

8/26/03



### THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS

"The Two Towers" (\$29.95; New Line) is a thrilling film that comes loaded with extras such as two making-of specials and a 10-minute sneak-peek at December's "Return of the King" (see story.) But you shouldn't get it. If the special edition of "The Fellowship of the Ring" is any indication, the November special edition of this movie (a half-hour longer) will blow away the theatrical version presented. Buy it if you must, but you'll be buying it again in the fall.

### "ANIMAL HOUSE" SPECIAL EDITION

Watching this famous gross-out movie 25 years later (\$19.98; Universal), what's most striking is how innocent it is. Food fights? John Belushi imitating a pimple? Toga parties? Oh, that college students today could be so unblemished by drugs and disease and political correctness that their greatest fear was the Nazi-like fraternity out to blackball them from fun. The extras include a widely seen new documentary.

### "ER" FIRST SEASON "WISEGUY" SEASON 1, PART 1

Wow, what a good show "ER" (\$59.98; Warner Bros.) once was! For five or six years, it provided great entertainment and a crash course in medical terms. It started off running, with great episodes such as Dr. Greene's delivery from hell in "Love's Labor Lost" and many more. The extras include commentary on three episodes, mini documentaries, a guide to medical terms and outtakes. "Wiseguy" (\$69.99; StudioWorks) never came close to "ER's" commercial success, but it paved the way for "The Sopranos" and more. Star **Ken Wahl** is undercover and under constant threat of danger as he tackles Atlantic City mobster Ray Sharkey.

### "THE SIMPSONS" THIRD SEASON "THE STORYTELLER"

"The Simpsons" (\$49.98; Fox) could do no wrong in its third year. From the season opener, spoofing **Michael Jackson**, it delivered one brilliant show after another. Extras include trivia, outtakes, story boards and commercials. Looking for family entertainment that's less in-your-face? Try "Jim Henson's The Storyteller," a captivating series (\$24.95; Columbia TriStar) that retells nine fairy tales with a combination of puppetry and live action.

### "CHER: THE FAREWELL TOUR" "SINEAD O'CONNOR: GOODNIGHT, THANK YOU"

**Cher** (\$24.99; Image) insists she is saying goodbye to the road with this hilariously over-the-top Miami concert featuring a modest 10,000 costume changes and hits from "Half Breed" to "If I Could Turn Back Time." Lots of extras, of course, because more is better. **Sinead O'Connor** says she is also done but comes out in one outfit and the camera stays close on her face throughout. O'Connor whispers and keens her way through Irish standards and pop classics such as "Nothing Compares 2 U" and "Fire of Babylon" in a one-hour show that's quietly thrilling (\$20.98; Eagle Vision). Extras include a documentary and a handful of videos.

### Also out:

"Raising Victor Vargas" is a real find — a sweet comedy about a New York kid trying to win the heart of a pretty girl while keeping his slightly mad grandmother at bay (\$24.95; Columbia TriStar); one of the few remaining **Woody Allen** flicks (from 1966) comes to DVD asking the question, "What's Up, Tiger Lily?" (\$19.99; Image); "Johnstown Flood" is a one-hour documentary narrated by **Richard Dreyfuss** about the 1889 disaster (\$27.95; Inecom) "Will & Grace: Season One" set a high standard the sitcom has struggled to maintain (\$44.99; Lions Gate).

### Coming out next Tuesday:

"Alias: Season One" lets newcomers catch up with this convoluted spy game; **John Cusack** won't run for president but he will campaign for the thriller "Identity"; "CSI: Season Two" offers more puzzlers for armchair forensic specialists; and Monty Python promises to reveal "The Meaning of Life."