



## The Avengers deserves hype

BY: MARCY PEDZWATER

Marvel's latest superhero movie, *The Avengers*, has been surrounded by hype and anticipation. The movie brings together an all-star cast of superheroes including Iron Man, the Hulk, Captain America, and Thor.

It is always promising to see a movie theater crowded for a Saturday matinee showing, two weeks after the movie has been released. The crowded movie theater was my first sign that the movie would live up to my sky high expectations.

The plotline was captivating. The film did a great job of creating a complex story with twists and turns that, for the most part, were fairly unpredictable. The action scenes were well-executed, but there was also a perfect blend of dialogue and humor to balance the action out.

Unlike most action movies, there was actually a storyline behind the action, which was refreshing.

The movie was also funny



in a way that never seemed forced or unnatural. There were scraps of humor throughout the entire movie that gave it comic relief when action scenes might have started to drag otherwise. However, the movie also had sad and serious moments that added another dimension to the film.

My only disappointment was the movie's unbelievable moments. It seemed as though in parts of the movie, the screenwriters simply gave up. Instead of offering complex explanations for the occurrence of something, they provided weak, hard to believe explanations.

Even though this movie is clearly not supposed to be realistic, there is a line between science-fiction and anything goes that the writers crossed several times.

The acting in the movie, however, made up for any plot holes. Robert Downey Junior, who played Iron Man, once again portrayed the arrogant yet lovable Stark Enterprises Tycoon flawlessly.

The chemistry between the cast members was perfect; the antagonist relationship between Iron Man and Captain America was riveting, giving both of the characters added depth.

Of course, it is impossible to write about the film without mentioning Samuel L. Jackson, who did a fantastic job of playing Nick Fury.

Overall, the movie deserved all of the hype surrounding it. It was enjoyable to watch and it raised the bar for superhero movies to come.

4.5 out of 5 stars

## NCSSM student fences internationally

BY: MIA MADDURI

NCSSM Junior Joey Lew not only balances her academics and social life this school year, but also attends Mid-South Fencer's Club where she has been fencing since she was eight.

Lew started fencing when she was eight after watching her brother's friend. Even though her coach only taught nine years old and older, he still allowed her to train and since then she has been passionate about her sport.

Not only has Lew won regional and local events she has also been competing nationally. In the beginning of this year, in first trimester, she has traveled to London and Hungary to compete in international competitions for the first time.

While she was in Hungary, she was dealing with pneumonia and a 101.5 fever. Despite feeling unwell, she still got second place, a silver medal and a trophy.

"I rarely compete in a competitive vein locally. My mindset and focus is on improving and learning," Lew says.

She fences in Cadet competitions, which are tournaments for 16 years and younger. Every year she also participates in NAC, the North American Cup, and summer

national competitions.

In the beginning of the year she had many tournaments, but the off-season for fencing is about three months.

"In the beginning season, I had tournaments every weekend, but now I haven't had one for a period of two months," Lew says.

There are 3 types of fencing – Foil, Épée, and Sabre. They are just different styles of fencing and each has a different set of rules.

In Foil, there are certain areas you can hit on the body that will allow you to score a point. In Épée, a hit anywhere on the body gains you a point.

In Sabre, you can score with the edge of the blade whereas in the other types you score a point my using the point. Each style has a different type of weapon.

"Sabre fits my personality type. It's aggressive and you have to think fast and move quickly. It's closest thing to dueling that still exists. It's more confrontational than the other two styles of fencing," Lew says.

Stereotypical fencing is depicted as wild sword fighting in movies when in reality it is a civilized sport that has rules so participants don't get hurt. Just like any other sport, however, injuries do happen.

"I had tendonitis in

5 places; my elbows, left hamstring, and both knees. A girl broke my finger at a national competition, I've had pulled muscles, and I tore my right hip flexor. Because of that injury, I was off fencing for about three months," Lew says.

However, despite these injuries, Lew has found that this is a great stress reliever and that when she isn't exercising she feels jittery and unfocused.

Before attending NCSSM, Lew trained at Mid-South Fencer's Academy for 3 hours a day, six days a week. With the rigor of academics, she now trains 10-15 hours a week.

"I wish it were more than that, but it has allowed my body to heal. I had a lot of injuries last year because I overworked myself. I learned organization and time management. Fencing took up a lot of time last year also," Lew says.

Next year, Lew plans on starting a fencing club. She has taught younger groups of children and adults over the summer and during the year.

She has also gotten the Mid-South Fencer's Club to agree to provide equipment for her club. The only problem is finding a sponsor.

"I would be frustrated not to get it off the ground because I couldn't find a sponsor," Lew says.



Courtesy of Joey Lew