

Film Review: Jeff Garlin Directs Inconsistent 'Dealin' with Idiots'

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on July 12, 2013 - 5:26pm

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CHICAGO – Jeff Garlin has created a good “character” in TV and films – a gruff but affable schlemiel that ambles through life as if distracted. He amplifies that role in his latest comedy, “Dealin’ with Idiots,” but the loose improvisation style has too many unfunny stretches and an unpleasant spirit.



Rating: **3.0/5.0**

The premise has potential – the overt weirdness and over competitiveness (from the parents) of kid’s sports, in this case baseball. Through a bevy of strange and overdone characters, kid’s baseball is shown to be pretty much what it is...a torturous showcase in which only the strong survive. The problem is that the situations strike only a couple notes once it establishes the weird coaches, overwrought parents and diffident kids. In the loose improvisational framework of the film, there obviously just wasn’t enough comic gold to be mined, although most of the funny people in the film were sweating profusely to make it work. There are moments, but they are too few and far apart, plus when it doesn’t work it projects a somewhat harsh attitude.

Max Morris (Jeff Garlin) is a self-described “top twenty comedian” and parent of young son. He has enrolled the boy in a kid’s baseball league, even though his son is not that good. His wife Ava (Nia Vardalos) is supportive, but Max has to put up with the weird coterie of parents and officials that populate the league, including Rosie (Jami Gertz), Harold (Richard Kind), Marty (Fred Willard), Sophie (Gina Gershon), Coach Ted (J.B. Smoove) and Coach Jimbo (Bob Odenkirk).

The circumstances become so strange that Max decides to chronicle the activities for a new film. He begins to visit the coaches and parents to see how they tick, and that leads to more surreal adventures. When the big playoff game comes, Max’s son is asked to not swing the bat and draw a walk. Max then takes over the situation, with advice from his dead father (Timothy Olyphant).

“Dealin’ with Idiots” has a limited release, including Chicago, on July 12th. See local listings for show times and theaters. Featuring Jeff Garlin, Timothy Olyphant, Gina Gershon, Jami Gertz, Bob Odenkirk, Nia Vardalos, J.B. Smoove, Richard Kind, Fred Willard and Kerry Kinney. Written by Jeff Garlin and Peter Murrieta. Directed by Jeff Garlin. Not rated.



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Max (Jeff Garlin) Interacts with Harold (Richard Kind) in 'Dealn' with Idiots'
Photo credit: IFC Films

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