's been announced that the upcoming 22 episode fourth season of &quot;Battlestar Galactica&quot; will be its last. Maybe I ought to start watching it at some point, as I've been told this show and &quot;Firefly&quot; are two of the best sci-fi series of the last ten years.

~ Speaking of bummers, Paul Newman has announced that he is retiring from acting, joining Sean Connery in that category. I guess that's one of the beauties of film, however, in that we will be able to enjoy their immense talents forever.

**This week's new releases:**

&quot;Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End&quot; will undoubtedly stay in the number one position this weekend, but look for &quot;Knocked Up&quot; to knock Shrek down to third place.

## **Knocked Up**

Starring: Seth Rogen, Katherine Heigl, Paul Rudd, Harold Ramis

Plot: A stoner slacker (redundant) has a one night stand with a girl waayyy out of his league...who ends up pregnant.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Even more so than the last film Judd Apatow wrote, directed, and produced, &quot;The Forty-Year Old Virgin&quot;, this film is getting absolutely nothing but rave reviews. Raunchy humor (it has an &quot;R&quot; rating), side splitting jokes, and still possessing a lot of character and touching soul, this movie may be the sleeper hit of the summer. I'll let you know my opinion early next week.

## Mr. Brooks

Starring: Kevin Costner, Demi Moore, and William Hurt.

Plot: A detective tracks a serial killer, an otherwise normal man with a devious alter ego (played by William Hurt).

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Costner, Moore, and Hurt...how early 90s can you get? As I've noted many times, unless Costner is on a horse or playing a jock, the movie is going to suck. No horses or baseballs were injured in the filming of this movie, so draw your own conclusions. To make it worse, when was the last decent movie with Demi Moore? (my answer: "Disclosure" in 1994) You want a clever story about a serial killer? Go rent the first season of "Dexter".

## Gracie

Starring: Carly Schroeder, Andrew Shue, Elisabeth Shue

Plot: Semi-autobiographical tale from Elisabeth Shue about a young girl in the 70s trying to play for a boys' soccer team.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: A nice little family affair weep fest for soccer moms everywhere. Elisabeth Shue co-produced and stars along with her brother Andrew, who was a pro-level soccer player in his own right. Schroeder reportedly beat out 9000 other girls for the right to portray the future first girlfriend of the first Karate Kid. Look for this to go straight to the Lifetime Movie Channel.

***New DVD Releases on Tuesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>***

Slightly better than last week. Which is like saying Pamela Anderson is slightly less slutty than Paris Hilton.

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**Norbit** - Eddie Murphy at his absolute worst playing every disgusting stereotype he can possibly imagine; a nerd, a fat dominating woman, and an ignorant Chinese man. It's rumored that co-star Thandie Newton almost walked off this picture several times due to the lecherous behavior of serial jerk Murphy...and there may be something to those stories based upon the non-existent chemistry between the two.

**The Messengers** - Above average creep-fest regarding the goings on at a sunflower ranch in North Dakota. I'm personally not sure anything could be a bigger nightmare than having to LIVE on a sunflower farm in North Dakota, but when you add in the ghosts, it sucks even worse.

**A Fistfull of Dollars** and **A Few Dollars More** - Re-releases of the spaghetti westerns that put Clint Eastwood on the map.

## ***Calendar Watch***

Next week - [Ocean's Thirteen](#), *Hostel II*, *Surf's Up*

Upcoming Biggies (click on the hyperlink to view the available trailers).

[Fantastic Four: The Rise of the Silver Surfer](#) - June 15<sup>th</sup> - This time the quartet go up against the Silver Surfer and the return of Dr. Doom. Please be better than the first one! (the trailers do look great).

[\*Evan Almighty\*](#) - June 22<sup>nd</sup> - Steve Carell's Evan Baxter from "Bruce Almighty" is now a Congressman chosen by God (Morgan Freeman) to be the next Noah. A reported budget of over \$200 million on this will either make it this year's "DaVinci Code" (big budget, big box office) or this year's "Poseidon".

[\*Live Free or Die Hard\*](#) - June 29<sup>th</sup> - John McClane strikes again. If the movie lives up to the expectations set by the trailers, this should be a lot of fun to watch.

[\*Transformers\*](#) - July 6<sup>th</sup> - Michael Bay (hack, spit) tries to spin a former children's cartoon into an "Independence Day" type Armageddon movie. As much as I hate to admit it...the teaser trailer looks good.

[\*Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix\*](#) -

July 11

th

- These movies keep getting darker and better

as they go. Voldemort (aka "relative of Art Modell") is back and targeting Harry and his friends for some nasty payback.

[1408](#) - July 13<sup>th</sup> - John Cusack as a famed debunker of paranormal activities encountering real terror in this adaptation of a Steven King tale. Saw the trailer the other day, and it nearly scared the crap out of me.

[Hairspray](#) - July 20<sup>th</sup> - John Travolta in drag. There are some things I really don't need to see.

[I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry](#) - July 20<sup>th</sup> - Kevin James and Adam Sandler as two straight Philadelphia firefighters who pretend to be a gay couple in order to receive domestic partner benefits.  
Oookaaayy.

[The Simpsons Movie](#) - July 27<sup>th</sup> -  
ummmm...beeeerrrrr

[The Bourne Ultimatum](#) - August  
3 rd \_

Superspy Jason Bourne (Matt Damon) is back and looking for his roots.

[Underdog](#) - August 3<sup>rd</sup> -  
Combination of animation and live action. Let's hope it's more "George of the Jungle" than "Scooby-Doo".

*The Invasion* - August 17<sup>th</sup> -  
Nicole Kidman and Daniel  
Craig in a sci-fi flick about an  
alien epidemic.

*Shoot 'em Up* - September 7<sup>th</sup>

- Clive Owen and Monica  
Bellucci protecting a baby  
from sinister Paul Giamatti.  
I was so there anyway, and  
then I found out that in one

scene Owen and Bullucci are having sex while in a shoot out. Totally Awesome!

*Eastern Promises* -  
September 14  
th

- Naomi Watts as a London midwife drawn into the Russian Mob, headed by

# Viggo Mortensen.

[The Kingdom](#) -

September 28

th

- Jamie Foxx, Chris Cooper, and Jennifer Garner in a story about an American team sent into the Middle East to

investigate a terrorist  
attack on Americans in  
Riyadh.

*3:12 to Yuma* - October  
5<sup>th</sup> -

Russell Crowe and  
Christian Bale in a  
remake of a classic  
Western with Bale as a

farmer volunteering to  
escort a criminal  
(Crowe) to Yuma by  
train, with a battle of wits  
ensuing.

*The Golden Age -*  
October 5  
th

- Cate Blanchett and Clive Owen in a follow up of the award winning &quot;Elizabeth&quot;.

*American Gangster* -  
November 2  
nd

- Denzel Washington

as a heroin kingpin from the Vietnam War era (he smuggled it back in the body bags of dead soldiers) and Russell Crowe as the investigator on his trail.

# *Lions for Lambs* -

## November 9

th

- Robert Redford directs himself, Tom Cruise (yeck) and Meryl Streep in this political thriller.

*Beowulf* - November  
16<sup>th</sup> - Robert  
Zemeckis gets all  
medieval on us with  
a motion capture  
(like "Polar  
Express")  
adaptation of the  
epic poem.

*His Dark Materials:  
The Golden  
Compass -  
December 7  
th*

- Major, major push  
from the studios for  
this big budget  
fantasy...designed

to be the first of a franchise. Nicole Kidman and Paul Bettany star.