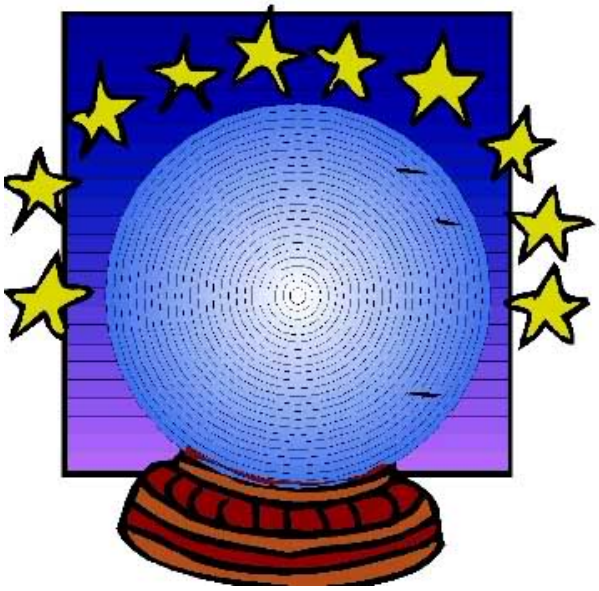
"The Bucket List" starring Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman is the highest profile of all the theater releases tonight, all of which Mitch previews for us as he does each Friday in his Crystal Ball column. Mitch also hits on the new DVD'd to hit the movie stores and Netflix, and in the news section updates on a new project that has Matt Damon playing an American officer in the Green Zone of Iraq, teaming up with a CIA agent to search for evidence of weapons of mass destruction.



Last week I made reference to wanting to reserve time for watching the Tivo of OSU/LSU.

I shut the recording off sometime in the third quarter, and immediately deleted it again.

I'd rather sit through an Adam Sandler/Ben Stiller marathon than to ever see another replay from that game.

News and Rumors

~ I've been bitching about "Speed Racer" from the day it was first announced. But after watching the trailer, I may have been a bit hasty. Directed by the Wachowski Brothers (The Matrix Trilogy), this

looks like it may actually be something special. Check out the Trailer here

~ Paul Greengrass, the extraordinary director of "United 93" and the last two "Bourne" movies, will once again team up with Matt Damon for "Imperial Life in the Emerald City", with Damon playing an American officer in the Green Zone of Iraq, teaming up with a CIA agent to search for evidence of weapons of mass destruction. Amy Rand, who did such a great job as the white-trash mother of a missing tot in "Gone Baby Gone" will play a NY Times reporter covering the story, with Greg Kinnear playing the CIA operative. As noted, Iraq War films have tanked at the box office. It will be interesting to see if the combination of Damon/Greengrass and the fact that there will be a new president in office when the movie releases in 2009 will make a difference.

~ The gossip columns have been going nuts about Nicole Kidman's pregnancy. Not that I really care about it, other than wondering about the effects of pregnancy on an over-40 stick figure, but I am interested in the fact that Nicole is now dropping out of movie commitments. The first to be affected is the post-WWII tale "The Reader". Kate Winslet will now assume the starring role as a woman who falls for a teeneaged boy in postwar Germany. Ralph Fiennes also stars.

~ Glad to see a good movie role coming up for Michael Chiklis. He is joining the cast of "Eagle Eye", playing the U.S. Secretary of Defense in a story centered around a slacker (Shia LaBeouf) and a single mother (Michelle Monaghan), who form an unlikely partnership when they are framed as terrorists and forced to become members of a cell with plans to carry out a political assassination.

This week's new movie releases:

The Bucket List

Starring: Jack Nicholson, Morgan Freeman

Plot: Two terminally ill men, a billionaire and an auto mechanic, break out of the hospital to fulfill all of their last wishes.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: This one looked really promising, but it's getting hammered by critics for it's cheesy "stop and smell the roses" script, blatant tear-jerking attempts, and limited chemistry between Jack and Morgan. Probably will still be a good movie to rent due to the talent of the these two legends, it's just too bad director Rob Reiner has turned into such a schmaltz-monger lately.

My Estimated Rating: Bill Nelsen (2½ footballs).

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First Sunday

Starring: Ice Cube, Katt Williams, Tracy Morgan

Plot: Two petty criminals bungle an attempt to rip off a local church, only to learn the error of their ways from the parishioners they're holding hostage.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Another stereotypical pandering movie that should be just as insulting to everyone as the infamous "Blacksploitation" movies of the 70s.

My Estimated Rating: Jeff Gracia (1 football).

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In the Name of the King: A Dungeon Siege Tale

Starring: Jason Statham, Ron Perlman, Ray Liotta

Plot: A farmer sets out to rescue his kidnapped wife and avenge the death of his son, acts committed by the Krugs, a race of animal-warriors controlled by an evil wizard.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Can you believe how stupid that description sounds? Almost as ludicrous as the trailer. The last thing Uwe Boll directed before this was "Bloodrayne", one of the worst movies of 2005. Just when I thought Jason Statham or Ray Liotta could not sink any lower than "War" and "Smokin' Aces", a total piece of crap like this shows up.

My Estimated Rating: Bill Nelsen (2½ footballs).

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The Pirates Who Don't Do Anything - A Veggietales Movie

Starring: Voices of Tim Hodge, Mike Nawrocki, Phil Vischer

Plot: Talking produced is whisked away from their jobs at the Pirates Dinner Theater and dropped into the middle of a real life 17th century Pirate adventure.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: The last Veggie Tales film "Jonah" made a ton of money, and was a hit for families and faith based movie goers. This looks to be more of the same; a great flick for 6 year olds.

My Estimated Rating: Spergon Wynn (0 footballs).

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New DVD Releases for Tuesday, January 15th

Good Luck Chuck - Dane Cook, possibly the most unfunny comedian ever, stars as a man who is under a curse that makes him popular with single women: Sleep with Chuck, and the next man you meet will be your true love. Idiotic beyond belief, and a complete waste of Jessica Alba as the clutz Chuck truly desires. Vulgar and Dumb. Usually a combination only seen by fans of the Steelers.

Mr. Woodcock - Two for two with insipid, puerile comedies. Billy Bob Thornton, Susan Sarandon, and Sean William Scott appear in this dreadful tale of a successful self-help author who comes back to his hometown to find that his mother is engaged to the gym teacher who tormented him as a teen. Thornton and Sarandon should be forced to return their Oscars for appearing in something this bad.

Calendar Watch

Next week: *27 Dresses, Cloverfield, Mad Money*

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

Rambo - January 25th - John Rambo and a group of mercenaries go to Thailand. I was OK with the way Stallone handled "Rocky Balboa". I think all of that goodwill he build up gets burned in this mess. The January release date

pretty much assures a stinker.

Vantage Point - February 22nd - Dennis Quaid, Forest Whitaker, and Matthew Fox in a political thriller/mystery showing five different points of view to an attempted assassination of the President.

The Other Boleyn Girl - February 29th

- Natalie Portman as Anne Boleyn, Scarlett Johansson as her sister Mary, and Eric Bana as King Henry VIII. I expect this to blow the tepid

Showtime series "The Tudors" out of the English Channel...but since it's gotten pushed back to the waste-land of February releases, I don't have a good feeling about it.

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 Hirch, 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.

The Incredible Hulk - June 13th

- 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 star out of James McAvoy ("The Last

King of Scotland") 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 19th

- Batman is back, and this time he's

tracking the Joker, played by Heath Ledger. Most likely the box office champion of 2008.