

## Blu-ray Review: Bruce Willis, Rebecca Hall in Dull ‘Lay the Favorite’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on March 13, 2013 - 9:02am

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CHICAGO – Every once in a Hollywood while, a true head-scratcher comes along. How on Earth did this movie, with this many talented people involved, end up so boring? If you told me that Stephen Frears (“The Grifters,” “The Queen”) was re-teaming with his “High Fidelity” scribe D.V. DeVincentis on a dramedy with the great Rebecca Hall and Bruce Willis, I would probably put that flick on a highly-anticipated list. Minutes into “Lay the Favorite,” recently released on Blu-ray and DVD, one knows there’s nothing to anticipate. Unless you anticipate boredom.



Rating: **1.5/5.0**

Poor Rebecca Hall (“Vicky Cristina Barcelona,” “Parade’s End”) gives it her absolute all as the naive, sweet Beth Raymer, a girl who becomes a good luck charm to the horribly named Dink Heimowitz (Bruce Willis), disrupting his business and marriage to the high-maintenance Tulip (Catherine Zeta-Jones). An incredible number of talented people flirt around the fringe of this oddball romance, including Frank Grillo, Wendell Pierce, John Carroll Lynch, and Joel Murray while Vince Vaughn and Corbin Bernsen pop up in cameos. They clearly were all excited by a chance to work with Frears. They should have read the script.

“Lay the Favorite” is almost fascinating in its tonal imbalance and generally lackadaisical attitude. I think perhaps that DeVincentis got so used to writing for John Cusack (he also wrote the great “Grosse Pointe Blank”) that he didn’t realize that Cusack’s deadpan style isn’t that easy to pull off. Although it’s not that “Favorite” is trying to be too cool. It’s not really trying to be anything. It just feels so by-the-numbers that everything other than Hall’s energetic performance is a bore. There are scenes where you want to yell cut and drag this talented actress and interesting character to another movie. Without Hall, this paper-thin, generic comedy probably never would have even been released on DVD. It might have just disappeared altogether.



Lay the Favorite was released on Blu-ray and DVD on March 5, 2013

Photo credit: Starz/Anchor Bay

### Synopsis:

Get ready to get lucky! Professional odds-maker Dink (Bruce Willis) is running a small-time sports gambling enterprise when a former stripper



named Beth (Rebecca Hall) promises to help him score big - and turns his world upside down. With his connections and her knack for numbers, the lucrative business of sports betting will never be the same. Catherine Zeta-Jones and Joshua Jackson round out the talented cast of misfits who are willing to risk everything for their dreams. Sly and sexy, heart-warming and hilarious, Lay The Favorite, directed by Stephen Frears (The Queen, High Fidelity), delivers laughs and thrills in this vivid expose of the world of gambling based on Beth Raymer's best-selling memoir.

**Special Features:**

o Deleted Scenes

*“Lay the Favorite” stars Rebecca Hall, Bruce Willis, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Joshua Jackson, and Laura Prepon. It was released on Blu-ray and DVD on March 5, 2013.*



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