



From slacker to author

Orange County (Rated PG-13, 81 minutes, Paramount Pictures)

High school senior (Colin Hanks) from Orange County, California, decides there is more to life than surfing after the death of a friend and plans to trade his surfboard for Stanford, but things take a comedic turn when his overworked guidance counselor (Lily Tomlin) accidentally sends in the transcript of an underachiever as his...

Movies like this have been done a hundred times before and a whole lot better.

Hanks and Pisk play the loving couple well and have a lot of chemistry together, but you can tell they are struggling against sub-par pacing and one-dimensional characters so hard, they are barely keeping their heads above water. Maybe someday they'll get some good material to show us what great second-generation actors they are.

Jack Black is humorous as the uber-slacker, Lance, but it's a role he's played before and a whole lot funnier, but he is the main reason for watching the movie. It seems like he just ploned in this role and he isn't a big enough star to get away with it yet.

Guest stars in the movie are a virtual who's who of comedic genius (Chevy Chase, Harold Ramis, Catherine O'Hara, Kevin Klein, John Lithgow, Ben Stiller, Gary Marshall and Lily Tomlin) and while they give good performances, they are not used to their full potential.

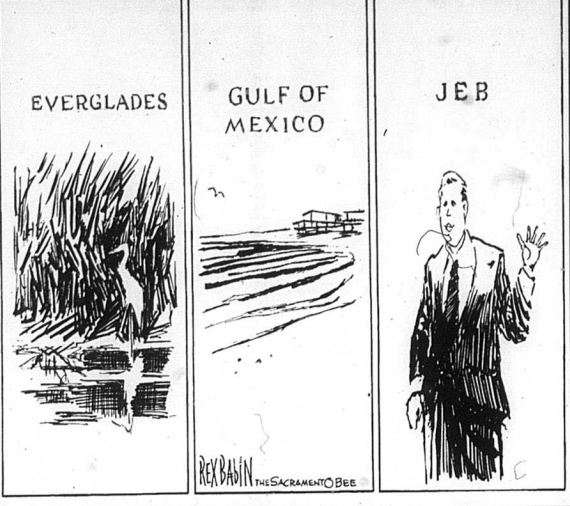
The movie has a good message behind it and with a little more time to tweak it, it could have been a classic. It's more like "Fretty in Pink" or "The Breakfast Club," but it just falls a little flat and gets lost in the mix.

The DVD features a few entertaining deleted scenes and a whole slew of trailers, called interstitials. These trailers feature some pretty hilarious moments filmed to promote the movie and make the movie worth picking up.

If you want a good get-together at their annual laugh-fest, pick up 1999's "How I Got Into College," starring Anthony Edwards and Lara Flynn Boyle.

Opini

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Commentary

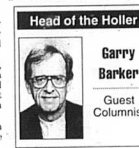
Cough, sputter, choke - tiller trouble

A few years back, far reasons I don't exactly remember, I bought a small Mantis tiller.

It's the underized, supercharged mini-tiller, a lightweight snarling and clawing dirt digger, and it would likely do a great job in loose, rich loam.

Out here, we deal largely in clay and rock, rendering the Mantis almost unusable. Never deterred by the impossible, though, I uncovered the tiny tiller early in this spring, cleaned and oiled the cutting blades, and decided it was probably time to install the new spark-plug which came with the machine.

That done, I pumped gas, set the choke, and jerked the starter cord. Jerked it many, many times, making a blaster on my hand. Nothing. I drained out all the old gas, mixed a fresh batch, adjusted the fuel mixture screw, and jerked the starter again.



Nothing. I waited 24 hours and tried again. Same result. On the third day I removed the "new" plug and discovered that, over the years in the toolbox, the tip had been flattened. There was no gap, no place for the fire to jump and ignite the gas. I put the old plug back in. Pulled the starter cord. Cussed.

Pulled again. The Mantis suddenly took on an explosive life of its own, roaring to life, clawing, headed downhill toward the blacktopped highway. Barry Larkin would have been proud of my one-handed grip.

I felt pretty dogged good about it too until I saw all the blood squirting out from my hand. My twisted and often broken pinky finger was sliced, a flap of skin laid back, blood pouring.

Three hours with the tiller, four bags of topsoil, and a week later, our minuscule garden was planted. Just tomatoes, peppers, cabbage, and cucumbers.

Last year a month-long dry spell started on the very day I planted the garden, so we can now expect no rain for at least five weeks. Mostly I am reminded that, for about the same money, I could have bought a real tiller. One with wheels and big cutters.

But that would mean getting serious about the garden stuff, a commitment I am not ready to make. Any food we get from the small plot is a bonus.

With the tiller running now at a lusty yip, I headed down to the garden plot. Applied full throttle and hung on while the Mantis bounced frantically on the hard clay. Decided we'd have a smaller garden this year. About 80 percent smaller.

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Abusing the sport

Ken Caminiti should be banned from baseball for life for admitting that he used steroids during his Most Valuable Player season with the Houston Astros in 1996. But if Commissioner Bud Selig abdicates his responsibility to protect the game's integrity, then he should at least be consistent enough to strike down Pete Rose's lifetime ban and make the sport's all-time hits king eligible for selection to the Hall of Fame.

One of Selig's predecessors, the late Bert Granitz, kicked Rose out of the game in 1989 for allegedly betting on baseball while he was manager of the Cincinnati Reds from 1984-89. Rose, still the most popular player in "Reds" history, denied the charges then, and he still denies them now.

The Draconian punishment for gambling goes back to the 1919 "Black Sox" scandal, where "Shoestring" Joe Jackson and other White Sox stars were found guilty of accepting money from gamblers to throw the World Series to the Reds.

To protect the game from future scandals, Judge Kenesaw "Mountain" Landis, then commissioner, ruled that any player or manager found guilty of gambling would be barred from the sport for life. That's the rule that Granitz used to banish Rose from the sport he loves more than 70 years later.

Today, in an era where gambling has become so socially acceptable that it's more of a national pastime than baseball, Rose's ban seems unduly harsh. Even murderers, rapists, gangsters, and child molesters sometimes get paroled. But baseball so far has refused to give Rose a second chance.

This sort of thinking is as outdated as the baggy flannel uniform. It's too bad that Selig isn't as sharp as Pete Kosile, the late NFL commissioner. In the early 1960s, when Green Bay's Paul Hornung and Detroit's Alex Karras were admitted to betting on their own sport, they were suspended each for a year, a punishment that fit the crime.

The theory behind Rose's banishment is that, as manager of the Reds, he could have made decisions based on how he bet rather than what was best for the team. While it's no doubt true that a manager's decisions can affect the outcome of games, it's unlikely that Rose, who loved nothing more than winning, would ever make decisions that caused the Reds to lose.

Science Center celebrates anniversary

The Louisville Science Center celebrates 25 years on West Main Street in July, with an IMAX film festival, July 4-14.

Festivals include the new films "Ocean Oasis" and "Extreme," as well as some IMAX favorites, including "Everest," "Grand Canyon: The Hidden Secrets," "Mysteries of Egypt," "Ring of Fire," and "Rolling Stones at the Max."

During Friday and Saturday night showings of "Rolling Stones," the science center's restaurant Galaxy Bistro will be offering a cash bar and finger foods from 6 to 10 p.m.

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"Seven Times Around" - concert
Cave Run Lake - Twin Knobs Campground Amphitheater - 8:00 p.m.

July 3

"Bluegrass on the Beach" featuring J.D. Crowe & the New South
The Licking River Ramblers
Cave Run Lake Twin Knobs Campground Beach Area
7:00 p.m.

FIREWORKS OVER THE LAKE

Cave Run Lake Twin Knobs Campground Beach Area
9:30 p.m.

July 4

Independence Day Parade
Downtown Morehead - 11:00 a.m.
Following dedication of new Veteran Memorial Wall

FIREWORKS OVER THE MOUNTAINS

Kroger Center - Morehead (Ky 32 North)
9:30 p.m.

For more information on Independence Day Activities in Morehead, Kentucky call the Morehead Tourism Commission at (606) 784-6221 or 800-654-1944

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THE CARLISLE MERCURY
"Proud to be serving Nicholas County since 1967"
The Carlisle Mercury is published on Thursdays
New Advertising 800-247-6142
Fax 606-784-7337
USPS 6990-820

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