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This week there will be a complete turnaround at the theaters. Last week, only three lame movies came out to try to compete with “300” (and failing miserably). This week? SIX new movies are being released, with pretty much something for everyone.

News & Rumors:

~ You all know how much I’ve been anticipating the upcoming “Speed Racer” movie (major eye roll). So now we have someone to play the title role, Emile Hirsh (“Alpha Dog”, “Lords of Dogtown”). Guaranteed to be a classic in the lines of “Dukes of Hazzard”.

~ Before Bryan Singer gets started on the next Superman movie, he’s going to direct a WWII thriller staring Tom Cruise. What the hell is going on here? Two movie with the psychotic couch jumper directed by some of the best Hollywood has to offer? (Robert Redford will also direct Cruise in “Lions for Lambs). How can I keep making so much fun of him if he ends up in good movies?

~ Maybe Tomkat should star in this one; another superhero movie, “The Green Hornet”. I always looked at GH as a really stupid attempt to rip off Batman...as in a rich guy with no

powers putting on a mask and using his expensive toys to fight crime. No casting announced yet, but if they go with Jackie Chan for Kato, I'm gonna hurl.

~ Some people are just too stupid to get it. New Line Cinema will be adapting the video game "Gears of War" into a movie. Why not? After all, "Final Fantasy" and "Doom" made soooo much money.

~ Not all the new movie announcements for this week concern crap. Brad Pitt will be filming "State of Play", a political thriller centering on a congressman and his former campaign manager (Pitt), who is now a journalist who investigates the circumstances of the death of the congressman's mistress. No word if Gary Condit is going to have a cameo role.

~ This weekend we say goodbye to another great HBO series as "Rome" comes to its conclusion with the final clash between Octavian and Mark Antony. If you've never caught this, you need to go back and rent the first season, and then catch the second one when it comes out in a few months (or sooner). Historical figures and events mostly viewed through the eyes of two "everymen", soldiers Titus Pullo and Lucius Vorenus, two of the most fascinating fictional characters ever conceived.

~ RIP, Bud Melman.

This week's new releases:

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

Starring: Some CGI Mutant Ninja Turtles.

Plot: Reboot of the cheesy show from the 80s...this time there are no live actors interacting with puppets, it's all animation.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: TMNT will very likely knock "300" off from it's throne as the #1 movie this week. Supposedly a little more adult oriented than the campy earlier movies, as they are trying to take a page from "Batman Begins", "Superman Returns" and "Casino Royale" by rebooting the franchise and taking it in a different direction. This is going to get whacked by the critics, but should be pretty solid entertainment, so don't listen to them.

Shooter

Starring: Mark Wahlberg, Danny Glover, Kate Mara

Plot: A marksman living in exile is coaxed back in to assist in stopping an assassination, but is actually being set up as the fall guy. Revenge ensues!

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Another movie that will be pummeled by most critics, but should be damn fun to watch. If you liked "Enemy of the State" with Will Smith, you'll probably want to catch this one as well. Since it stars Marky Mark, my wife has already let me know what we're watching this weekend. Look for the review next week.

Reign Over Me

Starring: Don Cheadle and Adam Sandler

Plot: A dentist rekindles a friendship with a former college roommate, a man in an emotional shell since the deaths of his wife and child on 9/11.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Adam Sandler is the only rival Ben Stiller has for “worst actor in the universe”. That said, I’m hearing great things about him in this film, and he may actually have some talent in playing a dramatic role. Add to it Don Cheadle, who really is one of the best actors around, and director Mike Binder, who proved his talent with the underrated “The Upside of Anger”, and you’ve got a movie I definitely want to see.

The Last Mimzy

Starring: Joely Richardson, Rainn Wilson, Timothy Hutton

Plot: A box of toys sent from the future is found by two siblings who develop special and terrifying new abilities after their discovery.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Dazzling special effects, but pretty much a movie that you'll only want to see if you're taking your younger children with you. In other words, it gets the dreaded "decent family film" label, putting it right up there with "Charlotte's Web" as something that might be a good film, but not one I'll be watching.

The Hills Have Eyes 2

Starring: The usual suspects.

Plot: National Guard trainees are attacked by disgusting mutants while on a training exercise in the New Mexico desert.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Remember when I said that there was something for everyone this week? This would be the one for Stupid People.

Pride

Starring: Terrence Howard, Bernie Mac, Kimberly Elise

Plot: A coach in a Philadelphia recreation center turns a group of troubled teens into one of the best swim teams in the country

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Relatively generic inspirational sports movies. “Coach Carter” meets “The Gridiron Gang” mixed in with the ugly hair styles and clothes from the 70s that we saw in “Invincible”. In other words, it’ll be a pretty decent film to add to your Netflix queue when it’s released on DVD.

New DVD Releases on Tuesday, March 27th

Speaking of Netflix Queues, with all the basketball and good movies at the theater, mine is getting backed up big time.

Children of Men – My purchase of the week. I’ve only deemed that four movies I’ve reviewed on this site have been worthy of a rating of four footballs (or higher), and this is one of them. Brilliant, haunting, but ultimately sadly uplifting film starring Clive Owen as a former radical turned bureaucrat trying to smuggle a young woman to safety. Why? Because in Alfonso Cuarón’s chilling world of 2027, no one has had a baby in over eighteen years, and society is falling apart in despair of it’s impending doom. However, Owen’s charge is miraculously pregnant, but in danger as she is an illegal alien in a country where they are executed.

The Pursuit of Happyness – My wife’s choice for the top of the Netflix Queue. Will Smith stars in his Oscar nominated role of a homeless single father striving to better himself as an intern at a brokerage film. I just need to make sure I have a fresh box of tissues ready for my wife (not that I’d EVER sniffle at an emotional movie...are you kidding?).

Happy Feet – Frodo Baggins can tap dance! Poor Elijah Woods...he will be this generation's Mark Hamill, tied forever to his staring role in an iconic movie. So he does the smart thing here, lending his voice as the misfit penguin who uses dance instead of song. Robin Williams also shines as a Hispanic accented, goofy looking bird, but it works for him. The kids will love this movie. One word of caution; if you are a politically obsessive type that pops a vein anytime you see Al Gore, avoid this "Global Warming is real" message movie.

Curse of the Golden Flower – No, it's certainly not in the category of "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon", no matter how much it tried to be...but far superior to most Jet Li martial arts movies, and one that will probably be enjoyable.

National Lampoon's Van Wilder: The Rise of Taj – Four movies worth renting...and then this piece of excrement.

Touristas – Oh wait! Taj isn't the only crapfest coming out on DVD to be ignored. You also get this lame slasher flick. But it's the "unrated" version, so you get to see more boobies and more gore!!

Calendar Watch:

Next week - *Blades of Glory* , *Meet the Robinsons, The Lookout*

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

Grind House – April 6th - Two one-hour short horror stories, one from Robert Rodriguez, the other from Quentin Tarantino. I may abhor slasher films, but this one looks too good to miss.

Perfect Stranger – April 13th – Hopefully Halle Berry is off the schneid with this thriller about a reporter investigating the death of a friend that through the internet got involved with a powerful married man (Bruce Willis)

Aqua Teen Hunger Force Colon Movie for Theaters – April 13th – The Adult Swim cartoon featuring a floating drink, container of fries, and a meatball hits the big screen. Why?

Fracture – April 20th – Anthony Hopkins back in Hannibal Lecter Full Creepy Mode as a man toying with a young D.A. (Ryan Gosling) after he is freed on a technicality for attempting to kill his wife.

Spider-Man 3 – May 4th - The webslinger versus Venom, Sandman, and Harry Osborne picking up his father's GoblinGear.

Lucky You – May 4th – Long delayed film centered around the World Series of Poker with Eric Bana and Drew Barrymore. Unlucky them...they're opening the same weekend as Spider-Man

Shrek the Third – May 18th – Shrek & Donkey…together again. This time with the jolly green Scottish ogre trying to push off the king's crown onto a young Arthur.

Pirates of the Caribbean: At the World’s End – May 25th - Captain Jack goes for the hat trick. Finally got a trailer for this.

Ocean’s Thirteen – June 8th – Ellen Barkin replaces Julia Roberts and Catherine Zeta-Jones in this edition. Talk about a "Brian Giles for Ricardo Rincon" level trade. Al Pacino in a role sure to induce his characteristic overacting won't help either. Will someone please stick a fork in this franchise?

Fantastic Four: The Rise of the Silver Surfer – June 15th – This time the quartet go up against the Silver Surfer and the return of Dr. Doom. Please be better than the first one! (the trailer does look awesome).

Evan Almighty – June 22nd – Steve Carell's Evan Baxter from "Bruce Almighty" is now a Congressman chosen by God (Morgan Freeman) to receive His powers. 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 29th - John McClane strikes again (probably with his walker).

Transformers – July 6th – 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 13th – 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 13th – 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.

The Simpsons Movie – July 27th - ummmm…beeeerrrrrr

The Bourne Ultimatum – August 3rd - Superspy Jason Bourne (Matt Damon) is back and looking for his roots.

Underdog – August 3rd – Combination of animation and live action. Let's hope it's more "George of the Jungle" than "Scooby-Doo".

The Invasion – August 17th – Nicole Kidman and Daniel Craig in a sci-fi flick about an alien epidemic.

The Kingdom – September 28th – 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 5th – 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 5th – Cate Blanchett and Clive Owen in a follow up of the award winning “Elizabeth”.

American Gangster – November 2nd – 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 9th – Robert Redford directs himself, Tom Cruise (yeck) and Meryl Streep in this political thriller.

Beowulf – November 16th - 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 7th – 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.