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This Week's Highlights



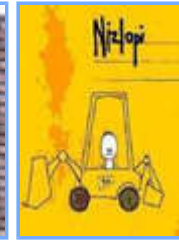
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- Cert: 
- Cat.no: TS001
- Running time: 70 minutes
- Year: 2004
- Pressing: 2004
- Region(s): 2, PAL
- Chapters: 18 plus extras
- Sound: Dolby Digital 2.0 (Dolby Surround)
- Languages: English
- Subtitles: None
- Widescreen: 1.85:1
- 16:9-Enhanced: No
- Macrovision: No
- Disc Format: DVD 5
- Price: £12.99

Dom Robinson reviews

Eightball

There are no rules in this game...

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- **Extras: Deleted scenes, Making of, Teaser Trailer, Special FX and Location Tests, Audio Commentary**

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Director:

Robert Allison (*Eightball, Short: Grave Matter, Tranquil Repose*)

Producers:

Richard Allison and Jack Vine

Screenplay:

Robert Allison

Music:

Sam Yates-Smith and Ryan Burrows

Cast:

Jon: Max Woollen
Claire: Jemma Garrard
Lytton: Nick Kirk
Tony: Chris Eaglestone
Snipe: Richard Allison
Gummer: David Power
Sam: Jon Barker
Cameron: Aime Lumbuyaka
Klaus: Lee Cooper
Darrol: Sam Yates-Smith
Butch: Jack Vine

***Eightball** is a low-budget movie and the first feature-length one for writer/director **Robert Allison**.*

The plot is far from an original one as hitman Jon (**Max Woollen**, below-right) plans to do one last job before calling it a day, and it involves a cocaine deal between himself and his best friend Butch (**Jack Vine**) and three Germans, but then imitation can be the sincerest form of flattery and we all know of the success that came for Quentin Tarantino after his feature-film debut [Reservoir Dogs](#). was assisted by the existence of Ringo Lam's [City on Fire](#).

However, a mysterious sniper looms initially out of sight as the transaction takes place on the



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**Me and my
Aortic Valve!**

beach, and you know it's not going to have a happy ending. Butch ends up dead and Jon has to put his skills into practice to survive. The sniper escapes, and Jon knows that he can't just continue to pretend to his girlfriend Claire (gorgeous up and coming actress **Jemma Garrard**, right) that he's working in IT and his friends keep 'leaving town' from time to time.

With help from another associate, Tony (**Chris Eaglestone**) and two of the best men for the job, Sam (**Jon Barker**) and Cameron (**Aime Lumbuyaka**), the latter with his home-made super-charged weapons, it's going to take some doing to rid the place of crime boss Lytton (**Nick Kirk**), who lights his cigars with an 8-ball-shaped lighter, and who Jon still has a score to settle from an earlier time when a game of pool didn't go to plan.

Before this is all over, he'll have to rescue Claire from Lytton's kidnapping clutches, engage in a car-park shoot-out after a romantic shopping trip and have a quick scrap with some council-estate chavscum.

Although without the special FX of the first film this movie has a comparison with, *Eightball* comes across like a low-budget *True Lies* meets [Max Payne](#), as Jon swaggers about like the assassin in the computer games based on the latter character, and there's entertaining use of slomo and speedup during fight scenes, with amusing sound FX to match.

The dialogue and acting can be a bit like that found in the cut-scenes and CGI of many computer games - although Jemma Garrard comes across better than most onscreen - and don'tcha just know it when Jon's got a '555' phone number. I also like the way when Claire discovers what he's really been doing for a job, after the car park incident, she just shuts the door in his face in the flat, at first, as opposed to having a real go at him.

There's a few scenes here which would rival even a mainstream film in terms of gauging interest and making it a worthy watch. And, if we do get a sequel, let's hope Jemma gets to go all guns blazing as well!

The film is framed at 1.85:1 widescreen but while the website states the DVD is anamorphic ("enhanced for widescreen TVs"), the disc I received was not. However, while the picture occasionally comes across as a little soft, due to the filming on digital cameras and the encoding of the film into Adobe Encore DVD, what does shine through is that there's great picture composition throughout, combining the juxtaposition of both fore- and background in shots that require the stylish touch, so director Robert Allison is certainly confident of the look he's aiming for and is achieving that each time.

The sound is in stereo only, but shoot-outs and special FX come across perfectly well, but a handful of times I did see that there is some slightly-out-of-sync dialogue.

The extras on this DVD are listed below. Film clips and test footage comes in either anamorphic or letterbox 16:9, and non-movie content is in 4:3.



- **The Making of Eightball** (13½ mins): Brothers Robert (director) and Richard (co-producer) Allison discuss how the movie came to being and there's work-in-progress and other test footage throughout along with the premiere screening of the movie.
- **Teaser trailer** (1½ mins): Matted to about 2.00:1, it would've been good to see the whole film in a 2.35:1 ratio as is possible with digital cameras nowadays.
- **Special FX test** (1 min): If you go down to the woods today, you'll see co-producer Jack Vine and another crew member shooting at each other, with slow motion bullets travelling about.
- **Beach location test** (2 mins): Test footage, as partially seen in the 'making of'.
- **Deleted scenes** (8 mins): Three scenes which had to get cut, for various reasons I won't explain as they'll spoil the plot, each with introductions from the Allison brothers.
- **Audio commentary**: with Robert & Richard Allison and producer Jack Vine.

The DVD was mastered using Adobe Encore DVD which can produce some cool home-made menus, incorporating a section of music that repeats on a loop. There are no subtitles which is a shame - these are possible with the program but it isn't something I've tried yet, although I don't use it a great deal compared to a standalone DVD recorder I use, turning to the PC to clone the end result to a DVD-R. Also, for a 70-minute film, 18 chapters are most welcome.

FILM CONTENT	
PICTURE QUALITY	☆☆☆☆☆
SOUND QUALITY	☆☆☆☆☆
EXTRAS	☆☆☆☆
OVERALL	☆☆☆☆☆

The following is a list of all the Jemma Garrard material online to date :

- 2004 [Eightball on DVD](#)
- 2005 [Interview with Jemma Garrard](#)

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