

NEW YORK POST

THE WIT HITS THE 'FAN'

By KYLE SMITH

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PATTON Oswalt gives a sharp performance as a doughy New York Giants fan in the black comedy "Big Fan."

Paul (Oswalt), a.k.a. "Paul from Staten Island," as he is known on sports talk radio, is a 36-year-old parking attendant who spends his work hours carefully scripting speeches for the call-in show he listens to every night. His life is fully lived through the exploits of a Lawrence Taylor-like linebacker and the Giants' prospects of thrashing the Eagles to capture the NFC East crown.

Such is his obsession that for home games, he drives to Giants Stadium, has himself a tailgate party -- and then watches the game on a TV in the parking lot. He lives with his mother (who, in a hilariously "Seinfeld"-ian sequence, accuses him of dating "your hand"). Meanwhile, his arrogant brother is an ambulance chaser who is so successful he stars in his own homemade TV commercial.

Superb Noo Yawk attitude, dialogue and performances (including one from the essential Kevin Corrigan, now well into his second decade of being indie movies' dirtbag on demand) keep the movie lively and tart, but it also turns out to have a surprising plot with a few twists you won't see coming.

"Big Fan" is a small, dark, uncuddly thing, but sports fans will get it. The directorial debut of Robert Siegel, who wrote the Mickey Rourke Oscar nominee "The Wrestler," suggests Siegel may be at the start of an all-pro career.

BIG FAN Right back at ya. Running time: 90 minutes. Rated R (profanity, violence, disturbing situations). At the Angelika, Houston and Mercer streets.



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