

Gere romances, deceives Foster in intriguing French remake



By **STEPHEN BROWN**
Staff Writer

"Sommersby," the new film starring Richard Gere and Jodie Foster, is a motion picture of uncompromised artistry.

A reworking of "The Return of Martin Guerre," a French import, "Sommersby" provides insight into trust, honor and the essence of love.

Jon Amiel, who most recently directed Barbara Hershey and Keanu Reeves in "Tune In Tomorrow," crafts "Sommersby" with the words of a poet, the landscape of an artist and the romance of Hollywood's boldest achievements.

Using the plot framework of the French original as a jumping-off point, Amiel sets his tale in the American post-Civil War South. Foster plays Laurel, a woman left alone to take care of her land and child after her husband has been missing for six years in the war.

Claiming to be her long-lost husband Jack Sommersby, Gere arrives in town and immediately gains the trust of the masses.

Laurel has her doubts, however. The Jack Sommersby she

remembered was a man who made love to her once in a drunken stupor, a man who beat her and verbally abused her, a man who was crass, racist and insincere.

Could this man who resembles her husband be the same man she remembered? Would she want him to be?

The premise is intriguing, and watching Foster and Gere make their new love work is exhilarating.

This man who claims to be her husband is an intellectual who treats her kindly, spends time with her son and takes special care to help the people of the community, no matter what class or color they are. Even if he were an imposter, would she feel any less in love with him?

Complications arise involving shady events of Gere's past and a jealous man whom Foster intended to marry the following year if her husband had not returned.

James Earl Jones turns in a sterling performance late in the film that breathes further life into an already thrilling story.

Never before has Gere been such a presence in a film. His tragic hero is an enigma in common man's clothes. He takes his acting seriously, and the result is his finest performance to date.

Even better is Foster, who in this role proves her status as a charming romantic lead. The fragility she

brought to her "Accused" role and the intensity she brought to her "Silence of the Lambs" part are coupled in the type of outstanding female performance that the past year lacked.

If this movie had been released in time for 1992 Oscars, Foster would accept her third statuette.

Filmgoers have witnessed the 30-year-old actress grow up on the screen, and "Sommersby," her 31st motion picture, displays her ability and beauty at the peak of performance. Her talent of communicating with her eyes is one of her greatest attributes, and the audience can tell what is going through her character's mind at any given time.

"Sommersby" avoids typical film formulas to achieve a moving portrait of a couple's life together. You might need a handkerchief as the film enters its stirring climax.

Some surprising choices for creative artists working on this movie, including the unusual pairing of Gere and Foster, paid off in a major way. Even "Batman" musical writer Danny Elfman creates an epic mood with his haunting compositions, and "Star Trek 6" screenwriter Nicholas Meyer combines the right tones for the screenplay.

"Sommersby" is a masterpiece of complexity and honestly assesses the way people can love each other under the most unusual of circumstances.

Field hockey scores interest

By **STEPHEN BROWN**
Staff Writer

Three sophomores are forming a field hockey club on campus, and they say response from interested students has been staggering.

Heather Agler, Nicole Ferrari and Julie Wimmer all played field hockey at their high schools in the North and were shocked to find that it is not a common sport in South Carolina.

"When I talked to people who work here about coming to USC, I asked if they had a recreational field hockey team, and they told me there was," Agler said.

Although USC offers floor hockey and roller hockey, there is no existing field hockey club.

The three founders have submitted a petition to campus life in order to make their club official.

Filing a petition and drafting a constitution are two of the steps in gaining representation on Sports Council.

Like rugby, sailing or equestrians, field hockey will be an official club sport once the paperwork is completed. Although they will go a year without funding, they say money will be available

to them the following year.

"We just miss the sport," Ferrari said. "For now, we plan to play each other and practice for future competitions."

The club founders hope to play this traditional fall sport year-round, weather permitting.

They held an organizational meeting at the P.E. Center Jan. 26, and about 50 people showed interested in playing.

Wimmer, who coached a junior high team for two years, said experience is not necessary to join the team and coaching will definitely be available.

"Camaraderie is important during the season," Agler said. "A field hockey team is like a big family. It's a lot of fun."

Of the people who expressed interest, about one-third had never played before, and two-thirds had some experience already, according to the three founders.

"We've talked to people who have played on the international level and some who are just learning the rules," Wimmer said.

Agler, who played three years on her high school varsity team and was awarded most valuable player, said, "The game requires a lot of stick control. You have to

work as a team."

Wimmer said the sport is a lot like soccer, but it has some distinct rules that separate it from any other sport.

Obstruction, the rule "to always give equal opportunity to the ball," and advancing, the illegal touching of the ball below knee level, are just two of the unique spins in the game's rules.

Field hockey sticks cost between \$30 and \$100, but good ones can be purchased in the lower part of the price range.

The ball used is a little harder than a baseball.

"Believe me, I know," Ferrari said, referring to a black eye she once had in high school.

"You may get bruised in the game," Agler said. "But you don't mind because your adrenaline is pumping the whole time."

For now, the sport will be co-ed, but if enough people express interest, it may eventually split into a men's team and a women's team.

In their planning stages, the founders hope to hear from anyone interested in the emerging sport. For more information, call Julie Wimmer at 544-0357.

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