

History of the World, Part I ...zany new hit

by Terry Dupuis

Writer-director Mel Brooks has established himself as one of the screen's most renowned mirth-makers over the past seven years.

Some critics regard him as a comedy genius, and they view him with the same regard which others reserve for Woody Allen.

Now this summer Mel Brooks has released his first new comedy in over three years, and happily it is mostly on target and comparable to his *Blazing Saddles* period of inspiration. The new comedy by Brooks is called *A History Of The World - Part One*. But Brooks' version of human history is far different from anything you have ever read in the history texts.

Brooks' comedy is divided into segments, and each segment covers a specific period in history. He opens with a prehistory section, a skit about the caveman days in which he spoofs the "Dawn Of Man" sequence from Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The main character in this segment is a caveman who is hilariously played by Sid Caesar.

Some of the movie's funniest moments are contained in the section which deals with Imperial Rome.

Here Brooks himself appears as a stand-up philosopher who is invited to perform at Caesar's Palace. Caesar is portrayed by the portly comedian Dom DeLuise, who brings his own special brand of zaniness to

very role he plays.

Personally I found the Spanish Inquisition sequence to be less amusing than the other sections. The film would probably be better off without it, but fortunately it is the movie's shortest segment.

However, in the French Revolution sequence, Brooks is back, again at his inspired best. It is not only the most hilarious segment of the movie, but it contains some of the funniest jokes Mel Brooks has ever written. Brooks again acts in this sequence. This time he has a dual role, playing both King Louis XVI and a lowly servant who is a dead ringer for the monarch. Harvey Korman has an amusing

role in this segment as a French nobleman, and Cloris Leachman as a peasant woman involved in the revolution is also memorable.

Mel Brooks' *History Of The World* is a fast-moving and zany comedy, full of inventive sight gags, slapstick, and wacky irreverent humour.

How well the individual viewer takes to this comedy will depend largely on how the viewer has responded to Brooks' previous comedies. The odds are favourable that any movie-goers who found *Blazing Saddles* and *Young Frankenstein* wildly hilarious will probably find Mel Brooks' *History Of The World* to be equally side-splitting.

Big softball tourney planned

The first annual Athenian Men's Softball Tournament will be held Monday at the main diamond in Little Lake Park in Midland and there will be eight teams entered in the event.

The eight teams will be competing for \$850 in prize money and taking part will be Wyebridge, Coldwater, Perkinsfield, Johnnie's Pizza, Athenian Raiders, Vasey Royals, Lercar Construction and Vasey Twin Lakes.

The Athenian Raiders' team is going to be combined with Adco Tire to make up a team but otherwise, all teams are restricted to their signed players.

Prizes are \$400 for the championship team, \$200 for the consolation winner, \$100 for the championship finalist and \$75 for the consolation finalist.

There will also be a baserunning and batting competition with the winner in the batting competition claiming \$50 prize money the champion in baserunning getting \$25.

Each team will be paying \$75 registration fee and one new ball and there will be a \$5 per player charge for the batting contest with a \$2.50 charge for the baserunning competition.

Starting time
Things in the tournament will start at 9 a.m. when Wyebridge and Coldwater will play their first game with the second game taking place at 10 a.m. between Perkinsfield and Johnnie's Pizza.

The third game will be at 11 a.m., with Athenian Raiders and Vasey Royals playing and the fourth game will be at 12 p.m. with Lercar Construction and Vasey Twin Lakes batting.

From there, the winning teams will go onto the championship round with the losing teams going into the consolation rounds.

The consolation championship game will be played at 6 p.m. and the championship game will take place at 7:30 p.m.

All games will be five innings in length and the mercy rule will be in effect if one team is ahead by more than five runs after three innings.

That does not, however, apply to the championship and consolation final games, those games being seven innings with the

mercy ruling not entering play.

The following tie breakers will be used if the game ends up ties after regulation time. First, an extra inning will be played. Then, if the teams are still tied, it will be the team with the most runners to reach third base safely, then second and then

first.

If still tied after that, extra innings will be played until the tie is broken by runs or by the third, second and first base ruling.

Each team can enter three players with the fastest runner from each team advancing to the finals.

Admission to the park is set at \$1 for adults and children under 12 get in for free. Refreshments are available at the park.

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