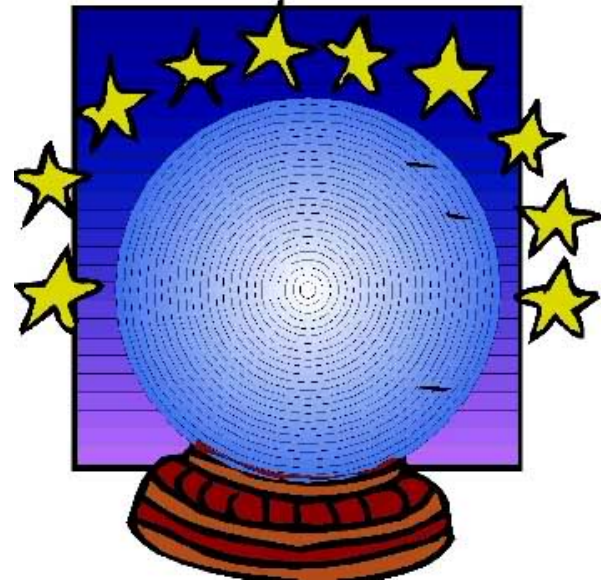


The Crystal Ball - Feb 22 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, February 21 2008 7:00 PM -

It's been all-Mitch-all-the-time this week on TCF, as he reviewed each of the films up for Best Picture for us this week. This weekend, we'll get his Oscars preview. And tonight, like every Friday night, it's Crystal Ball time. I love this column because in one quick snapshot you get a look at the new theater releases, find out which DVD releases to add to your Netflix queue, and get brief thoughts and commentary from Mitch on all of them.



That sound you are hearing emanating from the south is me getting my rear end kicked.

Seems out of all my reviews this week for the run-up to the Oscars, a LOT of people took offense to me not being in love with "No Country for Old Men". Hey! I did give it 3 footballs! Not good enough though, as many people seem to think I was 100% wrong on my feelings about the end of the movie.

To which I have two things to say:

1. They are my feelings, and I'll do with them as I wish.
2. But on the other hand, I'll probably watch the movie again, where I have been know to change my mind (see also, "Babel";. 1 ½ footballs on the initial review...and then after a re-watch I put it to #7 on my Best of 2006 list).

The only other time I've riled people up this way was the [Random Thoughts](#) column where I said that Ben Toothlessburger was scum bucket and was separated at birth from Theodore Chipmunk.

Difference is; the people writing me about "No Country for Old Men" can actually write in complete sentences, and don't have a really creepy fixation on farm animals.

My annual Oscar pre-show column will be up tomorrow.

News and Rumors

~ The big news this week is how Terry Gilliam will complete filming on the project Heath Ledger was working on when he passed away. Science Fiction allows many strange things, so in "The Imagination of Doctor Parnassus", Ledger's character will be transported three times into different dimensions, and each time the good doctor will be played by a different actor. Johnny Depp, Colin Farrell and Jude Law will play the other incarnations.

~ Ryan Reynolds, seen last week in "Definitely, Maybe" and Dominic Monaghan are the latest castings for "X-Men Origins: Wolverine".

~ Roland Emmerich, maker of mega-blockbusters "Independence Day", "The Day After Tomorrow", and the upcoming "10,000 BC" will soon have his pockets bulging after a

bidding war has started for his next project, "2012", which will be another apocalyptic tale. The man does like his carnage.

~ Here's an offbeat movie to be made that has my interest. Philip Seymour Hoffman, Kenneth Branagh, Bill Nighy, and Rhys Ifans in "The Boat That Rocked", a true story about a British pirate radio station that operated from a boat in the North Sea when the BBC was only broadcasting two hours of pop music each night.

~ This is just three of the stupidest words I've ever seen strung together "Monopoly: The Movie";

This week's new movie releases:

Vantage Point

Starring: Dennis Quaid, Forest Whitaker, Matthew Fox

Plot: Five different points-of-view are woven together to chronicle an attempt on the life of the President.

[Vantage Point](#)

The BeerBuzz: I'm looking forward to this...hopefully I'll get out to see it this weekend (notice the nice little "hedge your bets" thing there?). The different storylines are told in 15 minute increments, so this may require a lot more attention than you normally expend during a film. In other words, if you hate the TV show "Lost", stay away from this. Early reviews are very split on this one...about what I'd expect for this type of political thriller.

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Charlie Bartlett

Starring: Anton Yelchin, Robert Downey Jr. Hope Davis

Plot: After failing to fit in at a public school, Charlie appoints himself as the new resident therapist, doling out advice, and the occasion prescription to his classmates.

The BeerBuzz: Very intrigued by the trailer for this, plus the involvement of Robert Downey Jr always would put something on my radar. But is it going to pale in comparison to "Juno"? For what it's worth, Anton Yelchin, who plays Charlie, will be playing the young Pavel Chekov in "Star Trek".

My Estimated Rating: Bill Nelsen (2 1/2 footballs).

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Witless Protection

Starring: Larry the Cable Guy, Jenny McCarthy

Plot: A small town sheriff rescues a woman he believes was kidnapped, only to find that she's a star witness in an upcoming trial that he now must keep safe.

The BeerBuzz: Anyone paying money to go see this movie needs to be instantly sterilized right there in the theater to

prevent his/her Idiot Genes from being passed to another generation.

My Estimated Rating: Spergon Wynn (Zero footballs).

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Be Kind, Rewind

Starring: Jack Black, Moss Def, Danny Glover

Plot: Unaware that he has a magnetized brain, a man accidentally erases every tape at his friend's video store. To satisfy the store's most loyal renter, a dementia suffering old woman, the two set out to remake the lost films

The BeerBuzz: Jack Black could read the phone book, and I'd still at least give it 1 football. This look extremely interesting, and it will probably jump to the top of my Netflix queue once it comes out on DVD.

My Estimated Rating: Bill Nelsen (2 ½ footballs).

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New DVD Releases for Tuesday, February 26th

Beowulf - This movie will probably be better to watch on DVD than it was at the theater, as expectations have been reduced, and you can just enjoy the special effects and the camp. I was very disappointed in this film in my review, as I thought Robert Zemeckis could have done so much better of a job. And then there was the fact that Angelina Jolie was only onscreen for about 15 minutes. Maybe she'll be seen more (and in even more detail) on the uncut version.

The Darjeeling Limited - Another odd little Wes Anderson film ("Rushmore", "The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou", "The Royal Tenenbaums"). Owen Wilson, Adrien Brody, and Jason Schwartzman play three estranged brothers making a trip across India. If you're a fan of Anderson's other movies, you'll like it. If not, stay away.

Resurrecting the Champ - I have never seen a movie fall off the face of the earth like this one did after its release. Josh Hartnett plays an up and coming sports writer who rescues a homeless man only to discover that he is a boxing legend believed to have passed away. Problem was that the movie focused too much on the wooden Hartnett and not enough on Samuel L. Jackson as the old boxer.

Death at a Funeral - Chaos ensues when a man

tries to expose a dark secret regarding a recently deceased patriarch of a dysfunctional British family in this Frank Oz comedy seen by at least 40 people at the theaters.

Calendar Watch

Next week: *Semi-Pro*, [*The Other Boleyn Girl*](#), *Penelope*

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

[*10,000 B.C.*](#) - March 7th - Roland Emmerich, he of "The Day After Tomorrow",,

gets to unleash his big-budget vision of mammoth hunters in this film that is NOT a remake of "One Million Years B.C." Bummer. I was hoping of a really good visual update to Rachel Welch in that fur bikini.

[Horton Hears a Who](#) - March 14th - Not content to have made Dr. Suess spin in his grave with "How the Grinch Stole Christmas", Jim Carrey now takes on the voice of Horton the Elephant in this animated tale.

[Pride and Glory](#) - March 14th - Ed Norton and Colin Farrell in a tale of a multi-generational family of NYPD

officers and an investigation of corruption that could tear the family apart.

[21](#). - March 28th - Swerb's favorite upcoming movie, the true tale of six MIT students that are trained by one of their professors (Kevin Spacey) in the art of card counting. They later take down Vegas casinos for millions.

[Leatherheads](#) - April 4th - George Clooney and Renee Zellweger in

an old fashioned screwball comedy set in 1925 about an aging football legend and the college hotshot he's drafted for his pro team both fighting for the heart of an intrepid up-and-coming journalist.

[Iron Man](#) - May 2nd - The latest mega-budgeted superhero flick. Looks very promising, and the casting of Robert Downey, Jr. as the alcoholic billionaire who designs a supersuit.

[Speed Racer](#) - May 9th - Emile Hirsch, Matthew Fox, and Christina Ricci as Speed, Racer X, and Trixie in the Wachowski Brothers' ("The Matrix" trilogy) adaptation of the campy 1960s Japanese anime.

[The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian](#) - May 16th -

The same four kids from the first movie return to Narnia...1300 years after their last visit in that enchanted land's time frame, to help restore the throne to the rightful heir.

Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull - May 23rd - Spielberg and Ford team up one more

time, with Cate Blanchett as the romantic interest, and Shia LaBeouf ("Transformers") as Indy's son.

[Sex and the City](#) - May 30^t
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- The movie version of the HBO series hits the big screen. Can we guys get

our share of this pie and
have a movie version of
"Deadwood"?

The Incredible Hulk -
June 13
th

- Looks to be much,
much better than the Ang
Lee stink-fest, with

Edward Norton taking on the role of Bruce Banner.

[Get Smart](#) - June 20th - Steve Carell, Anne Hathaway, and Alan Arkin take on the roles of Maxwell Smart, Agent 99 and The Chief. As

much as I hate movie adaptations of television shows, this one has potential.

[Wall-E](#) - June 27th -

Pixar's next masterpiece, about a garbage cleaning robot

who dreams of the
stars.

Wanted - June 27th -
Look for this to make
a box office star out of
James McAvoy
("The Last King
of Scotland";,

"Atonement"
ot;) as he plays a
young man brought
into a secret society of
assassins by a hot,
hot looking Angelina
Jolie. Morgan
Freeman plays their
boss.

The Dark Knight -

July 19

th

- Batman is back, and this time he's tracking the Joker, played by Heath Ledger. Most likely the box office champion of 2008.