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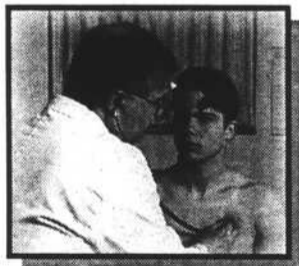
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COURTESY PHOTO

BRENDAN FRASER, who stars in the title role of "George of the Jungle," gets literary with one of his jungle brothers.

Live-action 'George' has cartoon feel

GEORGE from page 8

wrestling a hungry lion. (Note: not just wrestling, but professionally wrestling, complete with elbow-drops and clotheslines. The only thing missing was Hulk Hogan and the NWO).

Yep, she's smitten. She completely loses interest in self-absorbed, brainless blonde Lyle (Thomas Haden Church), but George isn't sure how to express his feelings. He seeks advice from Ape (voiced by John Cleese) on how to make Ursula his mate, which leads to one of the most hilarious moments in the film.

Everything follows like a weekly cartoon, straight out of "Rocky and Bullwinkle," complete with the characters interacting with the overly-dramatic narrator.

Naturally, George ends up back in

the big city with Ursula, where the movie then runs the "Crocodile Dundee" gambit of fish-out-of-water gags, but the campy attitude towards it all still keeps the laughter fairly fresh and full, but still drags a bit.

Both the laughs and George do their best work in the same place - the jungle.

The entire film is a live-action cartoon, complete with sound effects and outrageous antics and reactions from both people and beasts. The bumps George takes from beginning to end are sure to make even the toughest of craniums wince in pain.

Fraser is absolutely incredible in a role requiring an intense amount of physical comedy, as well as some training (rumor has it that, while other scenes were being filmed, Fraser was working out eight hours a day to get the musclebound bod for the flick).

The Facts

Title: "George of the Jungle"
Stars: Brendan Fraser, Leslie Mann, Thomas Haden Church, John Cleese
Director: Sam Weisman
Rating: PG
Grade: B+
Five Words: Laugh after laugh after laugh...

John Cleese also walks away with some great moments in the film, and perhaps one of the best showtune numbers to ever close out a film. (Sinatra would have been proud, but Paul Anka may have a quibble or two.)

Fun for young or old, grab a vine and swing in for "George of the Jungle."

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