Should be a big weekend at the box office, with four pretty appealing releases which include Clerks II and the new film from M Night Shyamalan. Mitch previews these flicks, as well as the new DVD releases in his latest edition of The Crystal Ball. Included as always are the latest Hollywood news and rumors, as well as some dates on upcoming projects and films of note.

"Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" continues to be the monster of the summer, moving into the #1 grossing movie of the year in only it's second week. Of course, when the only two new movies being released are disasters on the level of "Little Man" and "You, Me, and Dupree", it's not much of a competition.

As opposed to last week's slim pickings, there are four movies coming out this week, all of them looking to be pretty decent…at least in regards of playing to their demographics, and while none of them will unseat Pirates as the #1 movie for the week, they all stand a pretty good chance of making some decent bucks.

News and Rumors:

~ Another week, another Comic Book Adaptation report. Frank Miller, the genius behind the Dark Knight Batman graphic novels and Sin City will write an adaptation of the classic comic "The Spirit". Tom Cruise wanted to star in it, but being that he has no spirit and is just an empty

shell controlled by L. Ron Hubbard's lackeys…it's doubtful he'll get his wish.

~ A couple of weeks ago I wrote of Natalie Portman joining Eric Bana in the cast of "The Other Boleyn Girl", about the young Henry VIII. This week it's just gotten better, as Scarlett Johanasson has signed on as the other sister. Who cares if the movie is any good, as long as you have Natalie and Scarlett to look at?

~ Movies based on video games suck…there is no other word that describes it better. That said, there may finally be one that breaks that ironclad stereotype. "Halo" is currently being developed for producers Peter Jackson and Fran Walsh, and is rumored to be starring Denzel Washington in the role of Master Chief. If this one were to finally succeed, the unfortunate result would be a deluge of additional adaptations, much like we've seen from TV shows and comic books. "Pong: The Movie" might just be the one that puts me over the one bottle of scotch per day line.

~ Ian McShane will add his eloquent voice to "Shrek the Third" as Captain Hook. I can't wait to watch the outtakes and see him talk about that "c***sucking alligator".

~ I normally wouldn't mention theatre happenings in this column, but this is too good to resist. The Broadway production of "Chicago" is about to have Usher take over in the role of Billy Flynn (played by Richard Gere in the movie) with Tori Spelling to play Roxie Hart (played by Renee Zellwegger). Paying money to see that or shaving my head with a cheese grater? That would be a toss-up.

This week's new releases:

Title: **Lady In the Water**

Starring: Paul Giamatti, Bryce Dallas Howard, Jeffrey Wright

Plot: A maintenance man rescues a young woman from the pool at the complex he maintains. He then discovers that she may be a storybook creature trying to get back to her world, but pursued by something evil.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: M. Night Shyamalan can polarize an audience like few writer/directors can (Woody Allen being another). Shyamalan has recently become to film critics as the equivalent of Brian Billick to sports writers; a man they hate for his arrogance and his disdain for them. Sure enough, the bad (or stupid) guy in this movie is a movie critic (Bob Balaban)…so guess what this critic may end up doing to this film? We'll see next week, as I'll be reviewing it for Swerbs. In any case, the early buzz is NOT good on this one…but if you liked "The Village" (a movie to which I would give 2 ½ footballs), you'll probably be OK with this as well.

Title: **Clerks II**

Starring: Brian O'Halloran, Jeff Anderson, Rosario Dawson

Plot: When the Quick Stop that Randal and Dante works at burns down, they are forced to go to work at the fast food hell Mooby's, and additionally confront the fact that they are slackers

going on 30.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: This promises to be a typical Kevin Smith movie, and those that were really into Clerks, Dogma, and Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back are certainly going to love it. These types have a name…and it's called "Immature". In any case, Smith got a ton of free publicity when noted dumbass critic Joel Siegel from "Good Morning America" walked out of the film 40 minutes into it, making a big fuss as he did. Siegel was then roasted the next morning on the XM Radio Show "The Opie and Anthony Show" when Smith was a guest. Check out Kevin Smith's website www.silentbobspeaks.com to catch the audio.

Title: **My Super Ex-Girlfriend**

Starring: Uma Thurmun, Luke Wilson, Rainn Wilson

Plot: A man breaks up with a girl because she's too needy, but it ends up she's also a superhero who uses her powers to make his life a living hell.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: The good thing going for this is Ivan Reitman. The bad thing is one of the Wilson boys as the star. I'm leaning towards Reitman trumping Wilson, and that this will actually be a pretty amusing flick. With mega dork Rainn Wilson playing Luke's best friend, it

certainly has potential. I once had a Super Ex-Wife. She had the superpower of being able to make my bank accounts turn invisible…with the help of her sidekick, SharkLawyerBoy.

Title: **Monster House**

Starring: The voices of Mitchel Musso, Sam Lerner, and Spencer Locke

Plot: Three kids discover that a creepy house in their neighborhood is actually a living monster.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: For any of you dealing with the housing market in California, Phoenix, or the Boston area, you already KNOW what a Monster House is…it's the one costing $750,000 for 1,100 square feet. For this movie version of it, Robert Zemeckis uses the same motion-capture technology in this film as he did in "The Polar Express". Lots of major names as 'guest' voices in this one with Steve Buscemi, Jon Heder, Kathleen Turner, Kevin James, and Jason Lee amongst them. A safe family film that will be lucky to do half the box office of "Cars".

New DVD Releases on Tuesday, July 25th.

There's not much coming out this Tuesday. And only one (Chappelle) that is worth renting.

The Benchwarmers – Three lifetime losers (Rob Schneider, David Spade, Jon Heder) form a three man baseball team to play against standard Little League teams. I guess when they got done with that they were going to have a Spelling Bee against the St. Bluto's School for the Dyslectic.

Final Destination 3 – More D-List actors nearing thirty playing teenagers getting killing in really gross ways! Just don't think TOO much about the disgusting roller coaster crash when you're standing in line for three hours to get on Top Thrill Dragster this weekend at Cedar Point.

Chappelles' Show: The Lost Episodes Uncensored – If you're a fan, you need to buy this one.

Calendar Watch:

Next week: *Miami Vice, The Ant Bully, John Tucker Must Die*

Upcoming Biggies.

Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby: August 4th

World Trade Center: August 9th

Snakes On a Plane: August 18th

Invincible: August 25th

Lucky You: September 8th (Gambling movie…possibly the life story of Swerb)

All the King's Men: September 22nd

The Departed: October 6th (Scorsese's latest)

Flags of Our Fathers: October 20th

Casino Royale (007): November 17th