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The Southland Times Unwind



Team spirit

Age no bar to frivolity at festival

MARK WILSON



MY AGEING legs spared the population a recurrence of the visual trauma inflicted upon them in previous years, whereby they were subjected to images of me severely lacking in attire gracing their daily newspapers and popping up over the civilised family meal during the 6 o'clock news.

It's Winter Festival again, an epic celebration of the white-hot spirit of Queenstown to warm the coldest week of the year. Now into its 36th year, it has apparently cracked the big 10 festivals of the world, rated No 4 by a major Aussie travel site.

While it is winding up, advancing years have seen my success as a participant become hard-fought and often dwindling. I feel a bit like that old ram out of the Footrot Flats comics who just couldn't service all the ewes any more but still didn't want a bar of anyone else doing it.

Experience seems to count for little at the More FM Day on the Bay as a keen bunch of swimmers jump aboard NZL14 to ride to the start of the splash and dash, before taking the plunge into the icy waters of Lake Wakatipu. After almost missing the boat I'm there too, just!

With the leading three in the field being local swim racers, all aged between 18 and 21, my weary arms and mild hangover saw me pull in around 7th in my 7th frigid year of competing.

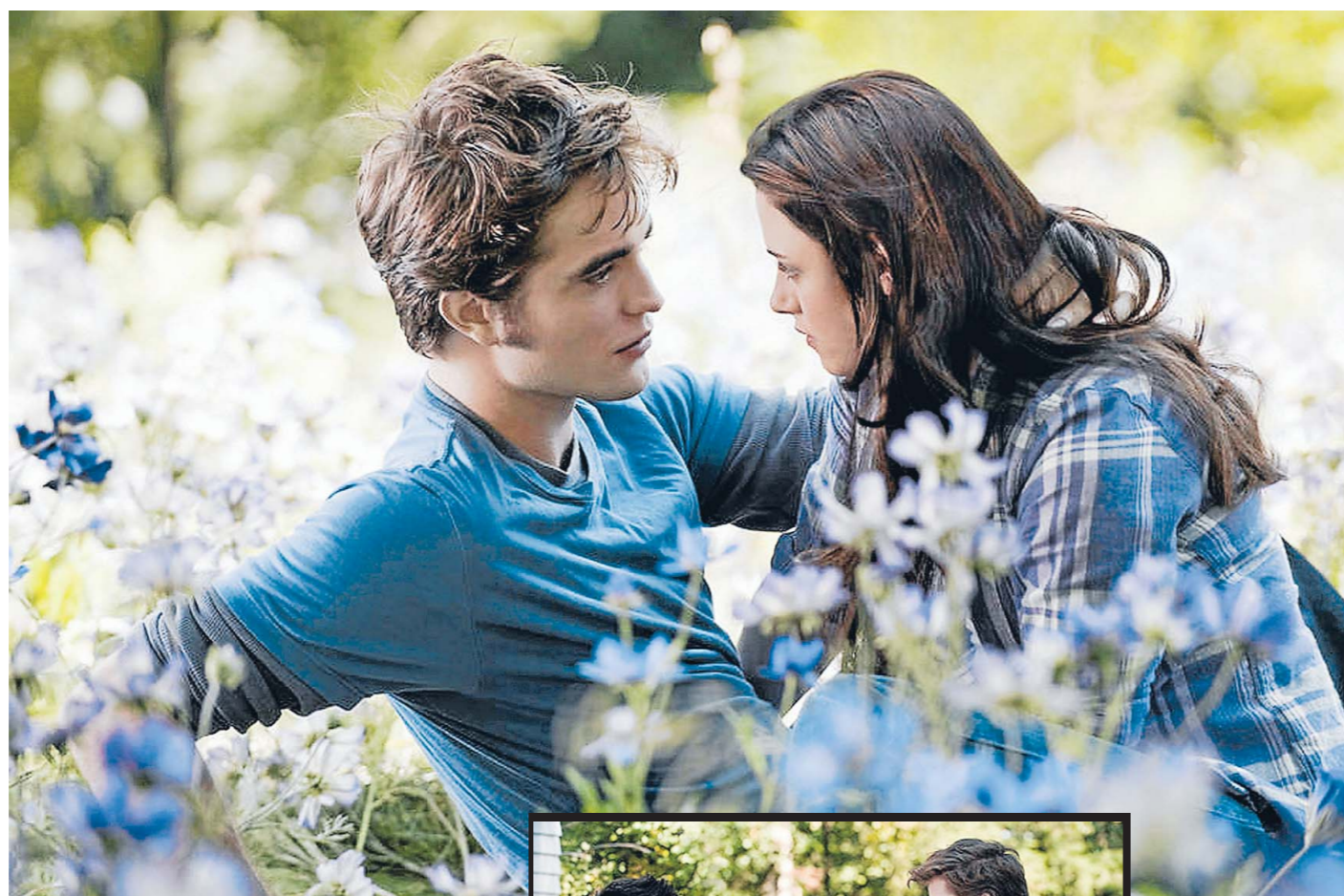
The Undy 500 is always a highlight, especially the lovely lass in the pink underwear complete with a great chassis. My second place was enough to save mum buying me my next set of underwear as I received a \$150 H & J's voucher.

Again the lovely, fake tanned, sparsely attired Hush Spa gals took centre stage with their raunchy Bird Man effort, that hot tub may not have risen above the clouds and claimed the distance points but the act sure got a rise out of some of the males in the crowd.

When the country comes to town for the Speight's dog derby it's always carnage and the slopes of Coronet Peak have never seen anything like it, barking and urinating dogs running amok and owners tumbling their way down the mountain, hopefully with faithful mutt in tow. Jose, the wee dog I borrow, looks forward to it all year and when I turn up in some ridiculous attire, he is as excited as teenager finding dad's dirty magazine stash.

Today I attempt to retain my men's open title in the converted Grab a Seat suitcase race. While I will not be repeating last year's naked efforts, I have a few tricks up my sleeve. This is one event where being older doesn't count against you; gravity is more important than fitness.

You can call me old but you can't call me stupid, or at least not in the context of this enigmatic week of fun and frivolity.



Twilight : Eclipse
Reviewed by:
Cassandra Pokoney

TEAM EDWARD or Team Jacob. Which are you? It was a question emanating freely from the lips of hundreds of people in Invercargill on Wednesday night as they prepared for the southern premiere of the most anticipated movie of the year - *Twilight: Eclipse*, the latest instalment of the *Twilight* saga.

For the record I, like thousands, if not millions, of people worldwide am firmly and completely Team Edward.

The young girls sitting in the seats beside me on Thursday were clearly Team Jacob - they applauded when he took his shirt off.

Never before has the competition between the two been so fierce as in this latest offering by the *Twilight* team.

The movie opened in Invercargill on Thursday at 12.01am. Hundreds of avid fans (Twihards they are apparently called) packed Reading Cinema eager for their bite of the worldwide phenomenon.

Less vampire flick, more Mills & Boon novel, the movie series has captured the hearts of millions. And it's easy to see why.

The cast is beautiful, the scenery gorgeous and the storyline captivating.

It is a storyline that every teenage girl dreams about, minus the vampires and the werewolves, of course: meeting the boy of your dreams, falling in love, and spending eternity with them.

The reality for Bella (Kristen Stewart) and Edward (Robert Pattinson) is, of

course, that for them, eternity is exactly that. Doomed to everlasting life as a 17-year-old, Edward spends much of *Eclipse* trying to convince the mortal Bella not to transform. She isn't listening.

Underpinning the tale are the complications brought on by enemy vampires bent on revenge, and a tangled love triangle with werewolf Jacob (Taylor Lautner).

For Lautner's Jacob, who delivers arguably the most tongue-in-cheek line of the film to his on-screen nemesis Edward - "I'm hotter than you" - the film is a breakthrough. While the second film in the saga, *New Moon*, saw him move out of the shadows of the minor roles, *Eclipse* is his shining moment. The fact that he

spends much of the film shirtless probably doesn't hurt his star appeal.



for Jacob are brought to the fore and finally acknowledged. The revelation leads to all sorts of problems, and the resulting tension between the two male leads is almost palpable.

For Bella, a girl who clearly isn't comfortable feeling happy, the story is also an awakening of sorts - her feelings

Added to the mix is evil Victoria (played this time by Bryce Dallas Howard) and her legion of "newborn" vampires she is using to avenge the death of her beloved James - her target, the Cullen coven, and Bella.

The result is an immensely watchable film, filled with beautiful scenes and breathtaking cinematography.

There are a few graphic moments - more so than in the previous two instalments - but they aren't gratuitous, and climactic scenes between the warring factions are edge-of-your-seat, nailbiting stuff.

But at its base, *Eclipse* is a love story - or at least part of it. And in this film there are plenty of swoon-worthy moments able to satisfy even the hardest of hearts.

It is a film to watch alone, or with friends, on the big screen, or small.

Just make sure you have seen the first two instalments first. The story won't make any sense if you haven't.

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