

'Replacements' suffers from unbelievable plot, dumb mistakes

BY SAMUEL MCKEWON

Yet another movie has mistaken The Police song "Every Breath You Take" as some sort of love ballad.

This time, it is the football flick "The Replacements," which, among other things, plays the song over a key romantic sequence in the movie - you know, when the quarterback and the head cheerleader figure they've got a little something in common.

Has the director, Howard Deutch, ever listened to the

song? The words, I mean? It is a song about a stalker. Not a romance deemed happily ever after. And yet here - and in movies like "Runaway Bride" - it is used as the culmination of courtship.

"The Replacements" uses 30 songs, which I believe outnumbered the actual football plays run by the strike-breaking squad of misfits and bums that overcome all to win the big game. I am ruining this ending because I don't want to you see this movie. It is a piece of trash.

Review

A rough plot outline: There's a fictional team in Washington. The real players (About 10 of them symbolize an entire league.) go on strike. For some reason or another, the team no longer has a coach so the owner hires Gene Hackman.

The coach goes out to find Keanu Reeves, a quarterback who blew the Sugar Bowl for Ohio State and dropped out of

the game to scrape barnacles off a boat because, apparently, he received no degree at Ohio State and chose to eschew the free ride several famous college athletes enjoy and live life on the low seas.

The quarterback meets Brooke Langton, an ex-"Melrose Place" actress who plays the cheerleader forced to hire an entirely new squad, too, even though cheerleaders have no union and wouldn't have quit. So she hires ex-strippers who spank each other on the ass and

distract the other team.

The quarterback and the cheerleader get together. "Every Breath You Take" plays. Then the quarterback rescues the team from imminent defeat to predictable victory in the big game. Cheap monologue runs over their celebration. Movie ends.

"The Replacements" is littered with colorful, stupid characters, who are funny once and then are never funny again. It may have helped if someone - anyone at all - involved in the production knew something

about football, or spelling. Or anything.

Some examples:
 ■ The team name is the Washington Sentinals, which would be fine, if sentinals was a word, which it isn't until it's spelled sentinels. Which would be fine, too, if the plural form of sentinel wasn't the same word.

■ A "Sentinals" coach remarks that the offense is "running right through us" when, in fact, the opposing team has yet

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