

PHHH # 812.4

Date: February 11, 2001

Weather: Chilly Scenes of Winter

Venue: Monmouth Battlefield State Park, from the Empire Diner to Bob Bob Dugan's

Time: 3 hours, including two soup/beer/cocoa checks

Set By: Pyroman and Weepi

Hashers: Rojo, Speedbumps, Hand Solo, Discomfort, Llloda, Nonsensei, Yellow Ball, Excitable Boy, Juicy, Hey YO! Paully, Tropical Depression, Ice Blue Balls, Baby Blue Balls (hashing in utero), and Mr. Whipple

The Defiant Hares (3:00 with 2 intermissions)

The theme of The Defiant Hares is that what keeps hashers apart is their lack of knowledge of a common course. With that knowledge comes respect, and with respect comradeship and even joy, though not to his mother. This thesis is exercised in terms of a weepee man and a pyro man, both hares chained together as they make their break for freedom and beer away from a band of Princeton hounds.

The performances by Pyroman and Weoipea are virtually flawless. Wepi captures all of the moody violence of a hare, setting again because a woman backed out of setting the hardcore. It is a cunning, totally intelligent portrayal that rings powerfully true.

As the arrogant white chemist chained to a casual transparent historian, Pyroman delivers a true surprise performance. He starts off as a sneering, brutal character, willing to dismiss the setting skills of his equally stubborn companion. When, in the end, he sacrifices a slice of pizza and the warmth of Bob Bob Dugan's bar to save his woman, Speedbumps, from the cold and dark, he has managed the transition with such skill that sympathy is completely with him.

There are two parallel stories, the major one of the hares on the loose and the minor one of the hounds and their rag-tag posse. When the hounds begin assembling for the big hunt, Mr. Whipple asks, "How come they set a live tagteam hardcore?" Hand Solo, in an Oscar-nominated performance, says drily, "The better to lose us with." Little does he know that he will become irretrievable after taking Weepee's advice seriously at the second soupcheck. In the meantime, the hares taunt each other with insults of such ferocity that their own chance of survival looks slim.

In contrast to many hashes, where the word "wanker" is thrown about as if it means nothing more than any bit of repartee, this movie treats it with the power it deserves. When Pyroman refers to Guipy as a wanker, he immediately lashes back with the furious retort, "Wanker! You call me that again, and I'll kill you!"

After a while, however, their harey condition makes them realize the similarities of their condition and of their upbringing. Both view their backgrounds and their thankless jobs as somehow having been caused by society's repression. Weepee laments that his Ph.D. stems not from his love of history but from an urge to meet women, and Pyro rues the fact that he is not a big-time professor, since those guys always get tenure.

Eventually, the two hares run into an EMT-licensed bartender and her Freehold buddies. At this point the bar begins to look pretty inviting. Their newly found friendship beings to crumble when the hounds stagger in. Pyroman boldly proclaims that they can't hang him because he's got the tab. The Grand Dominatrix and the other hounds aren't impressed with this line of reasoning and shoot the bad moon rising behind Wyipy.

Among the many excellent small performances, Discomfort, another Oscar nominee, plays a hound who thinks the Hardcore is going to be another trot in the park. Her sad, glistening eyes speak volumes. When Discomfort wants to show her pain, she merely screams in Bob Bob's women's room while running hot water over her feet. Her look as she removes her frozen socks is more chilling than than any scene in Ice Station Zebra.

Set has other surprises, not the least of which is Pyro and Hwipie's sensitive and skilled sense of direction, which after turning 180 degrees in a clever checkback at the start, led almost due north to Bob Bob Dugan's. The scenes of the hare and then the hounds groping their way painfully out of a deep silted culvert under Route 9,



their perilous journey up the creek, the confusing trail through the orchards, the soggy bottom near the railroad tracks, as well as their clumsy attempt to break into song under a full moon at Bob Bob's



and the subsequent near-lynch scene, become integral parts of the larger hash, where all are united in pointless happiness.





2001Hoshcars: Best Original Story & Screenplay, Cinematography, Set Design, Editing, French Onion Soup, Best Hash, Hare (Wuipee, Pyroman), Hasher (Hey YO! Pully), Supporting Hasher (Excitable Boy), Supporting Hashette (Lloda, Discomfort), Disappearance (Hand Solo).

More Stills:

Ice Blue Balls finds her false trail
dream house



Lloda soldiers on after a face-plant

Next Hash: Lessee, no Geezer, no Pyro, no Bumps, no Weepee, no Llloda, no Uranus, no slacker university hashers. . . a curious lacuna from the hash set sign-up list . . . It can mean only one thing for the last weekend in February . . . Hand Solo's annual run for the Worst Hash of the Year! Can it be so, Solo? Or are we on-on for Rubber's Return, Down Three (beers) and Vulnerable?