'Putney Swope' runs wildly well

Downey gets better overall score

By Robert Fouser

Robert Downey's first short, an enormous science fiction feature film, *Chafed Elbows*, opened on a few one-screen locations in an obscure Greenwich Village movie house, on a double bill with another underground film, *Rising*. The pair proved so unpopular they were moved to a commercial Village theatre, where they managed a successful run. His second film, *Chafed Elbows*, which premiered there soon after, was hardly thrown together for the occasion and the quality suffered; but it was popular nonsense.

Finally, last summer his latest film, *Putney Swope*, opened in New York at Cinema II, a feature house in the Rugoff chain reerved for films expected to enjoy long runs (in Bronco, it's now at the Paris Cinema, where *The Lion in Winter* just finished a 40-week stay).

In short, Downey's come a long way; the question now is: is this worth the coming? *Chafed Elbows*, after all, was little more than a string of outrageous (largely "dirty") jokes, linked by something resembling a plot. Sometimes they worked, and it was funny, sometimes they didn't, and it was a bore. On the whole there were more of the same, and so it was entertaining, if not too impressive.

*Putney Swope*, in parts, is more of the same, and with a comparable level of success. More's been added, however, in terms of character, social significance—and, perhaps surprisingly, the humor is of a more acceptable vein.

The stage is set for a "here's something else instead. Underney's greatest inspiration was to bring about reform, and changes the world."

Though it begins in Texas and ends in Florida, *Midnight Cowboy* didn't have the same impact. Joe Swope, the character of the title, is funny, contemporary, him.

By Jeff Gale

The soft parade (Electra) marks a departure for the Doors from their old ways. Listening to the album, one would never suspect that this was the group that peeped out Miami. The influence of James Holtman, Electra's president and production overseer, is at the dominating presence.

The album opens with two cuts designed for Jim Morrison's bare- tone singing voice as opposed to his shouting voice. Both songs are by Robbie Krieger and showcase Morrison's vocal talents in a baryonic brass. *Till All The People* is almost a "choke-hock" number, "Touch Me" however, is easily acceptable with Curtis Amy's sax solo really getting it on. Not that this album is so radical a change. Shankman's Blues, *Easy Riders*, The Wild One are all reasonable cuts in the classic Doors vein. *Do It* fails mostly because of the repetitiveness of

Go see 'Putney Swope'. A pacesetter with outrageous wit, courageous creativity, guts and intelligence. Tells it like its never been told before.