



Not only did Dustin Hoffman win a nomination for best actor for his portrayal of an autistic savant in "Rain Man," the film captured seven other Oscar nominations, including best picture.

Here's how to enter

So you think you're pretty good at picking winners, huh?
Think you know who'll be "el primo" on Oscar night, huh?
Well, if you're that good, then why not win yourself a trip to Hollywood in the Observer & Eccentric/AMC Theaters third annual Academy Award contest.

The rules are simple, but the payoff is big for the person who picks the most winners in six categories — best picture, best actor, best actress, best supporting actor, best supporting actress and best director.

The grand prize winner will receive a trip for two to from Detroit to Hollywood via Northwest Airlines, six nights' accommodations for two at the Pacifica Hotel in Los Angeles and a week's use of a Budget rent-a-car while in Tinseltown. Second place is an AMC gold pass, third place a screening party and fourth place AMC guest passes.

Here's the contest rules:

- Fill out an Oscar contest form available at AMC theaters and in the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.
- Forms must be turned in by midnight Friday March 24. They can be dropped off at any AMC theater or at the O&E offices in Livonia, Farmington, Birmingham, Plymouth and Rochester, or sent to AMC Theaters, 26028 Greenfield, Suite 460, Oak Park 48237.
- No purchase is necessary, but the limit is one entry per person.
- If more than one entry contains

the most correct answer, the winner of the grand prize and subsequent prizes will be selected by random drawing.

Employees of the O&E and AMC Theaters and their immediate families are not eligible to enter the contest.

The judges' decisions are final. Winners of the contest will be announced in the Monday, April 10, edition of Street Scene in the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

Now that you know the rules, what are you waiting for?

Late arrivals: 'Big' winners in Oscar bids

By Dan Greenberg
staff writer

Movies may not be better than ever but the box office certainly is. Hollywood set a new dollar record in 1988, selling just over a billion tickets for a total take of \$4.46 billion. That's more money for slightly fewer tickets as average ticket prices continued a climb.

As Oscar Night — March 29 — approaches, everybody's sharpening their wits to outguess the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which this year awarded most major and quite a few minor nominations to films released late in the year — "Rain Man" (eight), "Mississippi Burning" (seven), "Dangerous Liaisons" (seven), "Working Girl" (five) and "The Accidental Tourist" (four), 31 nominations for five films.

For the most part, those movies received nominations in the major categories — best picture, direction, actor and actress. Those are the four categories in the Observer & Eccentric/AMC Oscar Contest.

EACH YEAR, members of the Academy nominate five candidates in 23 categories. In addition, the Academy sponsors a very prestigious and rewarding nationwide Student Oscar competition.

Nominees in the well-known categories — as well as in sound effects, editing, documentaries, visual effects and other minor classifications — are chosen by each branch of the Academy so that selections are by peers who know the technicalities involved. The Academy membership as a whole then votes for the Oscar winners.

While that may all sound pretty reasonable, lots of politics and self-interest are at work as well as plenty of advertising in "Daily Variety" and "The Hollywood Reporter" as producers push their product for consideration. An Oscar can be worth big bucks as renewed interest at the box office inflates profit margins.

THE Observer & Eccentric/AMC Oscar contest isn't quite that big, but almost, and you can win a trip to Hollywood if you pick the winners. In the coming weeks, Street Scene will feature my analyses of the four major categories. Read these carefully and then make up your own mind, because I have a terrible track record when it comes to picking Oscar winners.

Two unexpected choices that run against the grain of popular films from late in the year are in the Academy's actors' branch, which picked Edward James Olmos for his role as a high school math teacher in "Stand and Deliver" and Max von Sydow as the aging Swedish worker who moves to Denmark looking for a better life.

Olmos did a competent job as the math teacher who prepared his students for a standardized test, one that everyone said they couldn't pass because they were typical underachievers. It's the same sort of attitude that infuses "Lean on Me."

To my mind, however, despite its moderate popularity and Olmos'

See the Oscar contest entry form on Page 4D.

competent performance, "Stand and Deliver" was pretty lame and lacked the passion and dedication required for a major production.

VON SYDOW IS, of course, well-known for his long career. This is his first nomination and it comes for his role in a film that also was nominated as best foreign film. (Because of Academy rules, any film that played in Los Angeles for at least one week in 1988 is eligible for all categories.)

The best foreign film category, however, requires official submission from a foreign government, usually via the motion picture establishment in that country. Only one entry per country is allowed in this category.

While this was a surprising nomination and von Sydow is warm and convincing as Pelle's father, an individual who believes strongly enough in love's ability to conquer, the film hasn't garnered the kind of popular notice one expects of Oscar winners.

Tom Hanks is a well-liked, successful young romantic comedy lead and "Big" was just that at the box office — something that gets a lot of attention since Oscars are for success. But given Hanks' youth, and because comedy isn't considered quite as highly as drama, I'll pass on this one and get right to the two main contenders.

ALL THE smart money is betting that "Rain Man" walks off with all the cookies, and they're probably right. But in so far as talent and performance are concerned, I can't overlook Gene Hackman's tough, but human, and very realistic portrayal of a Southern sheriff turned FBI agent in "Mississippi Burning." Of course, the political questions raised about the film may dilute Academy voters' enthusiasm.

Dustin Hoffman's characterization of an autistic savant clearly is the front runner for best actor. The film has been enormously successful (more than \$100 million at the box office) and it is very tightly focused. There is very little to the story except two brothers struggling to live and love — life and one another.

There are no political distractions in "Rain Man," hence the impact of Hoffman's performance is stronger. Also, it is an unusual performance, one that deals with a particular kind of mental disorder. That condition leads to a very different series of personal and psychological mannerisms and consequently a lot more meat for an actor to dig his talent into.

Because of that, despite the fact that Hoffman and Hackman both performed admirably, the nod probably will go to Hoffman. If it were up to me, I'd award each an Oscar, but nobody at the Academy has called.

The Detroit Tigers 'roar' at London's Joe Kool's

By Iris Sanderson Jones
contributing travel editor

Q: A few weeks ago you mentioned a Detroit Tiger hangout called Joe Kool's in London, Ontario. We'll be in London next week. Tell us more.

MBD, Plymouth

A: The banner above the front door of Joe Kool's restaurant/bar on Richmond Row in London reads: "1984 World Champions — DETROIT TIGER HEADQUARTERS." You will find Al Kaline, sitting, in an almost life-sized photo, above the dark mahogany bar. There are photos of the 1968 World Series on the right wall and clippings about the 1984 World Series on the left wall, over the booths where people munch on hamburgers and nachos.

Nobody would take any notice of Joe Kool's if it was in Detroit, but you don't really expect to find ardent Tiger fans 120 miles away across the United States-Canada border in Toronto Blue Jay country.

As Mike Smith, owner of Joe Kool's, said during the playoffs last

year, "We don't really care if the Tigers win the pennant as long as they beat the Blue Jays."

WHAT'S A Tiger hangout like this doing on one of the downtown streets of a Canadian city? Smith and his father used to go regularly to Tiger Stadium long before Toronto had a professional baseball team. Like many people in London, the Smiths became diehard Tiger fans. They drove two hours each way to attend games in Detroit. They watched the Tigers on television.

By the time the Toronto Blue Jays started playing baseball in 1977, it was too late to switch allegiance to a new team.

"Nobody in London knew the names of any of the Blue Jay players, but we could tell you all the stats on the Detroit Tigers," Smith said.

SMITH WAS working in the advertising business and operated a little takeout food place as a sideline before he left the business world to launch Joe Kool's in 1983. Smith wanted a good, old-fashioned bar, so he hunted Detroit and Chicago bars "as research" and

then built his own.

"I built the bar and then neglected it," he said.

LOOK CLOSELY at the neon sign in the window and you will see it is really "Joseph Koolinsky's," but the appropriate lights are permanently out so the lighted sign reads "Joe Kool's."

When you follow a path between wooden booths and bar today, you get that lived-in look of a place that has been around for a long time.

Turn right up the back stairs to the patio and you can sit in green folding seats straight out of Tiger Stadium. Smith bought them the last time the seats in the stadium were replaced.

And against the wall, next to the bowling alley, is the famous statue. It's not Michelangelo's David, it's Smith's "Lennie."

A guy called Lennie used to work here," Smith said. "We used him as a model for the Tiger player who is facing the brick wall. Plug him in and he makes the fountain work by peeing on a Blue Jay." Specifically, Blue Jay player number 11!

The strange thing is that, as far as Smith knows, no Detroit Tiger

has ever been to Joe Kool's. Londoners love it, whether they are Blue Jay fans or not. Willy, our waiter, told us that Tiger fans put Blue Jay sweat shirts on the floor for people to wipe their dirty shoes on during high season.

THERE ARE, of course, other



A Detroit Tigers' banner graces the front of Joe Kool's restaurant and bar on Richmond Street in London, Ont.

things to do in London. This is the home of the University of Western Ontario, sort of the Ann Arbor of southern Ontario, so you'll find students hanging out at Barney's and The Creeps, especially on Thursday nights.

The Second City, part of the



MICKY JONES

group that started Second City at the University of Chicago in the 1950s, has dinner theatre performances. Check the clippings on the lobby wall, showing Dan Ackroyd and Gilda Radner of "Saturday Night Live" fame.

London is full of parks where you can canoe, run, water ski, play softball, roller skate, ride paddleboats and otherwise play. Check out music bars like the Bavarian in Westown Plaza, or Dr. Rockets, which brings in good top 40s bands. There are two Kelseys', restaurant/bars on East and West Oxford Street. Locals love Spoons.

The best fine food place is Michaels on the Thames, Smith said. Also, check out the events calendar for big band festivals at Wonderland Gardens.

For more information, contact the London Visitors and Convention Bureau at 300 Dufferin Avenue, London, Ontario N6B 1Z2, or call (519) 661-5000. You can also call toll free (800) ONTARIO or pick up brochures at their booths on the Windsor side of either the tunnel or the bridge.

And if you get to Joe Kool's, wear your Detroit Tiger sweat shirt.