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The Scorpion King tops the box office, Jason X premieres at No. 4

LOS ANGELES (AP) — *The Scorpion King* ruled the box office for a second straight weekend with \$17.6 million, but its reign is about to end with the arrival of another hero that is part man, part bug.

One of the most hotly awaited comic-book adaptations ever, *Spider-Man* opens next weekend and is expected to put an early spin on the summer blockbuster season.

"This is one of the most anticipated movies of the year," said Paul Dergarabedian, president of box-office tracker Exhibitor Relations. "It's a total summer movie. It's exactly what people want in summer."

Scorpion King distributor Universal wisely chose to slip its action flick into the lineup two weeks ahead of *Spider-Man*. Starring pro wrestler The Rock in a spinoff of *The Mummy* franchise, *The Scorpion King* debuted with \$36.1 million last weekend, a record for a film opening in April.

The movie has taken in \$60.8 million in its first 10 days.

"We gave ourselves two full weeks with a lot of visibility and no real competition out there," said Nikki Rocco, head of distribution for Universal. "It turns out to have been a very successful strategy."

The thriller *Changing Lanes* held the No. 2 spot for the second straight weekend with \$9 million, pushing its 17-day total to \$44.6 million.

This weekend's main new films had weak debuts.

The romantic comedy *Life or Something Like It*, starring Angelina Jolie as a shallow TV journalist coping with a street soothsayer's prediction that she is about to die, opened in third place with \$6.65 million.

Jason X, a sci-fi update of the *Friday the 13th* horror franchise, premiered at No. 4 with \$6.5 million.

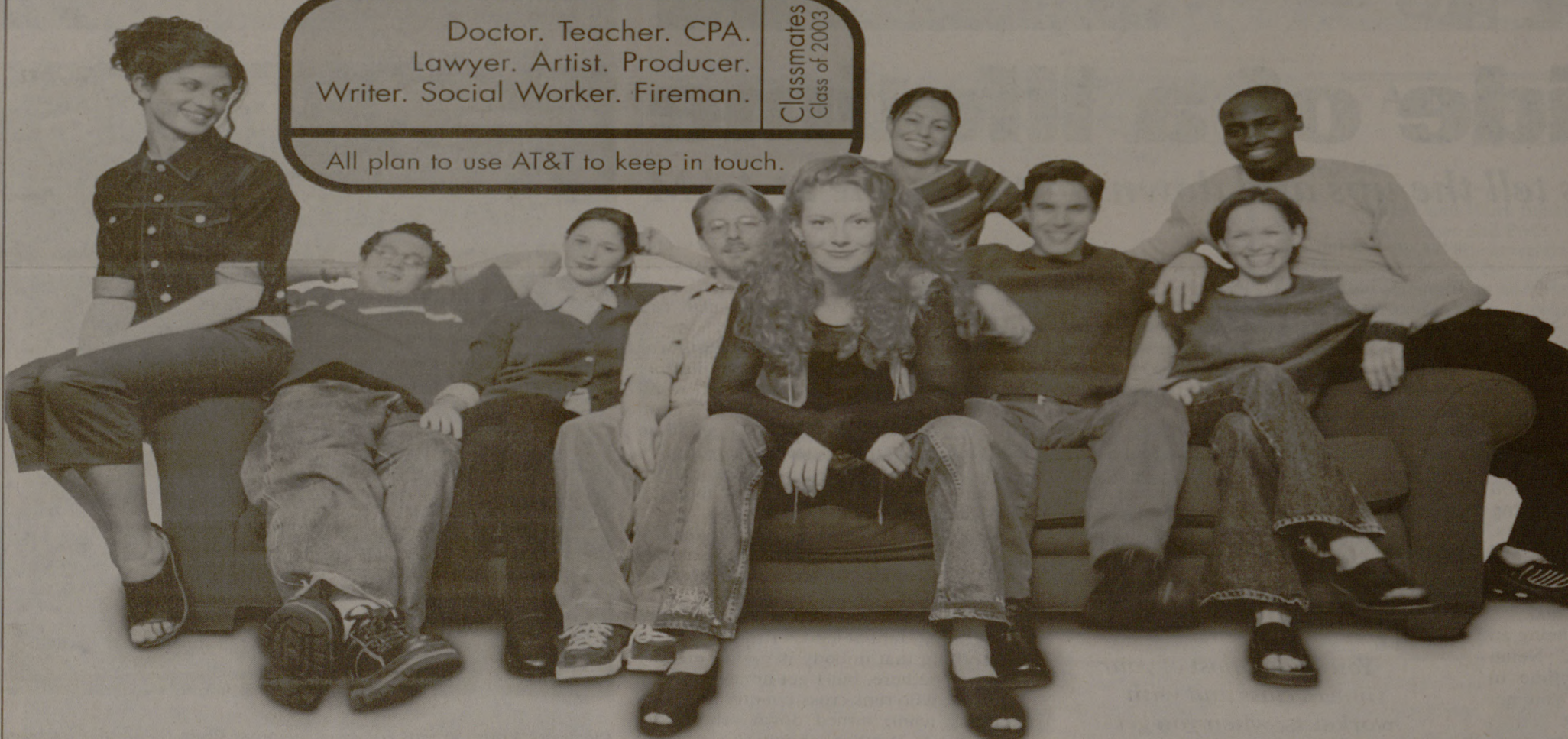
Playing in 2,606 theaters, *Life or Something Like It* averaged an anemic \$2,552 a cinema, compared with \$5,103 in 3,449 theaters for *The Scorpion King*. *Jason X* averaged \$3,461 in 1,878 theaters.

Box-office receipts for slasher films tend to tumble steeply after opening weekend because the hardcore horror crowd already has come and gone. *Life or Something Like It* might hold up better because its largely female audience gave it good grades and competition is scarce for movies about women, said Rick Myerson, general sales manager for 20th Century Fox, which distributed the film.

The overall box-office rose for the 11th straight weekend. The top 12 movies grossed \$69.8 million, up 27 percent from the same weekend last year.

Domestic movie revenues are running 15 to 16 percent ahead of the pace last year, when Hollywood had a record annual total of \$8.4 billion.

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Parker pregnant "Sex" season shortened

NEW YORK (AP) — Expectations for Sarah Jessica Parker's pregnancy were high, but less than expected.

The star's pregnancy means there will be only eight episodes next season instead of the usual 13.

Production on the Emmy-winning HBO comedy series was suspended for a month when Parker announced she was pregnant.

On Friday, the cable channel said it plans to produce episodes for its upcoming season. Two of them are for the other six will be starting in early May.

The fifth season is scheduled to begin airing in July. The character, sex columnist Bradshaw, will not be appearing in the show.

Parker is expecting a boy. The fall with husband Matthew Broderick. It will be the child for the 37-year-old actress and Broderick, 40.

'N Sync remembers TLC's Lisa Lopes

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Members of the group 'N Sync remembered singer Lisa Lopes Sunday as an energetic performer who was always eager to work.

Justin Timberlake described Lopes as humble, fun, and loving.

"She had a passion for what she did," Timberlake said. "She loved to work and she loved to make music."

"She had high energy and a lust for life," said J.C. Chasez. "She was always energetic."

Lopes, one-third of the Grammy-winning trio TLC, died Thursday in a vehicle crash in Jutiapa, Honduras.

Jimmy Buffett tours for CD, works on book

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Jimmy Buffett may sing about being away, but he has been keeping himself busy touring for his new CD and writing a new book.

"It's part-fiction, part-nonfiction," Buffett told *Parade* magazine Sunday's editions. "I haven't signed a contract. These things take a long time, and it's a lot of work. If you talk about it too much, they begin to smell the money and pile on the pressure to get it finished."

Buffett is already an accomplished writer, one of the authors to have a *New York Times* No. 1 best seller in both fiction and nonfiction.

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