There's not much going on in the Sports World this weekend other than the Indians' games, so what do you do? Check out the entertainment news and find something else to watch. Mitch is here with his weekly previews of the new releases, headed by "Evan Almighty" and the Stephen King scare-fest "1408". Mitch also runs down the new DVDs coming out on Tuesday and gives you the latest movie news and rumors, including some shameless pimping of the upcoming "Underdog" movie (?!?) and second thoughts about "Babel".

The Crystal Ball - June 22nd Releases

Welcome to the Dead Season. As Hiko mentioned in his latest article , this is the time of the year when you've got almost nothing going on other than the Indians.

It's a month until training camp for the Browns, the Cavs have no picks in the upcoming draft and little salary cap available to go after big name free agents or trade bait (and wouldn't Kevin Garnett look good in Wine and Gold?), and the Buckeyes' football team is still several weeks from being noticed.

So it's a good time for me to catch up on some more movies (what a surprise).

After doing so, I have a mea culpa. I totally trashed the movie *Babel* in my review
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Well, I had a chance to re-watch it on video, and I've got to say that I was completely wrong...it was an excellent movie.

I have no real idea what burr was under my rear when watching it the first time, but as the guys in the zebra shirts say on Sundays; "upon further review"...it's definitely a Top 10 movie from 2006. My list is now quite different from what I posted on 12/31/06 due to some re-watches and finally seeing some 2006 releases that weren't available nationwide until after the new year.

1. The Departed

2. World Trade Center

3. Children of Men

4. Letters from Iwo Jima

5. Babel

6. The Queen

7. Casino Royale

8. Little Children

9. Borat

10. Inside Man

Lots of additions of new trailers in the "Calendar Watch" portion of the column. Look for new trailers for "The Invasion", "American Gangster", "The Golden Compass", and "Shoot 'Em Up" (my favorite).

News & Rumors*:*

~ Morgan Freeman will be playing Nelson Mandela in a film adaptation of John Carlin's upcoming book "The Human Factor: Nelson Mandela

and the Game That Changed the World". It will be set right after the fall of apartheid, when South Africa was hosting the 1995 Rugby World Cup.

~ Another from the "I Can't Wait" category. Frank Miller ("Sin City", "300") is going to direct Clive Owen in a movie adaptation of Raymond Chandler's novella "Trouble Is My Business". Owen will portray literary icon Phillip Marlowe as the private eye cracks cases, heads, and whiskey bottles in 1940s Los Angeles.

~ Owen Wilson and Nick Nolte will star in a Ben Stiller directed comedy "Tropic Thunder", about a group of actors on location shooting a war movie when life starts imitating art. Interesting supporting cast that will include Stiller, Jack Black, and Robert Downey, Jr.

~ I caught a longer preview of Underdog while watching "Fantastic Four" this week. I really think this is going to be a movie that's going to be on my "Guilty Pleasures" list for the next ten years.

I just couldn't stop laughing through the entire preview.

Jason Lee is perfect as the voice of the superpowered beagle, and the special effects look to be great.

"One Nation. Under Dog".

That kills me.

~ I love it when I actually get a prediction right (it happens so seldom). "DOA: Dead or Alive" truly did live down to my expectations, pulling in less than $300,000 for the entire weekend, despite opening in over 500 theaters.

As mentioned last week, the title of the movie was also an apt description of it.

~ There have been nearly unanimous negative reviews for the musical stage version of "Lord of the Rings", which opened in London last week. Evidently, the only people who liked it were people who had never read the books, or seen the movie. Now if that isn't an indication of major suckage...I don't know what is.

This week's new releases:

And for this week, what a surprise! Another big budget sequel!

My suggestion? Go for the Stephen King adaptation.

Evan Almighty

Starring: Steve Carell, Morgan Freeman, Lauren Graham

Plot: God convinces a congressman to build an ark. Not so much as a sequel to "Bruce Almighty" as a spin-off.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: The buzz is not good on this one. It may not matter, as this type of family comedy will probably do great box office anyway, but it is being described as pretty lame.

Think "Wild Hogs" without the belly laughs that you feel guilty about later.

Carell is a tremendously talented comedian, but from what I'm hearing, he doesn't get an opportunity to showcase his abilities due to a very stilted and dumbed-down script.

1408

Starring: John Cusack, Samuel L. Jackson, Mary McCormack

Plot: A debunker of paranormal occurrences meets his match in the form of a haunted hotel room. Adapted from a Stephen King story.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: This will probably be the first horror film I've attended at the theater in several years as it's a PG-13 psychological thriller, not a blood and gore schlocker. Cusack is said to be magnificent in his role of a man who may be going slowly insane.

If the early reviews are accurate, this may be the best movie of its type since Jack Nicholson's meltdown in "The Shining".

A Mighty Heart

Starring: Angelina Jolie, Dan Futterman, Irfan Khan.

Plot: The real life story of Mariane Pearl's frantic effort to locate her journalist husband Daniel, who was abducted in Pakistan.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: I can't see any decent box office numbers for this, despite the fact that it is said to be a great film. Too depressing of a subject matter, as everyone knows the unpleasant fate of Daniel Pearl...definitely too intense for the Summer Blockbuster season, which makes me wonder why they didn't release it later in the year.

New DVD Releases on Tuesday, June 26th

Shooter - Mark Wahlberg makes what could have been a very ordinary action/adventure flick into something worth renting with his portrayal of a former sniper framed for an assassination attempt. Although it's almost as implausible as anything seen this year on "24", Marky Mark does his best Keifer Sutherland impression by single handedly keeping it afloat.

Pride - Another "rags to riches sports story inspired by real events where underprivileged inner city kids get a chance at beating the rich kids and feeling good about themselves". This time, it's about swimming, with Terrance Howard playing the coach dealing with all the racism problems that existed back in the 70s in Philadelphia.

Black Snake Moan - Samuel L. Jackson may never suck as an actor, but sometimes his movies do. Here he portrays a deeply religious blues musician trying to help out a drugged out, self destructive nymphomaniac, played by a barely clothed Christina Ricci, who spends most of the movie chained to a radiator.

(a run on sentence for a run on movie).

Dead Silence - A murdered creepy ventriloquist's creepy dolls may or may not be killing a bunch of stupid people. Yawn.

Calendar Watch

Next week - *Live Free or Die Hard* *(releasing on Wednesday, June 27th),*

Ratatouille, Evening, Sicko

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

Transformers - July 3rd - 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 trailer looks good.

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix - July 11th - 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.

Hairspray - July 20th - John Travolta in drag. There are some things I really don't need to see. I'm predicting right now that this will be the biggest bomb of the summer.

I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry - July 20th - Kevin James and Adam Sandler as two straight Philadelphia firefighters who pretend to be a gay couple in order to receive domestic partner benefits. Having seen the previews on the big screen last week, I can now say this may even be worse than "Hairspray"...except that it will still make a ton of money.

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 - Live action adaptation of the campy cartoon. Let's hope it's more "George of the Jungle" than "Scooby-Doo".

The Invasion - August 17th - Nicole Kidman and Daniel Craig in an adaptation of the sci-fi classic "Invasion of the Body Snatchers"

Shoot ‘em Up - September 7th - 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.

Check out the trailer, as it is one of the best I have seen.

Eastern Promises - September 14th (limited) - Naomi Watts as a London midwife drawn into the Russian Mob, headed by Viggo Mortensen.

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.

Hitman - October 12th - Deadwood's Timothy Oliphant follows up his portrayal as the chief villain in "Live Free or Die Hard" in this action/adventure film where he play...what else...a hitman.

Look for it to be in the same vein as "The Transporter", and a hit (heh...I just crack myself up sometimes).

The Golden Age - October 12th - 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.

Bee Movie - November 2nd - Animated flick with Jerry Seinfeld as a bee who files a lawsuit against mankind for eating honey.

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. Crispen Glover as the monster Grendel and Angelina Jolie as Grendel's mother? I'm there.

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 Daniel Craig star (their second collaboration this year), along with Sam Elliot and Eva Green.

I Am Legend - December 14th - Will Smith in a remake of the Chuck Heston apocalyptic film "The Omega Man".

Charlie Wilson's War - December 25th - Tom Hanks, Julia Roberts, and Philip Seymour Hoffman in an Oscar contender about the charismatic and eccentric Texas Congressman who orchestrated the funding