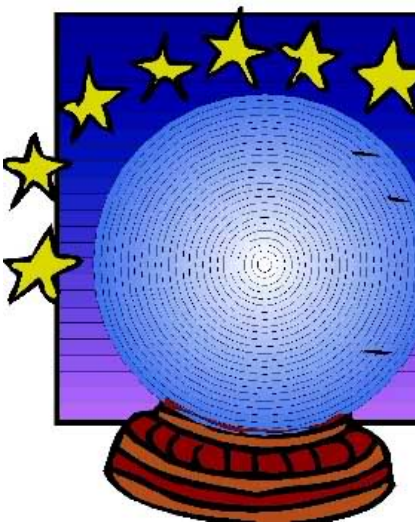
Mitch's intro says it all about this weeks edition of The Crystal Ball (tm): "It



It's amazing how it goes during the summer. We go from a week where we see possibly the four worst movies of the season being released to one that may just have two of the best…as I'm including Superman Returns in this group, as it's being released Wednesday, June 28th, prior to my next Friday column. On the downside, it's a lot harder for me to inject humor into blurbs about good movies, so please bear with me…I promise to be meaner next week.

News and Rumors:

~ Let the legitimization of Topher Grace continues. The gangly 'That 70s Show' star is getting something his talentless co-star Ashton Kutcher hasn't (and probably never will)…a plum role in a movie that smacks of "Oscar Contender". Grace will co-star with Terrance Howard ("Hustle & Flow", "Crash") in "The Crusaders", a film about the landmark 1954 Supreme Court case of Brown v. Board of Education, with Howard portraying future Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. But Ashton

still has Demi Moore and all her silicone.

~ Natalie Portman also continues to pick excellent roles that add to her rapidly rising star as one of the best young actresses in the business. She will play Anne Boleyn in the historical drama “The Other Boleyn Girl” (look for that title to change), opposite Eric Bana (“Troy”, “Munich”) as Henry VIII. (obviously before King Hank became Ted Washington sized).

~ My weekly Rant about remakes…this time it’s “Valentine’s Day”, a remake of sorts to Bill Murray’s classic “Groundhogs Day”, this time about a couple who are forced to relive February 14th again and again until they get it right. Sigh. No cast listed yet, but look for the aforementioned Ashton Kutcher and Paris Hilton to be at the top of the list. Maybe Ron Zombie can steal this idea for his “Halloween” remake and have teenagers get killed every day by some new gruesome manner, and wake up again the next morning with it still being Oct. 31st.

This week’s new releases:

Title: **Click**

Starring: Adam Sandler, Kate Beckinsale, Christopher Walken

Plot: Workaholic architect gets a mysterious remote control that allows his to pause, fast forward, or reverse his life. Things get wild when the remote starts overruling his choices.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: I am not an Adam Sandler fan in any sense of the word…but this has the makings of the best comedy of the year. It was supposed to be

released late this year, but the studio was so impressed, and the buzz so positive that they moved it up into a Summer Blockbuster slot. Christopher Walken in the “Nutty Professor” type role has me hooked already. That, and the trailer where they show Sandler ogling over the well endowed woman jogging by his car. Oink, oink! Good thing 90% of Swerb’s audience is male…so most of you know what I’m talking about. I’ll have a review of this posted early next week.

Title: **Waist Deep**

Starring: Tyrese Gibson, Larenz Tate, Meagan Good

Plot: Ex-con goes Terminator after his son is kidnapped.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Director Vondie Curtis-Hall's last effort was Mariah Carey's "Glitter". Nothing else needs to be said…the man has the credibility of Butch Davis in an NFL Draft War Room.

Title: **Superman Returns (June 28th)**

Starring: Brandon Routh, Kate Bosworth, Kevin Spacey

Plot: The Man of Steel returns after a mysterious seven year absence, and finds that Lois has moved on and Lex Luthor is up to his old tricks.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: This is already being compared to “Batman Begins” in regards

to a fantastic movie that can resurrect the Superman franchise in the same way as Christian Bale's brilliant performance revitalized Batman. Exceptional casting…I always thought Gene Hackman's Luthor was one of the best parts of the original…even if it was a bit too hammy and over the top. Spacey can give you all the quirks but add a lot more menace and insanity than Hackman, which bodes well. It's all up to the previously unknown Routh. Can he equal the "out of nowhere" performance of Christopher Reeve in the breakout 1978 movie? Given that the director is Bryan Singer, the man behind Hugh Jackman's initial major role as Wolverine, my guess is "yes".

New DVD Releases on Tuesday, June 27th.

Annapolis – This would be an early contender for the Razzies…if it had actually been paid attention to by anyone. Maybe James Franco won't be playing the Hobgoblin on the next Spider-Man movie…maybe he's a different super villain, and kills people by boring them to death. Lots of practice on it in this "An Officer and a Gentleman" ripoff.

Failure to Launch – This film did surprising well considering how bad it is. Matthew McConaughey playing the same role he plays in almost every one of his movies…Sarah Jessica Parker being a skanky flake again…and Terry Bradshaw in a prominent role (McConaughey's father), including a nude hot tub scene with Kathy Bates. Gargling Drano is a viable option to seeing that on screen.

Medea's Family Reunion – To

plagiarize myself from my initial write up at its theatrical release…who in their right mind was watching those old NBA/Converse commercials where Larry Johnson dressed up in drag with a gray wig, playing "Grandmama" and thought, "this would make a great movie?" Whoever it was…I need to have some of what they were smoking.

Ultraviolet – Another contender for worst movie of 2006. Mila Jovovich

in spandex makes it better than some…but no real difference between this, Catwoman, and Aeon Flux.

Calendar Watch:

Next week: *The Devil Wears Prada*

Upcoming Biggies.

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

M. Knight Shyamalan's Lady in the Water: July 21st

Miami Vice: July 28th

World Trade Center: August 9th

Snakes On a Plane!: August 18th

Clerks II: August 18th

All the King's Men: September 22nd

Flags of Our Fathers: October 20th

Casino Royale (007): November 17th