

sports & outdoors

GREAT SPORTS FLICKS: PART 2

A couple of months ago, I submitted my picks for the top sports movies of all time. Since then, I've heard from a number of readers who wondered why certain films weren't selected.



by Steve Sheppard

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Presented with several omissions from my original list, I realized there are some good movies that I overlooked the first time around. And so, in deference to our loyal readership, I herewith submit another list for your perusal and approval — call it: “An appendix to the best sports movies of all time.”

Paul Newman shows up on both lists, starring in “The Hustler” and “Somboddy Up There Likes Me,” (my first list) and

“Slap Shot” (the current one). His sports film credits also include “The Color of Money,” and “Winning,” making him, perhaps, the greatest sports actor of all time.

My research uncovered this tidbit: *Sports Illustrated* picked “Bull Durham” as its greatest sports movie of all time — twice — once in 2001 and again in 2003 when it expanded its selections. I agree that “Bull Durham” is a good movie, but it just doesn't make my cut.

In fact, as with my first list, there are no Kevin Costner movies on this list at all.

Here, for argument's sake, are the new selections, all of them worth renting as we count down to Opening Day.

Horse Feathers (1932) — How did I miss this one the first time around? It's the Marx brothers at

their finest. Professor Wagstaff tries to employ a couple of ringers to ensure that Huxley College defeats Darwin in football. The movie includes the classic speakeasy routine between Groucho and Chico: “You can't come in here unless you say, ‘Swordfish.’ Now I'll give you one more guess.”

Slapshot (1977) — Paul Newman as an aging minor league hockey player/coach AND the Hanson Brothers. What more do you need in a movie?

Bang the Drum Slowly (1973) — Based on the novel by Mark Harris. Powerful acting from Robert DeNiro in one of his first major roles, playing a major league catcher with a terminal illness. The movie highlights the friendship between the catcher and the star pitcher on the team, played by Michael Moriarty. David Halberstam said this was his favorite movie about baseball.

Brian's Song (1971) — Is this the best made for TV movie of all time? That's another list for another time. Stars James Caan as Brian Piccolo and Billy Dee Williams as Gayle Sayers in a true story of friendship. Another tear-jerker.

Victory (1981) — Sylvester Stallone, Michael Caine and Pele? You bet. A war-sports movie about a soccer game between allied POWs and the German National team. Directed by John Huston, to boot.

Jim Thorpe: All American (1951) — Burt Lancaster plays Jim Thorpe, one of the greatest athletes of all time, who was named both the greatest football player *and* the outstanding male athlete of the first half of the twentieth century. His prowess as a collegiate player and Olympian are legendary. This movie recounts how he was stripped of his Olympic medals for accepting money to play semi-pro baseball, an injustice that wasn't rectified until 1982.

The Karate Kid (1984) — “Wax on, wax off.” Do you really need to know more?

Chariots of Fire (1981) — Another true story, this time of the trials, tribulations and friendship of two British sprinters who hope to compete in the 1924 Olympics. Won the Oscar for best picture. A guy named Vangelis did something with the music, but I'm not sure what.

Endless Summer (1966) — Great surfing footage, great soundtrack. “The search for the perfect wave.” What better movie for Nantucket?

Cool Runnings (1993) — As colleague Peter Brace says, “Now that's a good movie.” Based on the true story of the first Olympic Jamaican bobsled team, with Doug E. Doug and John Candy.

Mighty Ducks (1992) — Hey, they named an NHL team after this one, how bad can it be?

The Absent Minded Professor (1961) and Son of Flubber (1963) — Had to get Fred MacMurray in there somehow. MacMurray plays “Flubber” inventor, professor Ned Brainard, with basketball factoring in the first movie and football in the second.

Best in Show (2000) — Yes, it's about a dog show, but I saw where *Sports Illustrated* included this movie in its 50 best sports movies of all time and I'm taking the opening. (I know, I dissed “Bull Durham,” but I strongly agree with this choice.) This is on my list as one of the funniest movies ever made, no matter what the category, and you'll just have to see it to believe it. This documentary with Christopher Guest, Parker Posey, et al. is the perfect way to end this column, so I will. ■

THE INDEPENDENT SUDOKU

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PUZZLE BY OPENSKY

Sudoku is a Japanese logic puzzle that consists of a 9-by-9 grid with some of the 81 squares filled in with numbers. Your challenge is to fill in the rest. There's only one simple, but often maddening, rule: The numbers 1 through 9 must appear only once in each of the grid's nine rows, nine columns, and nine 3-by-3 blocks. Proper sudokus have only one solution, meaning they can always be solved by logic. Don't place a number unless you have determined it is the only number that can go in that square. Trial and error guessing is hard work unless there are only a few squares remaining to solve.

THE INDEPENDENT KAKURO

The Kakuro puzzle grid is a 10x10 grid with some cells blacked out. Numbers are placed in the left and top cells of the starting cells for each row and column. The numbers are: Row 1: 17, 12, 5, 40; Row 2: 13, 13, 9, 9; Row 3: 28, 28, 8; Row 4: 17, 17, 5, 17, 13, 13, 3, 6, 12; Row 5: 12, 12, 17, 26, 26; Row 6: 23, 11, 4, 8, 8, 6, 6; Row 7: 11, 11, 11, 11, 3, 6, 6; Row 8: 30, 30, 8, 14, 23, 6, 12; Row 9: 23, 11, 13, 5, 5, 24, 24, 3; Row 10: 2, 4, 31, 31, 8, 14, 7, 7, 7.

KrazyDad.com

Kakuro puzzles are like a cross between a crossword and a Sudoku puzzle. Instead of letters, each block contains the digits 1 through 9. The same digit will never repeat within a word. If you add the digits in a word, the sum will be the number shown in the clue. Clues are shown on the left and right sides of “across” words, and on the top and bottom sides of “down” words