‘Jaws 2’ a soggy remake

By Barry J. Glenn
Gamecock Staff Writer

Here’s a great idea for a thrilling summer movie. Take a great white shark and have him terrorize a bustling resort town. Enter the diligent police chief of this town who assumes the role of hunter, determined to nail this beast before it devours everyone in sight.

Sound familiar? It was the plot of the original “Jaws” and is precisely the plot of its sequel “Jaws 2”, which is now showing at Richland Mall Theatres. Except this time the director has unleashed a multitude of teeny boppers upon the viewer, to the point of making this film seem like a Saturday morning kiddie adventure.

Indeed this sequel is geared toward a teenage audience and is crammed full of scenes showing young beach bums sailing, making out, cursing and being attacked by sharks. It all becomes pretty old after a while, as this shark seems to have a taste for these young delicacies.

All of this “action” again takes place in or around the waters near the fictional town of Amity. Again, Roy Scheider plays Martin Brody, the police chief whose destiny is to eventually meet this monster jaws to face and make this world safe for water sports once again. But surrounded by all of those kids, Scheider comes off looking like Dean Jones in a Walt Disney movie.

This is not to say that “Jaws 2” does not have some exciting moments. But after a while it all becomes too predictable. The same old plot begins to unravel as the film becomes nothing more than a combination of tame, dying scenes (not much gore this time) and near misses. It gets to the point where anytime a human steps into the surf to get his toes wet, we expect to hear John Williams’ bass score signalling the approach of the shark. The guessing game becomes not how the movie will end, but who will get killed before the shark does.

And all the while, the teenagers curse the shark, pray for their lives and act like — well, like teenagers. Poor Scheider is alone in his quest for this beast. Nobody believes his warnings, and there is no Quiet or Hooper to help him out as in the original movie. So all we can do is sit and watch him while most of the other dull characters sit around cursing at him, the shark or God.

“Jaws 2”, like its predecessor, will make a bundle this summer. And even though it’s a good summer fun for the kiddies, you begin to wonder if the sharks will run out before the sequels do. God only knows what will visit Amity next year — maybe “Son of Jaws”?

And just when you thought it was safe to go back in the theatre.

Deceptive bachelors subject of ‘Importance of Being Earnest’

By Barton R. Van Beenan
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The University Repertory Theatre performed their second production last week. Their performance of Oscar Wilde’s “The Importance of Being Earnest” was met with considerable favor from the audience.

The three act play deals with the subject of bachelors, deceitful ones in particular. The two main characters, Algernon Moncrieff and John Worthing, use fictitious alter egos to escape from their sometimes boring social commitments. For example, John Worthing utilizes a character by the name of Earnest, who he claims to be a wild, wayward brother living in the city. If John is out in the country, he goes by the name of John or Jack; in the city he becomes the fictitious Earnest.

Other prominent characters are a girl named Gwendolyn and her mother, Lady Bracknell. These two are related to Algernon, and while visiting him they happen to meet John Worthing, who is presently in his guise as Earnest. During the course of the evening, “Earnest” proposes to Gwendolyn, to the obvious consternation of Algernon. Earnest pays for his deceitfulness at least in parts; he has to go through a grueling and ridiculous third degree session with Lady Bracknell.

In act II, more trouble arises when Algernon learns that John has a beautiful ward staying at his country estate. Algernon rushes over, and under the guise as the much used Earnest, proposes to the girl, who readily accepts. After they have left, John enters with several other key figures and informs them that his brother Earnest died in Paris recently.

A ridiculous situation ensues by the two scheming bachelors when the young ward discovers that both men are named Earnest. They become embroiled in a battle trying to disprove each other’s claim to the name Earnest. The girls quickly discover how they were deceived and hastily depart. Algernon and John decide that they will go back to using Earnest as their social scapegoat, despite whatever problems they have just had with the facade.

The masterful production was greatly aided by the more than competent stage crew. They smoothly shifted the stage from a London flat to a country garden. For their efforts they received a standing ovation from the audience.