

## Following ‘The Sandlot’ Home Run, ‘The Final Season’ Strikes Out

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CHICAGO – Once a year, it seems a studio releases a film that tries to nudge its way into the almost-holy canon of American sports cinema. Most years, studios succeed. Recently, we have been lucky with the caliber of sports films offered up to us.



Rachel Leigh Cook in “The Final Season”.

Photo courtesy of IMDb

You might think the recipe for a decent sports drama is easy: take two parts small town, one part coach no one believes in, three parts dramatic music and stir with just a dash of romance.

As “The Final Season” shows us, though, just because you have all the right parts doesn’t mean you will make the perfect dish.



“The Final Season”.

Photo courtesy of IMDb

Sean Astin tries to bring some of the magic he had with “Rudy” to this story of a small-town Iowa high school baseball team as it competes in its final season before being consolidated into a larger school district.

The film is the true story of baseball coach Kent Stock (Astin) who leads Norway High School through its last baseball season.

Stock has to overcome his own shortcomings with replacing longtime coach Jim Van Scoyoc (Powers Boothe) and convincing his team that its conclusive season is worth playing.



“The Final Season”.

Photo courtesy of IMDb

Director David Mickey Evans (“The Sandlot”) sets a tone of a very Norman Rockwellian small-town America that is over the top in just about every way.

The dialogue is stale and in some parts sounds like the actors are reading VCR instructions. The lines that are injected with some emotion are so poorly acted that they come across more as funny than serious.

The whole cast looks like they are just going through the motions. Even the extras appear as if they have better places to be. “The Final Season” just has way too much going on.





“The Final Season”.

Photo courtesy of IMDb

There’s a school closing, a coach leaving, a new coach coming in (his love interest), the rebel kid (plus his love interest), the player who hates the team and the player who loves the team. You see all of this before they really get into any baseball.

The casting was particularly poor as Astin looks too young to be in charge of teenagers. By the way, where on Earth does a girl who looks like Rachel Leigh Cook fall in love with a guy who looks like Sean Astin?

Even though they were going for a delicious treat, the ingredients of poor acting, disastrous dialogue and bad casting made this a meal that needs to be skipped.

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