



LAWRENCE K. HO/L.A. TIMES/MCT "Argo" director Ben Affleck displays his prize backstage at the 70th annual Golden Globe Awards show at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on Sunday in Beverly Hills, Calif.

'Argo' Win At Globes Clouds The Oscar Outlook

BY STEVEN ZEITCHIK AND GLENN WHIPP

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LOS ANGELES — At a party the day before the Golden Globes, Harvey Weinstein walked up to Steven Spielberg collaborator Kathleen Kennedy and said he'd lay off campaigning on behalf of "Silver Linings Playbook," his Oscar competitor to Spielberg's "Lincoln," if Kennedy would cast Weinstein in the new "Star Wars" film she is producing. Kennedy quickly agreed.

The pair were (likely) joking. But they were serious about the stakes, which were upped on Sunday night when "Argo" swooped in and won the best picture (drama) and director awards at the Globes, leaving "Lincoln" and "Silver Linings" with just one acting prize apiece.

The development creates what many Hollywood pundits agree is at least a three-way race in the fast-moving contest for the best picture Oscar.

With six weeks until the Academy Awards are handed out Feb. 24, "Lincoln," starring Daniel Day-Lewis, remains a front-runner. Its 12 Oscar nominations topped all other movies in total number of nods.

But Ben Affleck's "Argo" is now back in the mix. The filmmaker was snubbed for a directing Oscar nomination last week — an ominous sign for its best picture prospects, given that it's been 23 years since a movie won best picture without its helmer being nominated in the director category.

Yet the film about events surrounding the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis picked up the top prize at the Critics' Choice Awards on Thursday and then laurels at the Globes, where there was hearty cheering for Affleck and his film. Some pundits now believe the directing snub could create a sympathy vote of sorts.

Hovering in the background is David O. Russell's mental-illness dramedy "Silver Linings," which last week became the first film in more than 30 years to garner Oscar nominations for best picture, director, screenplay and all four acting categories. Weinstein famously outmaneuvered a Spielberg drama with a lighter film once before: The mogul's "Shakespeare in Love" upset "Saving Private Ryan" at the 1999 Academy Awards.

Fading, but not entirely out of the best picture race, is "Zero Dark Thirty," a movie about the hunt for Osama bin Laden that won early critics awards but has caught heat in Washington over its portrayal of torture. Its director, Kathryn Bigelow, was passed over for an Oscar nomination as well.

Bigelow, along with screenwriter Mark Boal and Sony Pictures, has strained to answer some of the criticisms and questions about the film, and backstage at the Golden Globes star Jessica Chastain struggled to respond when asked whether she

Table with columns for Broadcast Stations and time slots (3:00, 3:30, 4:00, 4:30, 5:00, 5:30, 6:00, 6:30, 7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 10:30, 11:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30, 1:00, 1:30). Rows list various TV programs and their corresponding channels.

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