

Take a gamble on Rounders

By Jon Stubbs
features editor

From Miramax films comes the Ted Demme and Joel Stillerman production *Rounders*, the story of master poker player Mike McDermott. The film opens with McDermott, a law student, losing \$15,000 to the Russian poker virtuoso Teddy KGB (John Malkovich). McDermott vows to quit the game forever, and with his girlfriend and fellow law student by his side, is reduced to making local deliveries to convenience stores. However, when his best friend, Worm (Edward Norton) is released from jail and confesses to McDermott that he owes a large gambling debt that is gaining considerable interest, he is forced back into the game. This, of course, causes tension with both his girlfriend and his studies.

Academy Award winner Matt Damon, who plays Mike McDermott, says "The film is kind of a celebration of who you are. I'm portraying a guy who's meant to be at the highest level of the game. The character I play should be a poker player. This is what he is meant to be." Edward Norton, who plays the part of Worm, explains his character: "I would describe Worm as a philosophical cheat. He believes in cheating as a way of life. It's not as a matter of desperation, but rather as a matter of course." In order to prepare for their roles, Damon and Norton went the only real place one could go to learn the true spirit of high-stakes poker, in the backroom poker clubs of New York. It was here that they learned that behind what seems to be a game of mostly luck, lies a psychological game of pure skill. Both actors will quickly agree that a solid philosophy

exists within the game, a tournament of gesture-reading and self-control in order to take your opponents' money. Throughout production, games were held between cast members between takes in order to familiarize the actors with the game.

Director John Dahl states that his objective during filming was "to remain as invisible as possible in order to let the actors explore their characters." It would be impossible to ignore the fact that Dahl had an outstanding collection of actors to work with. Damon and Norton give an incredible performance; their characters and their characters' emotions are made tangible to the audience by the actors' ingenious performance. As the film rolls, the viewer sees the characters realize what their true identities are; the audience sees the costs involved in finding that true identity.

Rounders seems to give a realistic portrayal of this game of craft. Even World Series of Poker champion Johnny Chan, who makes a cameo appearance, was impressed with the film's authenticity. This film will satisfy the audience's appetite for adventure, without slowing down the pace of the storyline for one moment. The audience will always want to know what is going to happen next, no matter how insignificant to the plot it may be. *Rounders* is a true work of art, from the casting to the lighting right down to the way the cards are dealt. No film has it all but the best films have just enough, and *Rounders* is one of them. ★★★★★

Get to know the SPC

By Valerie Trost
staff writer

Last Saturday the Student Programming Council made about thirty people hysterical at Bruno's when they welcomed Philadelphia comedian Chris Coccia. His stand-up act included all the goods campus students find amusing from drugs and sex to student parking and fake identification cards. Christian Darling, 01, French, commented, "I couldn't breathe at some points." The rest of the audience also seemed to be having trouble with the oxygen intake at moments.

After the performance I had the privilege of investigating a question that I (and others) were pondering: Who is responsible for this entertainment and how are these people brought to our school? The answer is simple but the process and planning involved is not. The Behrend SPC is responsible for coordinating, promoting, and organizing functions such as last Saturday's comedian. Rob Ring, 03, business administration, gave an explanation of what actually transpires in this group.

Every year the student government administration puts in a proposal for a given budget specifically

used for student activities. SPC then has insight into what sort of activities they can economically afford on campus. They then start the process of choosing worthy candidates for these activities. Through contacting agencies, feedback from other colleges, brochures, and tapes they begin selecting activities students will enjoy. There is also a three day long national convention called NACA where three representatives from SPC are chosen to attend.

They watch bands and comedians and get ideas for making student life as exciting as possible. "We are here for the students," Ring commented, though most students do not even know this organization exists. It is sometimes difficult sparking student involvement and participation but the groups' main goal is to let the students be aware that there are things right here on campus to extinguish boredom. Competition from other groups such as Greek Life are usually contributors to a lack of participation but the group is trying to collaborate with other campus groups. SPC has already surpassed one goal: they exceeded fifty members for lots of support.

Sho'Nuff exhibits unique style

By Dakota Dinnen
staff writer

Until August 28 of this year, at Behrend's 50th Anniversary party, I hadn't ever heard the music of Sho'Nuff. Being from Pittsburgh, which is the city this band calls home, I had heard of them and was interested in finally checking them out at the party.

Sho'Nuff's name led me to a stereotypical conclusion that they must play hip hop or rhythm and blues music. Quickly I learned that this assumption was unfounded because Sho'Nuff can easily be marked an "alternative" band and, depending on who you ask, a rock 'n roll band. The lead singer and guitarist (Gene Walker), drummer (Jason Grew), bassist (Cliff Foster), and guitarist (Corey Congilio) intrigued me though I couldn't decipher some of their lyrics. After the band had finished, my curiosity afforded me ten dollars to

buy Sho'Nuff's album, *The Sho Must Go On*.

Since Sho'Nuff isn't yet known on the national music scene, I decided to compare their album with some others that are more widely known. As far as lyrics go, I found that *The Sho Must Go On* had much in common with Let's Face It, The Mighty Mighty Bosstones' latest album. Both albums deal with issues of illegal drug use, racism, and violence. For instance, Sho'Nuff's song "Who Got It?" is concerned with the malevolent effects of marijuana. It can easily be matched with the Bosstones' "Royal Oil", which is about the deadly effects of drug abuse in general. "Spectrum" by Sho'Nuff and "Let's Face It" by The Bosstones show both bands' adamancies against racism. Also, the Bosstones' "Numbered Days" is lyrically similar to Sho'Nuff's "Real Man" in the way it deals with the issue of violence.

Though the music of these two

bands is thrown into the vast category of "alternative"; the sub-genres of their music are what separate the two. The Mighty Mighty Bosstones play "ska-core", or ska-influenced hard rock with some reggae thrown in. Sho'Nuff does not play ska, though they play some reggae here and there. Sho'Nuff's music, in my opinion, can be compared with that of Los Lobos and Matchbox 20. If there were a cross between Los Lobos' bass-driven album, *Colossal Head*, and Matchbox 20's fast-paced rock album, *Yourself or Someone Like You*, Sho'Nuff's album would be it.

I highly recommend Sho'Nuff's album, *The Sho Must Go On*, especially for those who enjoy The Mighty Mighty Bosstones' lyrics and the musical stylings of Los Lobos and Matchbox 20. *The Sho Must Go On* can be purchased here in Erie at National Record Mart's Waves inside Millcreek Mall.

A "real" war movie

By Michael Coursey
staff writer

One of the most anticipated releases of this summer was *Saving Private Ryan*. This latest project by director Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks shows the gritty realism of war as it illustrates the D-Day invasion. The film was shot from the perspective of a small platoon of ordinary Americans, who were soldiers in the U.S. Army. This movie shows the unpleasant, if not grotesque human tolls that weapons and bombs took upon the soldiers on both sides of the conflict.

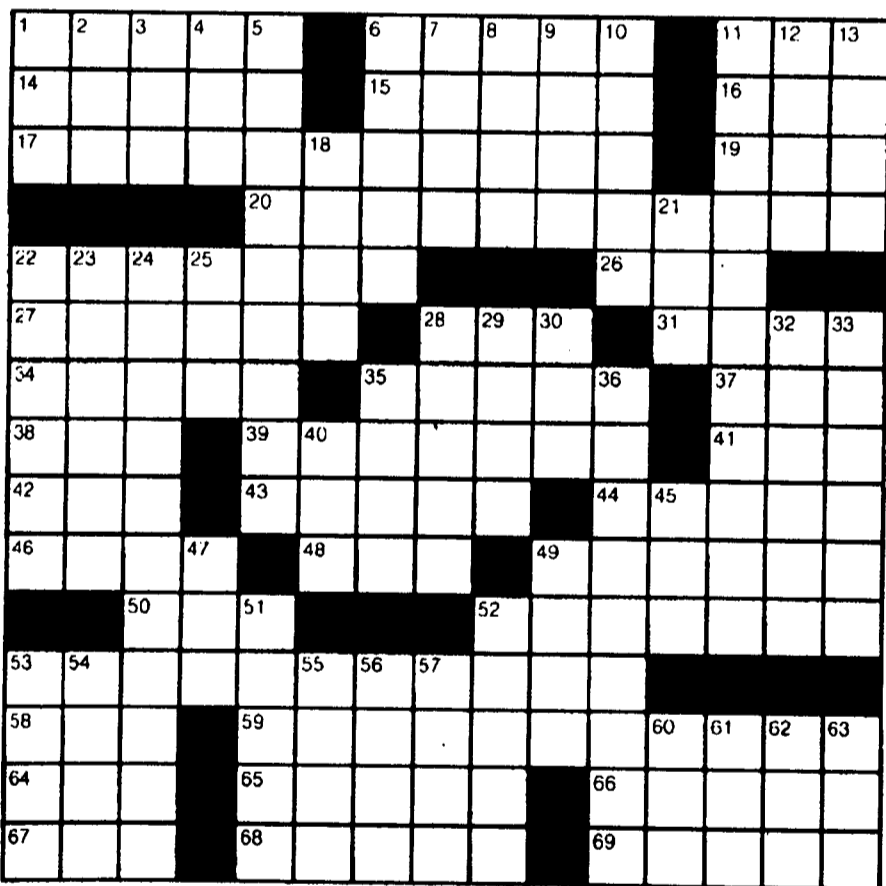
The movie stars Tom Hanks, Tom Sizemore, Edward Burns and Matt Damon. Tom Hanks plays a conscripted Army Captain whose only wish is to make it back home to be with his wife. His character is heroic but believable at the same time. Tom Sizemore does an outstanding job, but also is his men's confidant who only pulls rank when he had to. Edward Burns does an outstanding job, but Tom Sizemore's character, the salty Army Staff Sergeant, is extremely impressive. One can almost get Tom Sizemore confused with Michael Madsen, to whom he bears a striking resemblance. The platoon's mission

is to prevent Private Ryan, the sole remaining son of an Iowa mother, from being killed in combat as his other brothers were.

Tom Hanks definitely deserves a nomination for Best Actor, and Tom Sizemore should at least be nominated for Best Supporting Actor. *Saving Private Ryan* is a masterpiece, and should be seen by all. The climatic moments in the film reach out and grab the audience like no other war movie has done before.

Spielberg's genius of low camera angles gives this picture a documentary feel throughout the movie. The intensity of the movie lasts every second of the three-hour plus movie. The viewer will draw from the film this: World War II was not won only on the battlefield. Sacrifice was everywhere. The citizens of the United States owe a debt of gratitude to all our vets, combat and non-combat, and all the people who sacrificed and worked in factories to defeat the evil tyranny of the Nazi regime. ★★★★★

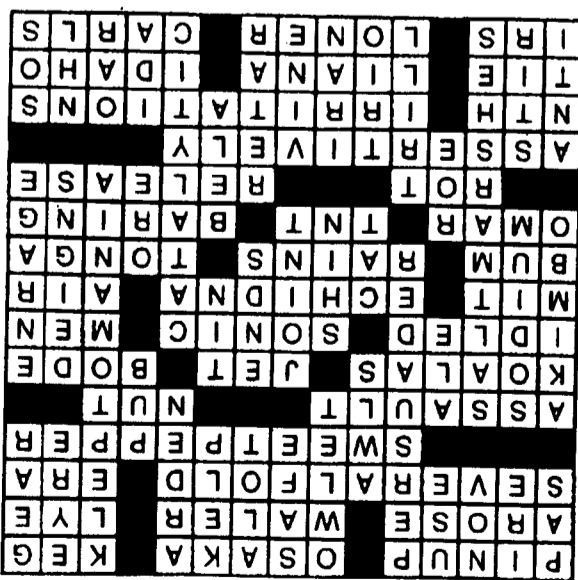
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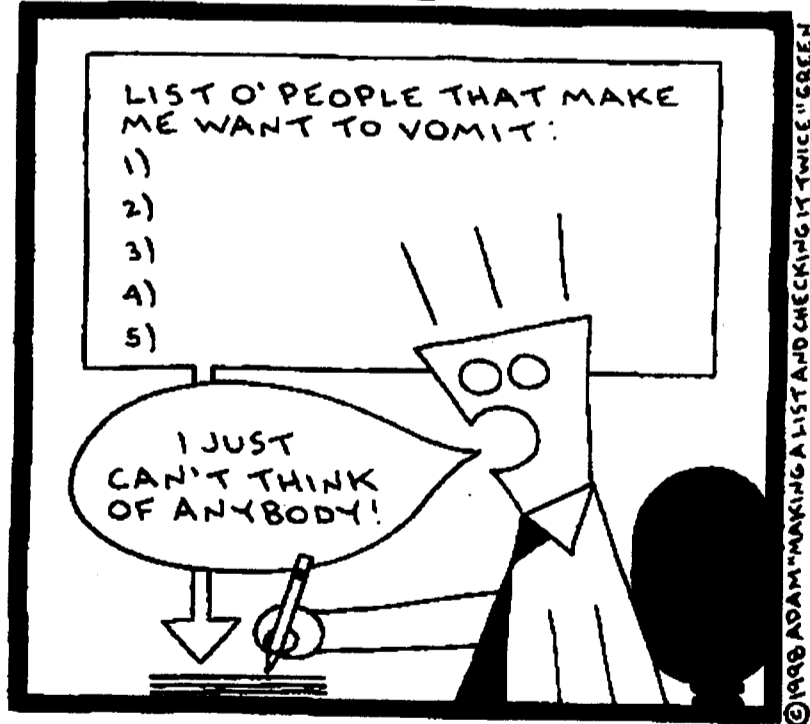
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