

# Dodge, Duck, Dip & Dive

Elude 'em

**DODGEBALL: A TRUE UNDERDOG STORY:** Written and directed by Rawson Marshall Thurber. Produced by Joe Camp, Stuart Cornfeld. Executive producers, Mary McLaglen, Rhoades Rader. Cinematography, Jerzy Zielinski. Production design, Maher Ahmad. Editor, Alan Baumgarten. Costumes, Carol Ramsey. Music supervisor, George Drakoulis. Music by Theodore Shapiro. Starring Vince Vaughn, Christine Taylor and Ben Stiller, with Rip Torn, Justin Long, Stephen Root, Hank Azaria, Joel David Moore, Missi Pyle and Alan Tudyk Twentieth Century Fox, 2004. PG-13. 96 minutes.

You may never have a chance to see an aching funny, utterly satisfying short film called *Terry Tate, Office Linebacker*, but those of us present one Thanksgiving watched it again and again, helpless with laughter. The short got funnier with each showing, and we only stopped watching when we couldn't breathe and our sides ached. This 10-minute, 2002 film was written and directed by Rawson Thurber, the brains behind *DodgeBall*.

Turns out Thurber attended a poetry reading in L.A. and later struck up an email correspondence with poet friends from Eugene. His short is like "The Office" on steroids, with a 300-pound NFL linebacker eager to bone-crunch late arrivers and maul workers who fail to put their soda cans in the recycle bin. Thurber's little introductory film was also a hit with Reebok, so Terry's escapades went into the corporation's Super Bowl commercials and pleased

millions. Thurber's first feature film, *Dodgeball*, shows many of the same comic sports-elements — surprise attack, unexpected pain and major ego-deflation — and is one of summer's sneak hits.

*Variety's* box office score shows that after seven weeks, *DodgeBall's* been seen by a respectable 111,033,939 paying customers nationwide. It's now at Movies 12, where manager Steve Rhay said it was "number one for many weeks in a row. People like its off-the-wall humor."

The movie is set in Southern California, where White Goodman (Ben Stiller), owner of Globo Gym, hates the neighborhood gym run by Peter La Fleur (Vince Vaughn).



White Goodman (Ben Stiller) lunges for glory for his team, the Purple Cobras.

on an unsuspecting public. *DodgeBall* may drum up similar interest among fans who recall the sport as a humiliating anatomical experience from junior high.

The movie is essentially a succession of comic bits, much like a "Saturday Night Live" show with filler plot instead of ads between the sketches. Like a typical SNL show, some jokes work and others don't. That's OK, because these goofy characters need their moment in the spotlight.

One of the weirdest is the coach hired by Pete's team — Patches O'Houlihan (Rip Torn), a deliriously foul-mouthed old crank whose training motto is: "Dodge, duck, dip and dive ... and dodge again." Patches tells them if they can dodge a wrench, they can dodge a ball, then begins slamming wrenches at them, hitting eight out of eight in a row. This is funny shit.

If Patches in the flesh is not evidence enough for you that this is a seriously deranged film, there's also a scratchy black-and-white movie like the ones you used to sleep through in middle school with Hank Azaria as a younger Patches. And a must-tatched player, female, from a former Soviet Union backwater, Fran (Missi Pyle). And a pirate named Steve (Alan Tudyk), whose entire vocabulary consists of variations on "Aaargggh."

*DodgeBall* will be great on video, but nothing's as good as seeing it on the big screen and giggling with a crowd. Stay in your seat at the end credits, because Stiller has a nasty little surprise for you. Now playing at Movies 12, this inspired lunacy is recommended for your summertime enjoyment. **EW**

## movie clips

**OPENING OR RETURNING:** **Benji Off the Leash:** Written and directed by Joe Camp, 17 years after the first, Benji The Hunted. Now Benji is on a mission to save her mother from the clutches of an unprofessional breeder. PG. Cinemark.

**Exorcist: The Beginning:** The backstory to the 1973 blockbuster commences in 1940s Africa with a disillusioned Father Merrin's (Stellan Skarsgard) first meeting with the demon Pazuzu. The film was bedeviled, too. It ran through directors John Frankenheimer and Paul Schrader before Renny Harlin came in and basically reshoot the whole shebang. Also stars James D'Arcy and Izabella Scorupco. 4R. Cinema World. Cinemark.

**Garden State:** Zach Braff wrote, directed and stars in this funny, resonant romantic comedy, which co-stars Natalie Portman, Peter Sarsgaard and Ian Holm. Braff and Portman help the film get to a truth about what it is to be 20-something in the early years of the 21st century. Highest recommendations. R. Bijou. See review this issue.

**King Arthur:** Excellent cast includes Clive Owen, Keira Knightley, Stellan Skarsgard, Stephen Dillane, Ray Winstone, Ioan Gruffudd. Directed by Antoine Fuqua and produced by Jerry Bruckheimer, this revisionist history, action adventure is Open recommended for its performances. PG-13. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

**Open Water:** Chris Kentis directs this thriller based on real events. A couple get left behind by a scuba diving group, in the middle of a shark-filled ocean. Blanchard Ryan and Daniel Travis spent 120 hours in the water with real sharks to make this movie. R. Cinemark. Cinema World.

**Outfoxed:** Ed Halter for *The Village Voice* writes: "Robert Greenwald's sharp, skillful exposé of Rupert Murdoch and Fox News, will have a...stomach-churning effect upon those who avoid tuning in to the aggressively conservative news channel, or don't consult television news at all." The network's self-styled "fair and balanced" reporting has created the widespread impression that John Kerry

waffles on issues and, worse yet, that he seems to be "French." What jerks! NR. Cinema World.

**Speedo: A Demolition Derby Love Story:** Jesse Moss's award-winning documentary chronicles a tumultuous year in the life of Ed "Speedo" Jager as he pursues a promising career while trying to save a faltering marriage. Then he falls in love. At 11 pm on 8/24 on OPB. Check listings. **Without a Paddle:** High-speed comedy adventure stars Seth Green, Matthew Lillard and Dax Shepard as clueless adventurers who go into the Oregon wilderness in search of lost treasure. PG-13. Cinema World. Cinemark.

**Films open the Friday following EW publication date unless otherwise noted. See archived reviews at [www.eugeneweekly.com](http://www.eugeneweekly.com)**

### CONTINUING:

**Alien vs Predator:** The scary monsters from earlier film franchises duke it out on Earth. Wow! PG-13. Cinema World. Cinemark.

**Anchorman:** Subtitled "The Legend of Ron Burgundy," this comedy stars Will Ferrell as an unctuous, untalented newscaster who's a legend only in his own mind. Funny moments. Recommended. PG-13. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

**Around the World in 80 Days:** Jackie Chan and Steve Coogan star in this remake. PG. Movies 12.

**Before Sunset:** Richard Linklater takes *Before Sunrise's* Celine (Julie Delpy) and Jesse (Ethan Hawke) on a walking tour of Paris nine years later. They've grown but have not forgotten their time together. Special love stays in your heart. A satisfying sequel, the film rates my very highest recommendations. R. Bijou. **Online archives.**

**Bourne Supremacy, The:** Paul Greengrass (writer, director of *Bloody Sunday*) directs Matt Damon as assassin Jason Bourne in the second installment of Robert Ludlum's espionage thrillers. Also stars Joan Allen, Brian Cox, Julia Stiles, Kurt Urban and Franka Potente. One of the summer's best films. Highly recommend-

ed. PG-13. Cinema World. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

**Coffee and Cigarettes:** Jim Jarmusch (*Stranger Than Paradise, Mystery Train, Dead Man*) returns with vignettes of famous folks swapping stories, who include Bill Murray, Cate Blanchett, Steve Buscemi, Alfred Molina, Tom Waits and Iggy Pop. Not the best Jarmusch ever, but as Matt Zoller Seitz of the *New York Press* says, "even less-than-great Jarmusch is still fascinating." NR. Bijou.

**Collateral:** Michael Mann's thriller stars Tom Cruise as an LA hitman and Jamie Foxx as his taxi driver, who's surprised to discover he's a hostage. Together, they're like fire and ice, feeling and nothingness. A character study in action, the film is one of the best movies of the year. Very highest recommendations. Don't miss. R. Cinema World. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

**Day After Tomorrow, The:** Roland Emmerich directs Dennis Quaid, Jake Gyllenhaal, Emily Rossum, Sela Ward. Climatologist tries to save the world from abrupt global warming as New York is being overtaken by a new ice age. PG-13. Movies 12.

**Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story:** Social rejects save their local gym from gentrification in this goofy comedy directed by Rawson Thurber and starring Ben Stiller, Vince Vaughn, Christine Taylor and Rip Torn. Inspired lunacy recommended for your summertime enjoyment. PG-13. Movies 12. See review this issue. **Fahrenheit 9/11:** Winner of the Palme d'Or at Cannes 2004, Michael Moore's nonfiction film is more restrained than his later films and better for it. The film is respectful, moving and informative, as well as opinionated and occasionally heavy handed. Don't miss. Highest recommendations. R. Bijou. **Online archives.**

**Garfield, The Movie:** Garfield, the smarty pants kitty, makes his film debut. PG. Movies 12.

**Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle:** A comedy about room mates who get stoned and go out for a few burgers but end up on a long, strange trip. Stars John Cho

Now a buff narcissist, White was once a really fat guy. Peter is a laid-back, nice guy, whose low-rent gym, Average Joe's, suits him. Globo and Joe's are as unlike as the men who own them — Globo all stainless steel machines and a mechanical mind-set, and Average Joe's simpler approach to fitness for its less-than-sleek customers.

When the bank threatens to foreclose over \$50,000 Average Joe's owes, White offers to buy the gym. The average guys who work for Peter won't let him sell. Then bank lawyer Kate Veatch (Christine Taylor) turns up. She refuses White's crude advances and starts hanging around Peter.

*Dodge Ball*, the sport, comes into play when Peter's gym guys devise a scheme to make the whole \$50 grand in one night at a national tourney in Las Vegas. There may be such a tournament, and it may be as funny as non-dog owners find dog shows since *Best in Show* released its inside story

(*American Pie*) and Kal Penn (*Van Wilder*). R. Movies 12.

**I, Robot:** Alex Proyas (*Dark City, The Crow*) directs Will Smith as a police detective investigating a crime thought to be perpetrated by a robot. Also stars Bruce Greenwood, James Cromwell, Chi McBride and Bridget Moynahan. Based on Isaac Asimov's classic sci-fi stories. Recommended for its strange ambiance. PG-13. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

**Little Black Book:** Offbeat romantic comedy directed by Nick Hurran stars Brittany Murphy as a wannabe news-woman who decides to check up on her boyfriend (Ron Livingston) at the instigation of her co-workers Holly Hunter and Kathy Bates. PG-13. Cinemark.

**Manchurian Candidate, The:** Psychological thriller stars Denzel Washington as an ex-career officer disturbed by his experiences in Desert Storm. Liev Schreiber plays a former squad sergeant, now a vice-presidential candidate and son of a powerful senator (Meryl Streep). An especially fine performance from Jeffrey Wright as a damaged vet suffering hallucinations. Very highest recommendations. R. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

**Mean Girls:** Lindsay Lohan plays a high-school student raised by zoologist parents in the African bush, who

falls for a popular girl's ex-boyfriend. PG-13. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

**Notebook, The:** Nick Cassavetes directs Gena Rowlands, James Garner, Ryan Gosling and Rachel McAdams. Depicts real first love, with a great performance by McAdams. Recommended. PG-13. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

**Princess Diaries 2 Royal Engagement:** Anne Hathaway is being groomed to be queen of Genovia, but she has to land a husband before she can be crowned.

Garry Marshall directs. Julie Andrews costars. G. Cinemark. Cinema World. **Raising Helen:** Garry Marshall directs Kate Hudson, John Corbett, Joan Cusack. Hudson becomes the guardian of her sister's three children. Recommended. PG-13. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

**Spider Man 2:** Peter Parker aka Spidey (Tobey Maguire) returns as a college student by day who still loves Kirsten Dunst and a superhero when needed against his new nemesis, Otto Octavius (Alfred Molina). Sam Raimi directs. Excellent film! See it. PG-13. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

**Stepford Wives, The:** Frank Oz directs Nicole Kidman, Matthew Broderick, Bette Midler, Christopher Walken, Faith Hill and Glenn Close in

this updated comedy-thriller about a perfect, 1950s-era community. Recommended for its entertainment value. PG-13. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

**Thirteen Going On 30:** Jennifer Garner goes to bed 13, wishing she were older. Wakes up 17 years later, and she is. Directed by Gary Winnick, also stars the always excellent Mark Ruffalo, with Andy Serkis and Kathy Baker. High recommendations. PG-13. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

**Thunderbirds:** Top-secret International Rescue run by former astronaut (Bill Paxton) and his five sons.

**Troy:** Wolfgang Petersen directs ancient Greek tale of war between Troy and Sparta. Stars Brad Pitt. R. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

**Village, The:** M. Night Shyamalan's new suspenseful film stars Joaquin Phoenix, Bryce Dallas Howard, Adrien Brody, William Hurt and Sigourney Weaver. PG-13. Cinemark.

**Yu-Gi-Oh:** Japanese, animation for the kiddies. Yugi and friends play a new game called Dual Monsters. PG. Cinemark.

Bijou Art Cinemas (686-2458) Cinema World 8 (342-6536) Cinemark 17 (746-5202)c Movies 12 (741-1231)

## video clips

**New Releases on Video**  
Releases subject to change. Available the Tuesday following date of EW publication, sometimes sooner. See archived movie reviews at [www.eugeneweekly.com](http://www.eugeneweekly.com)

**Dogville:** Lars Von Trier's controversial film never played Eugene. Set in a small town in the Rocky Mountains during the depression, it stars Nicole Kidman, Paul Bettany, Jeremy Davies and Chloe Sevigny.

**Ella Enchanted:** Anne Hathaway is a perfectly obedient girl. She does what she's told, literally. Based on Newberry-winning novel. PG.

**Laws of Attraction:** Julianne Moore and Pierce Brosnan play high-strung New York divorce attorneys who square off with their famous clients (Parker Posey and Michael Sheen) during a nasty divorce, and fall in love. PG-13. **Online archives.**

**I Vitelloni** (1953): Federico Fellini's semi-autobiographi-

cal tale is set in a small Italian town and tells of five young men, four of whom stay put, one who leaves. Considered by some to be the director's best film. 1957 Academy Award nominations for best story and screenplay.

**Tom Dowd and the Language of Music:** Mark Moormann's brilliant documentary film about the late music producer and recording engineer Tom Dowd, who helped revolutionize the industry. Dowd recorded many of the rock and roll greats in some of the genre's best-loved albums. *The New York Times* describes Dowd as a "likable, unpretentious musical enthusiast and roll-up-your-sleeves problem-solver who apparently led a charmed life." Critically acclaimed in those cities where it has played.

**Next Week: The Passion of the Christ, Slackers, South Park: The Passion of the Jew, Twisted and Videodrome (1983).**