After a dreadful couple months for movie releases, movie critic Mitch Cyrus is fired up about what lies ahead of us. Per usual, in this week's edition of The Crystal Ball, Cyrus previews the new releases at the theater and on DVD this weekend.

Popcorn Season has officially begun!!!

Starting this week, we get an action blockbuster every Friday for the next four weeks. “Mission Impossible III” this weekend, then “Poseidon, “The DaVinci Code”, and “X-Men United”. Given that this entire YEAR has blessed us with only two decent entertainment flicks, “Inside Man” and “V for Vendetta”, all I can say is “it’s about damn time.” Hopefully this means the weeks of having such utter crap as “R.V.”, “Scary Movie 4”, and “Medea’s Rotten Movie” at #1 have ended for the next several months.

Speaking of “M:I:III” (and don’t you just hate that stupid abbreviation?), thank God I don’t watch afternoon talk shows, late night talk shows, or any of the umpteen million variations of “Entertainment Tonight”, or else I’d be so OD’d on Tom Freakin’ Cruise that I’d be ready to firebomb the L. Ron Hubbard section of the local Barnes and Nobles.

The only cure for Tom Cruise overload is to continually loop two of the greatest

recent “South Park” episodes; the one with Tom-Tom literally in the closet, and the Super Adventure Club episode when they bumped off Chef.

Title: **Mission Impossible III**

Starring: The Scientology Lunatic, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Ving Rhames

View Trailer

Plot: Maniacal bad man wants to rule the world. Super secret agent must stop him. In other words, the same as every other M:I or Bond flick. But with these movies, it’s all about the “how” and not about the “why”.

The BeerBuzz: I really wanted to hate this movie and watch it bomb, I was so burnt out on the TomKat bullshit we’ve had to deal with for way too long. But I’ll just have to be a hater towards the actor and not the character, as it looks like Ethan Hunt and crew are in for one hell of a great ride. J.J. Abrams, the mastermind behind “Alias” takes over the director’s chair, and it looks like he’s put together a breathtaking action yarn. Hoffman probably gains 50 pounds chewing scenery as the bad

guy, with excellent support from such diverse actors as Laurence Fishburne, Billy Cruddup, and Jonathan Rhys Meyers.

Maybe after DJK's "Matrix" articles, I should just watch this picturing Keanu Reeves as Ethan, and perhaps I'll be OK then.

Title: **An American Haunting**

Starring: Donald Sutherland, Sissy Spacek, Rachel Hurd-Wood

View Trailer

Plot: In the early 1800s, a Tennessee family is tormented by a spirit that promises to kill one of their family members. Supposedly "based on true events" (yeah…right).

The BeerBuzz: A thriller with a twist; they actually try to explain

what was really happening to the family, other than the obligatory “monsters got ‘em”. An “intelligent horror film?” That oxymoron is almost up there with “military intelligence”, “happily married”, and “Pro Bowl bound first round draft picks by Cleveland”.

Title: **Hoot**

Starring: Logan Lerman, Luke Wilson, Brie Larson, and JIMMY BUFFETT!

View Trailer

Plot: A teen relocated from Minnesota to Florida joins his friends attempting to stop a new development from destroying a family of owls.

The BeerBuzz: This week's film for kids and aging tree-hugging hippies everywhere. Jimmy Buffett's producing his first movie with this Wil Shriner directed bit of entertaining fluff, and the early word is that everyone does a great job. So if you're needing to take the 6 – 10 year olds to see something this week, this won't make you want to stab your eyes out with a slurpee straw while watching it.

New DVD Releases on Tuesday, May 9th

Munich – If you've read my other stuff, you know how much I've pimped this movie. As in; I'll have the "Collector's Version" purchased by 11 AM on Tuesday. Rent it…you'll thank me later. But be warned that it is in the same line of "great, but depressing" Spielberg films like "Schindler's List" and "Saving Private Ryan". Not as profound as those two, but more of a fictional thriller based on historical facts.

The New World – Stylish retelling of the Captain John Smith/Pocahontas story. Heavy emphasis on "stylish" as recluse director Terrence Malick never met a five minute scene watching a flower grow that he didn't like. Well reviewed film by some of the major critics, but all with the grain of salt about Malick's deliberate pacing.

Rumor Has It – Jennifer Aniston stars as a woman who learns that she might be the granddaughter of the character who inspired Mrs. Robinson in "The Graduate", and is getting involved with the guy that was maybe Benjamin Braddock. I'll probably rent this and regret it later…as it was very "liked it or hated it" with the critics. Kevin Coster isn't on a horse or playing a jock…so it probably sucks.

Nanny McPhee – Kid flick of the week. A witch (a majorly fuglied up Emma Thompson) uses her

magical powers on her seven unruly charges. No, the nanny is not related to the hot chick currently on American Idol.

Big Momma's House 2 – My thesaurus does not have enough words in it to describe how much this movie sucks. So let's get cultural! In Spanish: chupar. In Italian: succhiare. In French: sucer. In Norwegian: suge. In German: saugen. Now don't you feel smarter? You won't if you waste $5 to rent this mess.

Ronin - DVD release of the excellent 1998 DeNiro caper film with one of the best chase scenes ever recorded.

Rescue Me: Season 2 – Just in time for Season 3

to start in a few weeks.

The Poseidon Adventure – Why is this being released this week? (see below for answer)

Calendar Watch:

Next week: *Poseidon, Just My Luck*

The Upcoming Biggies:

The DaVinci Code: May 19th

X-Men: The Last Stand: May 26th

The Breakup: June 2nd

Prairie Home Companion: June 9th

Click: June 23rd

Superman Returns: June 30th

Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest: July 7th

Miami Vice: July 29th

Snakes On a Plane!: August 18th

Casino Royale (007): November 17th