



FRANÇOIS DUHAMEL: UNIVERSAL; DREAMWORKS; SPYGLASS;

**Red Pollard (Tobey Maguire)**  
in a pensive moment.

# Wonderhorse

From nowhere to somewhere.

**SEABISCUIT:** Written and directed by Gary Ross, based on the book by Laura Hillenbrand. Produced by Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall, Gary Ross, Jane Sindell. Executive producers, Gary Barber, Roger Birnbaum, Tobey Maguire, Allison Thomas, Robin Bissell. Cinematography, John Schwartzman. Production design, Jeannine Oppewall. Editor, William Goldenberg. Costumes, Judianna Makovsky. Music, Randy Newman. Race design, Chris McCarron. Head Wrangler, Rusty Hendrickson. Starring Tobey Maguire, Jeff Bridges, Chris Cooper, with Elizabeth Banks, Gary Stevens and William H. Macy. Narrator, David McCullough. Universal, DreamWorks, Spyglass, 2003. PG-13. 129 minutes.

It all depends on how you look at it. The story of Seabiscuit, the abused and nearly worthless, 15-hands high, ordinary but thoroughbred racehorse that could and did beat the reigning Triple Crown winner of his day is a terrific tale. As written by Laura Hillenbrand, *Seabiscuit*, the non-fiction book, has spent most of the last few years on *The New York Times* best-seller list, first in hardcover for 30 weeks and in paperback for another 60 or so. Now *Seabiscuit*, the film, is set to be rolled out over time in a marketing plan with its eyes on the big prize, the Academy Awards.

Hillenbrand emphasizes in the book that poor people offset the suffering and degradation of the Depression era through a number of distractions, such as the first truly mass-market medium of radio; the popularity of horse-racing as entertainment; betting as a big-time money game based on hope; the endless pleasures of 1930s Hollywood musicals and screwball comedies; and the new realism of Movietone newsreels and wirephoto services as a result of improvement in photographic equipment.

Many today find themselves in uneasily similar circumstances to a Great Depression audience — facing high unemployment, hunger, fewer high-paying job opportunities, cuts in education, human services and medical care; as well as an economy that seems to serve only the already-wealthy minority. (And that's leaving out our current military and political dilemma that's all too familiar and morally wrong on every level.)

But ordinary people love this movie, not

**... no guns, no violence, no sex  
— Seabiscuit is a real winner.**

Critics are divided. Nearly all agree the movie is true to Hillenbrand's book, which means true to the facts, but with allowance for film conventions such as compound characters, compressed time, brevity (from a 400 page book to a 129 minute film), and some fictionalization. The negative voices say that writer and director Gary Ross (*Pleasantville*) carried his respect for Hillenbrand's work too far, by incorporating historian and writer David McCullough's public broadcasting, voice-of-truth narration to set the context of the Great Depression.

However, the film's visual elements intensify the words spoken through cinematography, production design, costumes and a careful reconstruction of horse races run 70 years ago. That said, it is a little disconcerting in the early minutes of a mainstream, feature film to find such homage to the historical past through newsreels and still photography. But most people at the sold-out, first-show audience applauded, and many stayed during final credits, I think, because they weren't eager to leave the upbeat, overcoming-odds ambiance.

because it's escapist, but because it shows the real effort involved in coming from behind. Not because it's sentimental, but because it's a true story. Not because it's about perfect people, but because it's about a gifted animal and the three broken men who came together to lead him where he was born to go — to victory as a racehorse.

Charles Howard (Jeff Bridges), Tom Smith (Chris Cooper) and Red Pollard (Tobey Maguire) were lucky to find each other at such a time. And they knew it. Howard had made a fortune by seeing the future of the automobile. But he lost his family. Smith was an outsider who lost his occupation but found promise in a horse who was also out of step with his time. And Pollard, abandoned by his family at an early age, become a hard-drinking, hard-fighting, itinerant jockey in the brutal fringe world of racing. He recognized himself in Seabiscuit, and the animal understood and trusted that.

An unusual story for a big-budget movie — no guns, no violence, no sex — *Seabiscuit* is a real winner. I'd bet on it. Highest recommendations. Now playing at Cinema World and Cinemark. **EW**

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<b>AMERICAN WEDDING* (R)</b> 10:45, 11:30, 1:25, 2:15, 4:05, 4:50, 7:20, 8:00, 10:00, 10:40	<b>JOHNNY ENGLISH* PG</b> 11:35, 2:05, 4:30
<b>GIGLI* (R)</b> 12:15 3:15, 6:50, 9:50	<b>LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN (PG-13)</b> 9:55, 12:50, 3:45, 7:15, 10:05,
<b>BEND IT LIKE BECKHAM *(PG-13)</b> 10:40, 1:35, 4:25, 7:40, 10:30	<b>PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN (PG-13)</b> 11:40, 12:10, 3:05, 3:35, 7:00, 7:30, 10:25, 10:50
<b>LAURA COFT: TOMB RAIDER: CRADLE OF LIFE* (PG-13)</b> 10:20, 11:05, 1:15, 2:10, 4:10, 5:00, 7:05, 7:55, 10:05, 10:45	<b>TERMINATOR 3:RISE OF THE MACHINES (R)</b> 10:00, 1:10, 4:00, 7:10, 7:40, 10:00
<b>SPY KIDS 3-D: GAME OVER* (PG)</b> 10:15, 11:10, 12:45, 1:45, 3:20, 4:20, 7:00, 9:25	<b>FINDING NEMO (G)</b> 10:10, 12:55, 3:40, 7:30, 10:20
<b>SEABISCUIT* (PG-13)</b> 12:00, 3:25, 7:20, 10:45	<b>ITALIAN JOB (PG-13)</b> 10:50, 1:55, 4:40, 7:50, 10:35
<b>BAD BOYS 2* (R)</b> 10:55, 2:20, 6:45, 7:15, 10:10,10:40	<b>28 DAYS LATER (R)</b> 7:25, 10:15

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<b>ALEX &amp; EMMA (PG-13)</b> 12:20, 2:40, 5:20, 7:50, 10:25	<b>THE LIZZIE MCGUIRE MOVIE (PG)</b> 11:50, 2:15, 4:35, 7:00, 9:30
<b>ANGER MANAGEMENT (PG-13)</b> 12:05, 2:35, 5:10, 7:35, 10:20	<b>THE QUIET AMERICAN</b> 11:30, 5:00, 10:35
<b>BRUCE ALMIGHTY (PG-13)</b> 11:40, 2:20, 4:50, 7:30, 10:05	<b>2 FAST 2 FURIOUS (PG-13)</b> 11:45, 2:25, 5:05, 7:40, 10:30
<b>CHICAGO (PG-13)</b> 11:25, 2:05, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00	<b>X-2: X-MEN UNITED (PG-13)</b> 1:55, 7:30
<b>DADDY DAY CARE (PG)</b> 11:55, 2:30, 4:55, 7:15, 9:40	<b>SUMMER MOVIE CLUBHOUSE CONTINUES</b>
<b>HOLES (PG)</b> 11:20, 2:00, 4:45, 7:25, 10:10	<b>ANDRE</b> AUGUST 5 ONLY! 10:00 AM
<b>HOW TO DEAL (PG-13)</b> 12:15, 2:45, 5:15, 7:45, 10:15	<b>SCOOBY DOO</b> AUGUST 12 ONLY! 10:00 AM
<b>LEGALLY BLOND 2 (PG-13)</b> 11:35, 2:10, 4:30, 7:05, 9:35	
<b>THE HULK (PG-13)</b> 12:25, 3:30, 6:45, 9:50	

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**RESPIRO**  
Valeria Golino  
In Italian with English subtitles.  
5:10 & 9:45 Nightly SAT MAT 3:15  
NEXT: L'AUBERGE ESPAGNOL (PG-13)

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**AFRICA**  
In German with English subtitles.  
7:00 Nightly SUN MAT 2:15  
FINAL WEEK! SOON: WINGED MIGRATION (R)

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— Jeffrey M. Anderson, SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER  
**WHALE RIDER**  
5:05, 7:25 & 9:35 Nightly  
SAT & SUN MAT 2:50  
SOON: LEGEND OF SURIYOTHAI (PG-13)

**Coming Attractions Theatres**  
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SCHEDULE FOR 8/1-8/7 • ( ) = FRI - MON EARLY SHOWS

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\***SPY KIDS 3D: GAME OVER - PG** 12:15 2:20 4:25 6:30 8:30  
\***BAD BOYS II - R** 12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00  
**TERMINATOR 3: RISE OF THE MACHINES - R**  
1:20 4:00 6:40 9:15  
**STARTS WEDNESDAY, 8/6: "FREAKY FRIDAY"**

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\***AMERICAN WEDDING - R** 12:30 2:45 5:10 7:25 9:45  
\***GIGLI - R** 12:50 3:40 6:30 9:20  
\***BEND IT LIKE BECKHAM - PG-13** 12:40 3:20 5:50 8:30  
\***LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: THE CRADLE OF LIFE - PG-13** 1:10 4:00 6:50 9:30  
\***SEABISCUIT - PG-13** 12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00  
**LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN - PG-13**  
1:20 3:50 6:20 8:50  
**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - PG-13** 12:10 3:10 6:10 9:10  
**28 DAYS LATER - R** 9:40  
**FINDING NEMO - G** 11:55 2:30 4:55 7:20

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