

Talkin' baseball victories with the famous Rangers

By JOE BOB BRIGGS

The closest baseball team to my house is the Texas Rangers, which if you don't live within three miles of Arlington, Texas, you probably never heard of, but let me just put it this way: They're the fifth greatest tourist attraction in the greater Arlington area. The first is Six Flags Over Texas where this year's new ride is the Permanent Spinal Injury Flume-a-rama, followed by Wet & Wild amusement park where you can go swim next to tow-headed yard monsters that do cannonballs off the high board, the Southwest Historical Wax Museum with its famous Lee Harvey Oswald stuffed mannequin, the 2300 Club topless bar where most of the girls have moss growin' on their teeth, followed by the most famous baseball team in town — the Rangers.

I went out to watch 'em the other night, along with all their relatives, to see our favorite player, Charlie Hough, pitch against Cleveland. You might of heard of Charlie. He's our 87-year-old knuckleballer who occasionally "mixes it up" with his six-mile-an-hour fastball. Charlie's won more games for us than anybody we've ever hired, so we've developed a lot of special motivational yells for him, like "Would you like a little buttermilk and applesauce to get that pot roast down?" Charlie had it flutterin' that night and so we gave him some new tennis shoes with Velcro snaps after the game.

Fortunately, we have a Puerto Rican who knows how to hit the ball and say enough English cuss words to get by. We used to have seven or eight Puerto Ricans, but they all went to some other team that has more money. We still have Ruben Sierra, though, who never says anything, plays right-field, and always looks like those blond-headed guys in the health spas that stand around in their shorts saying "Good workout? How about you? GREAT workout! Good-looking workout, man." Except for a big ole Baby Huey-



lookin' kid named Pete Incaviglia who either strikes out or hits the ball into West Texas but then WHINES 'cause he has to run ALL THE WAY around the bases.

Last year we almost won as many games as we lost. We'd usually win by a score of 28 to 26. But if we LOST the game, it'd be something like 26 to 2. The reason is we never did find anybody that knew how to pitch except Charlie, and he had to be hooked up to an IV between innings. We had a pretty good Puerto Rican named Edwin Correa for a while, but come to find out he couldn't pitch on Friday nights for religious reasons. I can't remember what Puerto Rican religious reason it was on Friday nights, but it was like he'd go to hell or something, and so the team went to hell instead.

The only thing everybody agrees is decent about the Rangers is we got a manager named Bobby Valentine who looks like the father of the kid down the street who used to get Christmas presents like authentic miniature Indianapolis-style race cars while you would get something like a tether-ball, and his daddy would be out there in jockey shorts showin' the kid how to soup up the carburetor and de-throttle the nacho valve or whatever else you're supposed to know about it. Well, that's Bobby Valentine, and we like him fine, cause everybody comes out to the ballpark, takes one look at him and says, "Wow! Now THERE'S a guy looks like he can play baseball." Kinda makes us feel like there's a baseball team in the vicinity.

Speaking of Cleveland, one of the greatest horror films of the year just came out — "Bad Dreams," which is an excellent

"Nightmare on Elm Street" ripoff about a gal who was almost burned up in a Jim Jones Guyana deal that happened in 1974, only she was the only survivor and went into a coma, and so now she wakes up in 1988 and still thinks this Charlie Manson pit-face monster is coming back to get her, and there's only one thing she fears worse than that — TAKING HER MEDICATION. She's in a cool white nuthouse kind of like the one in "The Sender" where everyone has video monitors and they sit around in therapy sessions screaming and explaining why it's okay to talk about putting ice picks through your hand if you need to get in touch with those feelings. And so after a few days of this, she starts going bonkers, the dead Mutant Buddhist comes back to haunt her, and all the patients who know her start killing themselves "for the publicity." The cops investigate for a while, but decide all the people dying over at the nuthouse is "a coincidence."

In other words: Spam in a Rubber Room. We're talking a 78 on the Vomit Meter.

No breasts. 37 dead bodies. Blood and body goo leaking out of air vents. One bimbo drowning. Approximately seven minutes of screaming. Chest mutilation. Gut gouging. Exploding sedan. Exploding hippie house. Exxon Super



Jennifer Rubin asking the hippie zombie to cut her some slack in "Bad Dreams"

Unleaded baptism. Gratuitous psychiatrist-pancaking by a deranged hit-and-run driver. Coffee pot Fu. Scalpel Fu. Knife through hand Fu. Formaldehyde Fu. Drive-in Academy Award nominations for Susan Barnes, as crazy Connie, for saying "We're so pathetic, rutting like rabbits," right before she gets eaten by an air-conditioner turbine; Richard Lynch, as Harris the Charlie-Manson Freddy Krueger lookalike, for saying "You belong to us — forever" and "Your pain is my pain"; Damita Jo Freeman, as the moon-face love child who wanders around the halls going "He's touched you, he will take you"; Susan Ruttan, as

Miriam the bonkers reporter for Me Magazine, for saying "Come on, Cynthia, dish out the dirt"; Dean Cameron, as the gonzo stand-up comic who likes to ram knives through the palm of his hand; E.G. Daily, as Lana the space cadet who has to kill herself because someone said "Please leave me alone"; Jennifer Rubin, as one of the finest porkchop survivors since Heather Langenkamp in the original child-molester bloodbath, the one that started it all, "A Nightmare on Elm Street"; and Andrew Fleming, the kid writer-director, for the line "If I kill you, it's because I love you."

Four stars. Joe Bob says check it out.

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