



B B3 Living Green

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Entertainment **B1**

'Hangover' Gives Murphy a Headache at Box Office

LOS ANGELES (Reuters)—The party kept rocking for "The Hangover," the first big surprise hit at the North American box office this summer, while Eddie Murphy suffered a headache with his second consecutive flop.

According to studio estimates issued on Sunday, "The Hangover" led the field for a second weekend with ticket sales of \$33.4 million across the United States and Canada. The raunchy comedy with a little-known cast becomes the first movie to retain its crown since "Madea Goes to Jail" in February.

The film also took just 10 days to hit the century mark -- \$105.4 million, to be exact -- setting a new record for an R-rated comedy. The old mark of 11 days was set last year by "Sex and the City."

Industry pundits expect "The Hangover" to hit \$200 million -- not bad for a movie that cost a reported \$31 million to make. The action revolves around three guys struggling to remember what happened at a wild bachelor party in Las Vegas the night before. It stars Justin Bartha, Bradley Cooper and Ed Helms, and was directed by Todd Phillips of "Old School" fame.

The film, from Time Warner Inc.'s Warner Bros. Pictures, easily fended off a pair of new entries boasting some major star power.

Columbia Pictures' remake of the 1974 subway-hijacking thriller "The Taking of Pelham 1 2 3," starring Denzel Washington and John Travolta, opened at No. 3 with \$25 million, in line with expectations.

"It's a solid opening for us," said Rory Bruer, president of worldwide distribution at the Sony Corp unit.

Washington's last major release was "American Gangster," which opened to \$44 million in late 2007. The last time Travolta headlined a drama was in 2004 when "Ladder 49" opened to \$26 million. Comparative data are not adjusted for ticket-price inflation.

Murphy, on the other hand, came in at No. 6 this weekend with the Paramount Pictures family comedy "Imagine That," which tallied just \$5.7 million.

"We're really disappointed," said Don Harris, executive vice-president of distribution at the Viacom Inc unit.

Murphy previously starred in "Meet Dave," which opened to \$5 million last July.

Walt Disney Pictures' Pixar cartoon "Up" held at No. 2 with \$30.5 million, taking its total to \$187.2 million after three weekends.

Rounding out the top five were the Ben Stiller comedy hit sequel "Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian" (Fox) which held steady at No. 4 with \$9.6 million; and the latest Will Ferrell bomb "Land of the Lost" (Universal), which fell two places to No. 5 with \$5.6 million in its second weekend.



SUPERHERO COMES BACK TO LIFE: Marvel Comics announced on June 15 that it is bringing Steve Rogers and his alter-ego, Captain America, back to life in a new comic book series. The five-part miniseries, titled "Captain America Reborn," brings back the superhero, whose last appearance in Marvel Comics was in August 2007. MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT

Susan Boyle Returns to Tour After 'Rest Day'

LONDON (Reuters)—Susan Boyle, who became famous for the world over after appearing on the "Britain's Got Talent" television show, returned to the stage on Monday after cancelling a week-end performance amid concerns over her health.

The 48-year-old church volunteer from Scotland delighted the home crowd of 6,000 in Glasgow by taking the stage and singing "Memory" from the musical "Cats" followed by the tune that made her a star, "I Dreamed a Dream" from "Les Miserables."

"She sang in front of 6,000 Scots," said a spokeswoman for the tour. "She's ecstatic," she added, saying Boyle earned a standing ovation from the audience.

Boyle's first performance on Britain's Got Talent in April was downloaded around 200 million times on the internet, making her a global celebrity.

But Boyle has struggled to cope with the pressures of her sudden fame.

During the run-up to the final Boyle repeatedly broke down in tears, and soon after losing out

to dance troupe Diversity she was taken to a private clinic suffering from exhaustion.

Boyle, whose dowdy image and idiosyncratic behaviour made her an unlikely star, did perform at the opening tour concert in Birmingham on Friday and again on Saturday in Sheffield.

But on Sunday she dropped out, prompting fresh concerns over her health.

After the tour is finished, Boyle is expected to record an album which will hit stores by Christmas.

McCain Defends Palin Against U.S. Talk Show Host

WASHINGTON (Reuters)—Republican Senator John McCain has a message for late-night comic David Letterman: Enough with the jokes about Sarah Palin and her family.

The host of CBS' "Late Show with David Letterman" drew the ire of Palin this week by making jokes about her visit to New York last weekend.

"They (the Palins) deserve some kind of protection from being the butt of late-night hosts," McCain

said during a telephone interview last Thursday.

Palin, who was visiting New York with her 14-year-old daughter Willow, charged that Letterman made "perverted comments," prompting a semi-apology from Letterman on his show Wednesday night.

The Alaska governor was the vice presidential candidate last year on the Republican Party ticket headed by McCain. McCain and Palin lost to Obama.

Entertainment Summary

Bollywood's Jodhaa Akbar Wins at Indian Film Awards

MACAU (Reuters)—Indian epic film Jodhaa Akbar scooped top honours in India's version of the Oscars at a ceremony in the Chinese gambling haven of Macau Saturday. Some of Indian cinema's biggest names including Amitabh Bachchan and Hrithik Roshan graced the green carpet, as thousands of fans screamed and jostled for autographs at the annual IIFA (International Indian Film Academy) awards.



Bollywood actor Hrithik Roshan. VICTOR FRAILLE/GETTY IMAGES

Harry Potter Publisher Denies Plagiarism Claim

LONDON (Reuters)—Bloomsbury Publishing Plc on Monday denied allegations that author J.K. Rowling copied "substantial parts" of a book by another children's author when she wrote "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire." The book, published in 2000, was the fourth installment of the hugely successful boy wizard Harry Potter series that has sold more than 400 million copies worldwide and been turned into a multi-billion-dollar film franchise.

It's Sir Count Dracula for Actor Christopher Lee

LONDON (Reuters)—Dracula actor Christopher Lee and British golfer Nick Faldo will receive knighthoods in the Queen's Birthday Honours List -- and a 93-year-old station master gets a nod too. The 87-year-old Lee, famed for his role as the blood-sucking Count in the Hammer horror movie classics, has found popularity with more modern audiences by starring in the "Lord of the Rings" and "Star Wars" trilogies.

Madame Tussauds Ready for Hollywood Close-Up

LOS ANGELES (Reuters)—Clint Eastwood has holed up on Hollywood Boulevard waiting for John Wayne and busloads of visitors to join him, as Madame Tussauds prepares to open its latest wax museum in the tourist mecca this summer. The \$55 million complex, featuring more than 100 celebrity waxworks spread across three floors, is the biggest attraction to join the teeming thoroughfare in years.

With Digital Transition, More Focus on Smaller TVs

WASHINGTON (Reuters)—The Friday deadline for a nationwide transition from analog to crisper digital television transmission has U.S. retailers hoping for a boost in sales of smaller TVs as consumers upgrade secondary sets in spare rooms. The digital transition has already unleashed a surge in sales of converter boxes to consumers who want to keep their existing TV sets, and an uptick in cable and satellite TV service sales for Americans who want to upgrade.

Keyboardist, Producer Beckett Dies in Tennessee

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (Reuters)—Producer and keyboard player Barry Beckett, who recorded and accompanied singers Aretha Franklin, Bob Dylan, Bob Seger, Paul Simon and numerous country music stars, has died, his family said on Friday. Beckett, 66, died at his Hendersonville, Tennessee, home on Wednesday, his family said. He had been diagnosed with cancer and suffered strokes, according to local media.



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