

AGGIE life

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Spy Hard falls short on laughs

By Jeffrey Cranor
THE BATTALION



Leslie Nielsen's latest parody, *Spy Hard*, is comparable to the greatest American comedic films of all time (*History of the World Part I*, *Big Airplane!*, etc.) because it is a movie and it was made in America. The comparison stops there. Not to downplay the importance of this correlation, but *Spy Hard* just does not stand out in Hollywood's competitive and over-packed realm of comedies, satires and spoofs. Nielsen plays Dick Steele, Agent WD-40, who was once one of The Agency's top spies. He quit the team, however, after his partner and lover Victoria Dahl dies in Cliffhanger fashion during an assault on the evil General Rancor (Andy Griffith). Years later, however, The

Agency discovers that Rancor survived, minus two arms, and asks Steele back to help stop the rubber-armed general. Steele declines—until he learns Rancor has captured Barbara Dahl, the daughter of his fallen lover, and strapped her to the nose of a missile that could destroy

the world. Steele teams up with Russian Veronica Ukrinsky, Agent 3.14 (Nicollette Sheridan), to help find her father, a scientist,



Leslie Nielsen and Nicollette Sheridan star the latest parody, *Spy Hard*.

who has the computer chip that could provide either world pow-

er for Rancor or world peace for everyone else.

Consistent comedic elements are lacking. One can not help but enter the theater with a make me laugh attitude, which makes it difficult for the movie to ever get its humor moving, let alone its audience rolling.

Many of the scenes rely solely on one gag to bring the audience to laughter, unlike other successful parodies, that incorporate several background gags to supplement the plot or primary joke.

The lack of comedic potential of *Spy Hard* was not difficult to predict. Nielsen's most recent movies have been Mel Brooks' *Dracula: Dead and Loving It*, *Surf Ninjas* and the two *Naked Gun* sequels, that were really just blanks.

The laughter in *Spy Hard*, consists of the hearty bellows are greatly outnumbered by the mediocre guffaws. And even though there is a role for Griffith, audiences should not expect any appearance by Ron Howard.

Too much dribbling, not enough laughs hurt Goldberg and Eddie

By April Towery
THE BATTALION



Whoopi Goldberg is far from her funniest in *Eddie*. Too much basketball and not enough character development weakens this Steve Rash (*Son-In-Law*) film.

Goldberg stars as Edwina 'Eddie' Franklin, a limo driver and die-hard New York Knicks fan. By winning a free-throw contest, and thus a one game stint as honorary coach. She is then offered a head coaching position by the team's owner Wild Bill Burgess (Frank Langella).

Realistic this movie is not. In an attempt to recreate *Hoosiers*, Goldberg tries to pump up the team as they grow to love and respect her, despite her lack of experience in coaching.

Langella does most of the acting in the movie, whereas Goldberg relies on her unimpressive street-smart dialect. The rest of the cast is primarily comprised of 49 NBA stars, who act as well as Goldberg coaches. The players are each built on basic stereotypes.

There is Nate Wilson, (John Salley), who is watching his career fade due to knee injuries; Terry Hastings (Rick Fox), whose marriage is falling apart due to an on-the-road fling, Sta-

cy Patton (Malik Sealy), an egotistical ball-hog; Darren Taylor (Mark Jackson), the 'preacher;' and Ivan Radovadovitch (Dwayne Schintzius), whose primary line is "Ivan make basket."

The characters are underde-

veloped. They are introduced, their problems are revealed, then Goldberg sets out to make everything better. Her goal is to reach the players on a personal level and therefore become a better coach.

The problem is, although the fans may love the game and know each player's individual statistics, this does not qualify them to coach.

Eddie simply does not meet the expectations of a Whoopi Goldberg comedy.



Whoopi Goldberg stars as "Eddie," a die-hard New York Knicks fan, who wins the opportunity to coach the team.

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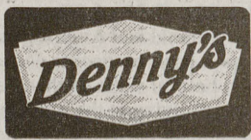
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