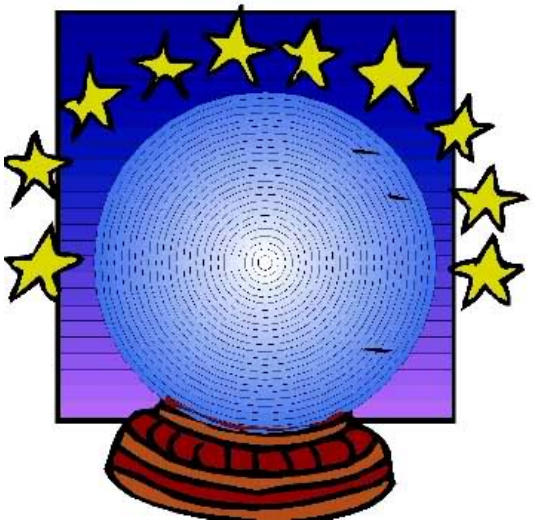
Before we crank back up the Buckeyes/Longhorns coverage, we stop for our regular Friday night installment of the Crystal Ball. In it, the talented Mitch Cyrus previews the new releases at the theaters and on DVD, and also gives us the latest Hollywood scoop. This week, with a weak crop of releases, Mitch gives the following advice: stay home, drink beer, watch football. Uhh ... OK.



Welcome to September and some “serious” movies. However, the best description this week might be “seriously DULL”; as I’m not sure anything being released this week has a big chance to unseat “Invincible” as the #1 box office flick. Not that it really matters to me, as I’ll too busy watching Ohio State and the Browns to even think about going to a theatre (that, and drinking heavily from about 6 PM on Saturday until midnight or so on Sunday…have liver, will rot).

The post-mortem on “Snakes on a Plane” continues, as the shock-fest continues a free fall only previously seen by Floyd Landis after his Tour de France drug test results were revealed. SoaP has fallen to #17 in only its third week, and there is a 90% probability that if you walk into any theater where it’s playing, you’ll have most of the auditorium to yourself.

In space, no one can hear you gag.

News & Rumors:

~ In 1972, Michael Caine starred with Sir Laurence Olivier in the movie “Sleuth”. In something I’m not sure I’ve seen before, a remake is planned and Caine will still be in it, this time playing the role originally filled by Sir Larry. Jude Law will play the role Caine originated…and let’s hope it works out better than the last time Law remade a Caine role, the utterly forgettable “Alfie”. Kenneth Branagh will direct the new thriller.

~ Bruce Willis is rumored to be #1 on the wish list for the role of Col. John “Hannibal” Smith in the theatrical remake of the TV series “The A-Team”. If Bruce were to accept this, we would therefore know that his career is over, and it’s only a matter of time before we see him on “Dancing with the Stars”.

~ Interesting concept. Jim Carrey and Cameron Diaz are set to rekindle the chemistry they exhibited long ago in “The Mask” in a comedy/drama called “A Little Game of Consequence”…where they play a happily married couple who decide to play a game on their friends and pretend that they are breaking up. The kicker is that once word gets out, they find out that their friends and family never thought they should have been together anyway. News flash…your friends and family ALWAYS trash the other person once they learn you’ve split.

~ We may not be at the bottom of the barrel yet, but we’re damn close. Tom Sizemore will evidently star in his own reality show on VH1. Drugs, prostitutes, and probation officers! Oh, my! What’s next? A reality show starring Charles Manson?

This week’s new releases:

Title: **Hollywoodland**

Starring: Adrien Brody, Diane Lane, Ben Affleck

Plot: A detective investigates whether the reported suicide of Superman actor George Reeves was actually a murder.

The BeerBuzz: I have to wonder if Ben took this role due to the fact that he contemplated killing himself after he heard the guffaws of critics and audiences after his performance in Daredevil. Typical for Hollywood, we get two similar films released next to each other, as this one shares the “based on an actual incident film noir detective flick surrounding Hollywood many years ago” with next week’s “The Black Dahlia” from Brian DePalma. From the buzz I’m hearing, this film is getting swallowed up by the glitzier DePalma picture, although comparing Adrien Brody to Josh Hartnett as actors is like comparing Otto Graham to any Baltimore Ratbird QB.

Title: **The Covenant**

Starring: Somebody from “Sky High”, somebody from “Tony-n-Tina’s Wedding”, and somebody from “Indigo USA”. I’ve seen more star power in a Dentine commercial.

Plot: Plug in your generic lame plot from any “X-Men” comic book second tier writer, and you’ll probably be pretty close.

The BeerBuzz: The 64 cent question is which Superhero-Lite show will be a bigger bomb; this movie or NBC’s new TV show “Heroes”? This will probably get a decent first week’s take from the 12-15 year old crowd, and then join SoaP at the bottom of the list. I give the TV show three episodes before it’s cancelled (and shipped to the Sci-Fi network, where it will be a cult hit).

Title: **The Protector**

Starring: Tony Jaa, Nathan Jones.

Plot: A Muy Thai fighter goes to Australia to confront the gangsters that stole a couple of elephants.

The BeerBuzz: I love it that the PR guys try to pimp this up by dropping the names “Crouching Tiger/Hidden Dragon” and “Quentin Tarantino in an effort to make this yawner appealing to the public. Guess again...”Slouching Elephant/Hidden Profit” is more like it, as this film totally tanked in Europe and Asia. So they hope Tarantino’s name (he had nothing to do with the filming of it) might fake some people out enough to get a modest first weekend take before it settles into oblivion.

New DVD Releases on Tuesday, September 12th

Lucky Number Slevin– Notice my earlier statement about Josh Hartnett? Well, he stars in this movie, and can even make a film with Bruce Willis as a hit man suck rotten eggs.

The Wild– Kiefer Sutherland may have had a great year financially and critically with the success of “24”, but he had a crappy year at the box office, playing a boring stiff in “The Sentinel”, and being the lead voice in this lame animation. Buy it for your young kids to watch so they won’t bug you while you’re watching football next weekend…it’s so simple that they won’t bug you to ask you to explain things.

Goal! The Dream Begins – Is this the dream where I can watch a World Cup Soccer match that doesn't end in a binary score (0-0, 1-0, or 1-1)? Or the dream where the players don't act like they've been stabbed by Ray Lewis in an attempt to draw a Yellow Card? Or is it the nightmare to think I have to watch a remake of "Victory", that terrible WWII soccer movie with Sly Stallone as a goalie?

Star Wars Limited Edition – Volumes IV, V, & VI – More re-imaging and special features designed to make geeks fork over more of their money earned from programming in C#.

Calendar Watch:

Next week: *The Black Dahlia, The Gridiron Gang, The Last Kiss, Confetti*

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

All the King’s Men : September 22nd Sean Penn, Jude Law, and James Gandolfini in the classic remake of the thinly veiled tale of the life of Louisiana governor Huey Long.

Children of Men – September 29th – Futuristic movie with Clive Owen and Juliana Moore where women can no longer bear children, and mankind seems doomed to extinction until one woman mysteriously becomes pregnant

The Departed : October 6th - Scorsese's latest with the Cast To Die For. Jack Nicholson, Matt Damon, Leonardo DiCaprio, Mark Wahlberg, Martin Sheen, Alec Baldwin, and Ray Winstone in a story about a cop (Leo) who has infiltrated the mob, and a mobster (Damon) who has infiltrated the cops.

Man of the Year : October 13th – Robin Williams as a Jon Stewart type commentator/comedian who runs for President as an Independent to shake things up…and wins.

Flags of Our Fathers: October 20th - Director Clint Eastwood's tale of the men who raised the flag on Iwo Jima.

The Prestige : October 20th – Christopher Nolan (Momento) directs Hugh Jackman, Christian Bale, and Scarlett Johansson in a turn of the century mystery about two magicians. This one has some great early buzz.

Lucky You : October 27th Eric Bana/Drew Barrymore movie centering on the Poker Craze and the World Series of Poker.

A Good Year : November 10th - Ridley Scott's latest with a kinder, gentler Russell Crowe and a plot line revolving around a vineyard. Crowe and booze…always an interesting combination.

Casino Royale : November 17th - Daniel Craig in his first appearance as 007. Good early buzz on this one.

The Fountain : November 22nd – Hugh Jackman as a 16th Century Conquistador who finds the real fountain of youth and spends 1000 years searching for a way to save his love.

Déjà Vu: November 22nd – Denzel Washington in a Tony Scott time travel adventure.

Rocky Balboa – December 22nd – Adrian!!!! I want to watch Matlock!!!!

The Good Shepherd – December 22nd – Robert Di Niro directs Matt Damon, Anjelina Jolie and himself in a tale of the early years of the CIA.

Dreamgirls – December 25th – Big budget adaptation of the Broadway musical with Beyonce, Jamie Foxx and Eddie Murphy.