

Golden Globes no longer ugly stepsister

outtakes

Eleanor O'Sullivan

If last week's Golden Globes awards influence the upcoming Oscars (March 23) — and they often do — you can bet there will be much moaning and groaning the morning after about the banal predictability of it all.

Moreover, the Globes' pair of delightfully unpredictable moments (Ving Rhames turning over his "Don King: Only in America" award to his idol, Jack Lemmon, and Christine Lahti being summoned from the bathroom to accept her "Chicago Hope" award) injected more oomph into the proceedings than the stuffy Oscars have seen since David Niven shamed a breaker in 1973 ("For showing off his shortcomings," Niven cracked.)

Similar projections: Look for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' voters to copy the Globes — awarded by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association — by tilting the evening toward "As Good As It Gets" and "Titanic."

The former won the best musical-comedy and actor and actress awards, while the latter won best dramatic film and director awards.

Those wins broach an intriguing question: How will Jack Nicholson and Helen Hunt, winners for "As Good As It Gets," top their gushing Globes' acceptance speeches — or make Oscars? And how can "Good Will Hunting" screenwriting winners Matt Damon and Ben Affleck, set to star in Kevin Smith's "Dogma," be as effusive the second time around?

Their gushing reveals an interesting change in emphasis: For years, the Globes were humble and virtually ignored, relegated to a late Saturday night airing on a nonbig-network (Channel 11 in New York). They certainly posed no threat to the hoopla-mad Oscars. In the '90s, the Globes were the



● "Good Will Hunting" stars Minnie Driver and Golden Globe winner Matt Damon: Will he be as effusive at the Academy Awards in March?

object of fun and skepticism, especially in the era when they named Pia Zadora Star of Tomorrow.

But in recent years, with competition for moviegoers' and video watchers' dollars growing more intense, the Globes are inching up in coverage, if not prestige. Print and broadcast advertisements now prominently ballyhoo a Globe win right up until the day of the Oscars' ceremonies.

Do I think all the Globes' winners will prevail at the Oscars? Certainly not. For one thing, there are 5,500 voting members of the academy, so the chance of one mind-set prevailing is much smaller than there was among the Foreign Press Association's 90 members.

The Globes shared one regrettable

element with the Oscars: an honorary lifetime award that enabled its winner (Shirley MacLaine) to blather on. But perhaps the Oscars can take a cue from the Globes by setting the ceremonies in an informal room with dinner tables, which was their original setting. It's time to bid adieu to the impersonal, pseudo-grand Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

Add him to the mix

The list of locally grown filmmakers continues growing. Add to it Paul J. Bracco, 25, a graduate of Holmdel Township High School (class of 1991) who is now in post-production on his first feature, "The Court." Bracco is writer, producer, director and lead actor in the

film, which he's shopping around to festivals.

Bracco is based now in the Red Hook section of Brooklyn, where his family settled from Sicily three generations ago. But fond memories of his Monmouth County school days persist; he said that acting teacher Anthony Mangan and the school's former art teacher, John Kavalos, were instrumental in guiding him toward a filmmaking career.

What was that?

Best want ad of the week: "Blurred Midget Films: Needed are actresses and actors for upcoming projects. Send head shot and biography to: Blurred Midget, P.O. Box 2, Belford, N.J. 07718." It got my attention.