

## Blog Export: Beaneball, <http://beaneball.org/>

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### A few non-baseball things

On Saturday, we went and saw Mad Hot Ballroom, a documentary about public schools in New York City that have ballroom dancing programs. It was a pretty straightforward film, but I couldn't help but be impressed with the footage of the actual dancing competitions the kids entered. The crowd got very into it, awww-ing at all the appropriate moments. I don't know whether it's playing widely outside of New York, but the opportunity to see 10 year-olds doing an impressive merengue and rumba should not be passed up.

Last night, as I mentioned, we saw Crash, the Paul Haggis (the writer of Million Dollar Baby) film that grew out of his experience being carjacked in L.A. It was as bad as all the reviews said, unfortunately. A lot of good talent, including Don Cheadle, Brendan Fraser, Ryan Phillippe, Sandra Bullock, Terrence Howard, and Larenz Tate, went wasted. The theme of the movie, racism, would have been better approached in a much more subtle way. Modern incarnations of racism, after all, are more under-the-surface, more quietly insidious, than the view presented in the film, where everything, while mixed up and "not quite what it seems" (if the movie is going to traffic in so much cliché, then so will I), is quite overt: Matt Dillon is a blatantly racist cop; Sandra Bullock insists that her locks be changed again because a Latino man who she believes to be a gang-banger changed them the first time; a gun-shop owner calls an Iranian customer "Osama."

We did get two great trailers, though: Hustle & Flow, also starring Terrence Howard as a pimp trying to make it as a rapper, which was all the rage at Sundance this year; and Rize, David LaChapelle's documentary about "krumping," a new dance form coming out of inner-city Los Angeles. The cinematography looks as fantastic as you'd expect out a renowned photographer and I expect that the dance moves will be as impressive as watching any extreme sports or And 1 video.

Finally, I read the article in Sports Illustrated about online poker last night. As Wilson points out in this comment, it's really just an article saying, "College kids play poker online." It talks about people who made money, mentions a kid who's lost over \$50k, and briefly says that colleges don't have gambling addiction programs, but that's really it. There's no real exploration of the issues of legality (that's relegated to a sidebar), no exploration of the addiction, no discussion of social and familial problems that are allowed to arise when money starts being lost hand over fist. Any or all of these themes would have made excellent articles on college kids playing online poker. Instead, we got something akin to Moneyball: a piece that was supposed to be about a larger point but devolved into a series of profiles of "interesting" people (the players were made much more intriguing in Moneyball).

Posted by jason in Magazines, Movies, Reading, The Blog at 18:09

Speaking of movies...War of the Worlds..that Spielberg movie coming out..

Gonna be awesome.

Same with that Land of the Dead, or whatever it's called. Check out those trailers on Yahoo! Movies section. They're sweet.  
Anonymous on May 30 2005, 23:35