

Movies for Training Camps to the Games...

Below is a personal list of movies – in no particular order - that I am working on bringing to the Athens Paralympics as DVDs. This will allow small groups to watch on a laptop, despite the voltage and TV scanning line differences. I will have a projector that will allow us to show these as movies on the wall of our main grouping room in the village. These same movies would seem to be of value to show at Regional and National High Performance camps for any sport. The same goes for showing Dare to Dream, and Heroes – the highlight films of the 2000 Olympics and Paralympics, to give those never having been there, a better visual sense of what this sustained competitive excellence is all about.

I also have quite a few DVDs of concerts – and plan to bring them too, for the same recreation/performance anxiety reduction reasons. The list of those I am bringing follows the list of the movies. I have about 20 concerts in all to enjoy. If you are in town at the OTC for training camp and want to borrow a DVD, just let me know, after you and your team play some coed sitting volleyball and goalball. Please make suggestions for other movies that are helpful to have along. Will Carlin has made comments on a few of the movies, as more sport preparation notes for coaches and players, and feel free to add your thoughts for any movie to have such opening descriptions. Note that some of these included are for younger camps/groups.

One idea before Athens is to create a TEAM video - One of the better ideas is to create a video of movie clips from each player's inspirational/important to them section of a movie. For instance, while Monte Python and the Search for the Holy Grail is a comedy, the section where the Black Knight states, None Shall Pass...then keeps fighting despite losing, in order, an arm, the other arm and then both legs, is about perseverance. So get your athletes to write down a scene of import to them, rent or borrow the videos, and put them into a sequence that then at a team gathering, you can discuss the why and what about each section... ----- *Best wishes – John Kessel*

MIRACLE (2004)

The Karl Malden version was good, but this one is better, as it captures so well the preparation and moments leading to a gold medal. A must see for your team this summer, in advance of their big event. - Kessel

Stars

Kurt Russell, Billy Schneider, Eddie Cahill, Eric Peter-Kaiser, Michael Mantenuto, Nathan West, Noah Emmerich, Patricia Clarkson, Patrick O'Brien Demsey

Description

From Walt Disney Pictures comes MIRACLE, an inspiring family drama that combines hockey and history in retelling the story of one of sports' all-time greatest upsets. In 1980, amidst the tense political climate of the Cold War, Herb Brooks (Kurt Russell) took over as coach of the U.S. Olympic hockey team. With the help of affable assistant coach Craig Patrick (Noah Emmerich), Brooks selected a group of twenty amateur hockey players who faced the daunting task of bringing respectability to their country's floundering program. While Brooks was well aware that his team lacked the talent and experience of the team from Russia, he nonetheless devoted his energy to realizing his lifelong dream: to coach a team to Olympic gold. Stepping into the gaudy wardrobe of the legendary Brooks (who was a consultant on the film and died in an automobile accident just after production wrapped), Russell delivers one of his finest performances to date. Surrounded by a cast of unknown young actors, Russell captures the complexities of a man who dared to dream the impossible dream. Director Gavin O'Connor and screenwriter Eric Guggenheim deftly balance the drama of the game itself with the larger political implications the game inspired, celebrating this truly miraculous moment in time.

STAND AND DELIVER (1988)

One of my personal favorites on how to teach/coach/parent better. I have a short clip of the real Jaime Escalante also with me – showing his great pattern interrupting/fun teaching of math in action. The clip opens with him writing on a board to a new class – “Ganas, that’s what I need...Desire....the desire to learn, the ability to sacrifice to improve, the wish to get ahead, and ganas means hard work, and hard work means the future...you are the best, you know, people are watching you, looking at you, learning from you, you’re going to do it, you are the best hope of the future....” Talk about a great way to start a class...or training regime...Kessel

Stars

Edward James Olmos, Andy Garcia, Lou Diamond Phillips, Rosana De Soto

Description

Based on a true story, "Stand and Deliver" is an inspirational tale of a dedicated teacher who rescues a group of poor Latino students from potential delinquency by turning them into math whizzes. Using humor, imagination and whatever other means necessary, Jaime Escalante gets his students at a tough East Los Angeles high school so excited by learning that they are able to pass advance placement tests in calculus with flying colors. Their scores are so spectacular, in fact, that the testing board decides the students have cheated and forces them to prove their new-found knowledge by retaking the test. Academy Award Nominations: Best Actor--Edward James Olmos. Independently produced, "Stand and Deliver" was picked up for distribution by Warner Brothers for an estimated \$5 million. Winner of 1989 Independent Spirit Awards for Best Actor, Best Director, Best Film, Best Screenplay, Best Supporting Actor and Best Supporting Actress. Awards: Academy Awards (1988) • Best Actor: Edward James Olmos

Quotations

"Tough guys don't do math, tough guys deep-fry chicken for a living." -- Jaime Escalante (Edward James Olmos) to his high school math class

"There are some people in this world who assume you know less than you do because of your name and your complexion, but math is a great equalizer." -- Jaime Escalante (Edward James Olmos) to his high school math class

THE NATURAL (1984)

This allegorical tale of success and failure in America tells the story of a natural born baseball player who should have been a star but gets a last chance to shine. – Some parallel worlds with some of the older players a coach might have, even though young...Kessel

Stars

Robert Redford, Barbara Hershey, Glenn Close, Kim Basinger, Robert Duvall

Description

Farm boy Roy Hobbs (Robert Redford) is the best baseball player anyone has ever seen. His bat, handmade from the wood of a tree felled by lightning following the death of his father, is magic in his hands. But before his career can start, the mysterious Harriet Bird (Barbara Hershey) inexplicably shoots him, sidelining him for more than a decade. Fifteen years later, Hobbs returns to play for the New York Knights, whose coach, Pop Fisher (Wilfred Brimley), begrudgingly accepts the aging rookie as a member

of the team. Pop is as surprised as the rest of the team when Hobbs knocks the ball out of the park time and again and can still play a mean outfield as well. However, when the politics of the business side of the game get in the way, Hobbs has to make some life-changing decisions. Meanwhile, he becomes involved with Memo Paris (Kim Basinger), a sultry siren with her own agenda. Glenn Close plays Iris, the hometown girl whom Hobbs left behind but never forgot. Director Barry Levinson (DINER, RAIN MAN) manages to re-create the excitement of old-time baseball while telling an all-American tale of success and failure, based on the novel by Bernard Malamud. Filmed in Buffalo and New York City. The film version has a vastly different ending than Bernard Malamud's novel.

Awards

Academy Awards (1984)

- Best Cinematography: Caleb Deschanel
- Best Original Score: Randy Newman
- Best Supporting Actress: Glenn Close

Quotations

"There goes Roy Hobbs...the best there ever was...."--Roy Hobbs (Robert Redford)

"Some mistakes you never stop paying for."--Hobbs

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BEING THERE (1991)

I have a personal top five movies of all time list, and this is one of them. Maybe it is because I like subtlety over brute force, and great wit and multiple humor levels. This movie has them all. Inspiring in it's own unique way, to the very last walk by "Chance Gardner" - Kessel

Stars

Peter Sellers, Shirley MacLaine, Jack Warden, Richard Basehart, Richard Dysart

Being There is based on Jerzy Kosinski's short comic novel about a simpleton, Chance (Peter Sellers), raised in isolation whose only education came from watching TV. When he's forced out of the house where he worked as a gardener by the death of the wealthy recluse who raised him from infancy, he's fortuitously struck by a limousine carrying Eve Rand (Shirley MacLaine), the wife of a wealthy industrialist. He's mistaken, because of his well-tailored suits, for a man of means and taken to dinner with her husband, Ben Rand (Melvyn Douglas). There, as Chauncy Gardner, his blank affect is taken for seriousness and his literal pronouncements about gardening for metaphoric economic predictions. Soon he's meeting the president (Jack Warden) and becoming a star on TV--where he's a natural.

Kosinski was well known to be personally fascinated by the power of television. In Being There, which he adapted for the screen himself, he presents a comic fable about a man whose entire sense of reality came from watching television. Sellers is marvelous as the always-deadpan cipher in whom everyone he meets sees whatever it is they need to see. Shirley MacLaine, Jack Warden, and Melvyn Douglas give outstanding performances in this biting satire directed by Hal Ashby.

Quotations

"I like to watch."--Chauncy Gardner (Peter Sellers) to Eve Rand (Shirley MacLaine)

VISION QUEST (1985)

A high school wrestler falls head-over-heels in love with a beautiful artist. Wrestling is the sport, and Matthew Modine plays the high school wrestler who has some brains, too. His training is very tough (however, don't go out and start running in a rubber suit like he does wrestling has some strange ideas), his growing pains are a bit corny and the movie turns out to be oddly inspiring. If you rent it, yes, that really is a young Madonna singing in the bar. She makes a brief appearance during which she sings her hits, "Crazy For You," and "Gambler." – Will Carlin

Stars

Matthew Modine, Linda Fiorentino, Michael Schoeffling, Ronny Cox

SEARCHING FOR BOBBY FISCHER (1993)

Is chess a sport? I'm not getting into that debate here, but this movie (which is also based on a true story) is not quite a cautionary tale for parents of athletes, but it does a very fine job of showing how close the line is between allowing a child to excel at something and taking the enjoyment out of it. This may be the best movie of the bunch. – Will Carlin

Stars

Joe Mantegna, Ben Kingsley, Joan Allen, Laurence Fishburne, Max Pomeranc

Description

A sportswriter is thrilled to find his son is a chess prodigy. Taking his son into the amazing world of championship chess, he learns that loving his kid is the best way to mold a champion in this intelligent and fascinating film. Academy Award Nominations: Best Cinematography. Though he's only seven, Josh looks at a chessboard and anticipates moves that mature chess players don't even see. He's a malleable young boy with an incredible talent for the game of masterminds. When Josh begins honing his talent, playing a speedy version of the game called "blitz" with hustlers and hobos, his father decides to take him to world renowned coach Bruce Pandolfini, who claims Josh may well be the second coming of chess legend Bobby Fischer. But family struggles ensue when the mother worries that in cultivating the genius, they may be hurting the child.

Film Notes

"Searching For Bobby Fischer" is a true story based on the book of the same title by Fred Waitzkin about his experiences with his chess-playing prodigy son Josh. This is screenwriter-director Steven Zaillian's directorial debut. Producer Scott Rudin can be credited as having first brought the book to Academy Award-nominated screenwriter Steven Zaillian's attention. Zaillian, nominated for his "Awakenings" script, has turned many stories about ordinary people into compassionate screenplays dramatizing life's mysteries. For the part of Josh, casting agent Avy Kaufman issued a national talent search, hoping to find a child actor capable of balancing the challenges that accompany playing a child prodigy: familiarity with chess, ability to memorize lines, and acting skill. Kaufman provided the same assistance for Jodie Foster's 1991 directorial debut, "Little Man Tate." According to the film's production notes, the real Bruce Pandolfini, responsible for discovering Josh's talent, was technical advisor on the film. To Pandolfini, verisimilitude was the goal. According to Paramount's press kit, he worked with the cast to coach them on chess techniques, perfect their chess style and help them memorize their moves. "Innocent Moves" is the British title; "Searching for Bobby Fisher" is the U.S. title.

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AIR BUD SPIKES BACK (2003)

Stars, Cameo role of Gabby Reece.

Description

Hey, this is for the VOLLEYBALL gang first...so endure this one... Not simply content with his basketball prowess, Air Bud (who has also played football, soccer and baseball) sets out to conquer the beaches in AIR BUD SPIKES BACK as the hoop shooting pooch takes up competitive volleyball. However, when a neighborhood crime concerns his owners, Buddy, the most athletic golden retriever the world has ever known, also plays the role of detective as he tries to reveal the identity of the neighborhood menace.

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HAPPY GILMORE (1996)

Stars

Adam Sandler, Alan Covert, Bob Barker, Carl Weathers, Christopher McDonald, Frances Bay, Julie Bowen, Kevin Nealon, Richard Kiel

Description

When Happy Gilmore, a would-be hockey player, hits a golf ball over 400 yards, he realizes that his true calling lies in that sport. So, to help his grandma regain her home from the IRS, he trades in his stick and puck for a 5-iron and a tee, and enters the PGA tour. To prepare for this new career, Gilmore hires Chubbs, an ex-golf pro. Happy's "Generation X" status, and his wild, boisterous antics on the green, shake up the stuffy golf world -- particularly when groups of rowdy hockey fans show up at tournaments to cheer Happy on. This dismays Shooter, an arrogant pro who is exasperated with Happy... and will do anything to get rid of him. Can Happy elude Shooter's conspiratorial clutches? And if so, can he win enough money to save his grandma?

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DRUMLINE (2002)

Stars

Nick Cannon, Earl C. Poitier, GQ, J. Anthony Brown, Jason Weaver, Leonard Roberts, Orlando Jones, a

Description

Charles Stone III's crowd-pleasing drama spotlights the previously unheralded world of university marching bands--more specifically, the cutthroat world that energizes Southern black campuses. Devon Miles (Nick Cannon) is a Harlem teenager who receives a full scholarship to attend Atlanta A&T University based on his excellent percussion talents. However, making the transition from hip-hop street drumming to the drumline of the school's legendary marching band is more challenging than Miles expected. For one, the band director, Dr. Lee (Orlando Jones), is determined to reclaim the national championship using old-school tactics, even though his traditional beliefs appear to be leaving A&T in the dust. And then there is Sean (Leonard Roberts), the current drum leader, who is threatened by Devon's skills and frustrated by his fierce individuality. These antagonistic forces, as well as the addition of a cheerleading love interest (Zoe Saldana), combine to test Devon's previously unshakeable confidence. As the season builds toward the BET Big Southern Classic and a showdown with rival Morris Brown University, Devon must swallow his pride and learn to be a team player if he wants his band to win the championship. DRUMLINE proves that any subject can make for an invigorating work of entertainment, if handled properly.

AMERICAN FLYERS (1985)

Some people are going to be annoyed that I didn't pick Breaking Away as the biking film, but I'm guessing that most of you probably never saw this early Kevin Costner film about two brothers one of whom is dying who enter a grueling bicycle marathon. One of the performance tests in the film still motivates me when I am doing sprint training. A classic root-for-the-good-guys film (by the same guy who later went on to write Breaking Away so leave me alone), it's worth checking out- Will Carlin

Stars

Kevin Costner, Alexandra Paul, David Marshall Grant, Rae Dawn Chong

Description

Kevin Costner and David Marshall Grant star as two estranged brothers driven apart by the untimely death of their father. Marcus (Costner), the older brother, is a renegade bicycle racer and doctor who returns to his family home and discovers that David (Grant) may suffer from cerebral aneurysms, the same ailment that killed their father. In an effort to discover the truth about David and mend their failing relationship, Marcus brings his brother home with him to Wisconsin, where he works at a state-of-the-art sports medicine facility. The two brothers, although quite different, share the love of bicycle racing, and decide to go to Colorado to participate in "Hell of the West," the most difficult bike race in the country. As they undergo the grueling journey, they mend old wounds and realize the importance of family, before it is too late. Director John Badham's film features spectacular racing footage, including fast-paced rides along spine-tingling drops in the Colorado wilderness. Filmed on location at the Coors International Bike Race Classic.

Quotations

"I have a double major in Eastern philosophy and cowboy movies. The yin, the yang, and the bang-bang."-
-David (David Marshall Grant) to Marcus (Kevin Costner)

WITHOUT LIMITS (1999)

Without Limits was one of the better movies that no one saw. A docudrama about one of the greatest American runners in history, Steve Prefontaine, it does a better job than almost any fictional account of showing the obsessiveness, cockiness and hard work it takes to be the best. Surprisingly affecting.- Will Carlin

Stars

Billy Crudup, Billy Burke, Dean Norris, Donald Sutherland, Gabriel Olds, Jeremy Sisto, Judith Ivey, Matthew Lillard, Monica Potter

Description

Robert Towne's bio-pic about the legendary long-distance runner Steve Prefontaine. The picture follows Pre's Oregon upbringing, through his days at Oregon University (where he met and worked with famed running coach Bill Bowerman), through the Munich Olympics. Sadly, his career was cut short at the age of twenty-four when he was killed in a car accident, adding to the myth of this talented, inspired athlete. Golden Globes (1999) -- Best Supporting Actor: Donald Sutherland

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THE KARATE KID (1984)

Most of you probably remember this movie. It is a real audience pleaser that is unabashedly manipulative and old-fashioned in its values. Directed by the same guy who directed the original Rocky movie, the Karate Kid shows how sports can increase self-confidence particularly for teenagers. Also, I defy anyone who sees the movie not to want to go out and find their own personal Pat Morita. A fun exploration of the relationship between mentor and athlete - .Will Carlin

Stars

Pat Morita, Ralph Macchio, Elisabeth Shue, Martin Kove, Randee Heller, William Zabka

Description

In John G. Avildsen's THE KARATE KID, Daniel (Ralph Macchio) and his mother (Randee Heller) move from New Jersey to Southern California, where he's not too keen about his new home--until he meets Ali (Elizabath Shue), an attractive girl who seems to like him. But trouble looms when Ali's ex-boyfriend (William Zabka) and his gang of ruffians start tormenting Daniel. One day, as Daniel is suffering a beating at the hands of these louts, Mr. Miyagi (Noriyuki "Pat" Morita), an elderly Japanese handyman, comes to his rescue. To Daniel's amazement, Miyagi manages to take down the whole group all by himself using karate. Daniel begs to learn this ancient martial art, and soon Miyagi begins the boy's training, teaching Daniel that there is more to karate than fighting. Through a series of lessons, the wise mentor instills a sense of honor and nobility in his young pupil while preparing him for the ultimate karate showdown. However, as Daniel studies the discipline and art of karate, his enemies are learning a dirtier kind of fighting from Kreese (Martin Kove), a cold-blooded ex-marine. Ultimately, the boys will fight to the finish in the All Valley Karate Championship in a rousing and triumphant finale. Morita is a gem as the elderly father figure Miyagi, giving the character warmth, wisdom, and comic charm. Macchio's underdog character inspired an entire generation to run out and join the nearest karate school while chanting "wax on, wax off."

Film Notes

Although Ralph Macchio portrays a teenager in THE KARATE KID, he was 23 when the film was released. The film features Elizabeth Shue's first major screen role. Pat Morita uses his real Japanese first name, Noriyuki, in the credits. Morita was a real-life WWII California Japanese Internment Camp survivor. Chad McQueen, who plays Dutch, is Steve McQueen's son. Morita starred in the delightfully low-key TALK TO TAKA (2000), a short film put together by AtomFilms for \$100,000.

Quotations

"Now use head for something other than target."--Mr. Miyagi (Noriyuki "Pat" Morita) to Daniel (Ralph Macchio)

"How did you do that?!"--Daniel, after Miyagi chops the head off of three bottles with his hand "Don't know. First time."--Miyagi

"Wax on, wax off."--Miyagi, teaching Daniel karates moves

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ROCKY (1976)

If Searching for Bobby Fischer isn't the best movie, this one is. People are always surprised to be reminded that the original Rocky actually won an Oscar. It happened to be the one for Best Picture. The sequels became increasingly cheesy, but rent the first one again sometime, and you may find yourself screaming "Adrian" after your next match. This is the granddaddy of motivation films. Bring it out for the big one. – Will Carlin

Stars

Talia Shire, Aldo Silvani, Bill Baldwin, Burgess Meredith, Burt Young, Carl Weathers, Frank Stallone, Jimmy Gambina, Joe Spinell, Thayer David

Description

In ROCKY, a young boxer from Philadelphia rises from obscurity to get a shot at the world boxing championship. Director John G. Avildsen's ROCKY is the stand-up-and-cheer saga of Rocky Balboa (Sylvester Stallone), an underdog boxer who gets his million-to-one shot at love, self-respect, and the world heavyweight title. Rocky is a down-on-his-luck Philadelphia southpaw who works at a meat-packing factory while fighting at a local club. He's given the chance of a lifetime when the world heavyweight champion, Apollo Creed (Carl Weathers), chooses him as an unlikely opponent in his championship bicentennial fight. What was originally planned as a publicity stunt becomes a chance for Rocky to prove himself as a prizefighter while training with his cantankerous manager, Mickey (Burgess Meredith), to rise to the challenge. Thrilling scenes of Rocky's arduous training, including his unforgettable run up the Philadelphia Art Museum steps, are interspersed with a sweet and touching love story between the fighter and his best friend's shy sister, Adrian (Talia Shire). With the love of Adrian on his side, Rocky struggles to overcome the odds, fighting with all his heart in the glorious and brutal finale. Shot with gritty realism on the mean streets of Philadelphia, ROCKY introduced a new American cinematic hero, spurred on by rollicking action sequences and a rousing soundtrack. A triumph for star and screenwriter Stallone, who himself came from nowhere to reach the top, ROCKY is crowd-pleasing entertainment at its finest.

Film Notes

Filmed in Philly, PA, in only 28 days. ROCKY is number 76 on the American Film Institute's list of America's 100 Greatest Movies. The film received 10 Academy Award Nominations and won three, including Best Picture and Best Director (John G. Avildsen). Sylvester Stallone wrote the script in three days after watching the legendary boxing match between champion Muhammad Ali and underdog Chuck Wepner. Wepner was left standing after 15 rounds. James Caan, Ryan O'Neal, and Burt Reynolds were all favored by United Artists to play Rocky Balboa. They agreed to cast screenwriter and relative unknown Sylvester Stallone after he agreed to keep the budget under \$1 million.

Quotations

"Your nose is broken."--Mickey (Burgess Meredith) "How does it look?"--Rocky (Sylvester Stallone) "Ah, it's an improvement."--Mickey

"Why do you wanna fight?"--Adrian (Talia Shire) "Because I can't sing or dance."--Rocky

"I can't beat him. But that don't bother me. The only thing I want to do is to go the distance, that's all. Because if that bell rings and I'm still standing, then I'm gonna know for the first time in my life, see, that I wasn't just another bum from the neighborhood."--Rocky

"Yo, Adrian!"--Rocky

THE RIGHT STUFF (1997)

THE RIGHT STUFF is the epic chronicle of the seven pilots chosen to be the astronauts of Project Mercury. Also featured is the story of Chuck Yeager, the test pilot who first broke the sound barrier.

Stars

Charles Frank, Ed Harris, Scott Glenn, Barbara Hershey, Fred Ward, Harry Shearer, Jeff Goldblum, Sam Shepard

Description

This epic chronicle of the seven pilots chosen to become astronauts for Project Mercury is based on the novel by Tom Wolfe. Deep in the desert during the 1950s, army test pilots courageously fought to break the sound barrier. These maverick men would stop at nothing to achieve winning speed. Led by their champion, Chuck Yeager (Sam Shepard), they caroused at the local watering hole while sharing tales of extreme sport and bravery--until the Russians successfully sent their Sputnik satellite into the skies, and the United States government panicked, quickly launching a space program of its own. In an effort to find the right men for the job, the government searched the desert and the seas, compiling a crew of daredevil space cowboys willing to do anything for the chance to represent America in the space race. After grueling medical, physical, and psychological tests, seven men were left standing, led by American hero John Glenn (Ed Harris), test pilots Gordon Cooper (Dennis Quaid), Gus Grissom (Fred Ward), and Scott Carpenter (Charles Frank), and Navy man Alan Shepard (Scott Glenn). With the help of the media and the government, these men became overnight heroes, sacrificing their freedom and their families for the dream of space travel. This piercing exploration of the men and wives behind the mission serves as a testament to the determination of America to dominate the field of space exploration, while offering an intriguing portrait of a period in which America wanted to believe in perfect men and their perfect wives, even if the reality was vastly more complex. Philip Kaufman's gripping film also features fabulous special effects and stunning aerial cinematography.

Quotations

"Punch a hole in the sky."--Glennis Yeager (Barbara Hershey) to Chuck Yeager (Sam Shepard)

SAVING PRIVATE RYAN (1998)

Steven Spielberg's award-winning film is a brutal look at the devastation that war leaves behind, both physically and emotionally. Standouts in the film include Tom Hanks as the seemingly hardened leader, Ed Burns as the cocky New Yorker, and Jeremy Davies as the wanna-be writer who'd rather be carrying a typewriter than a gun. A closing battle nearly matches the opening scene's in impact, and Spielberg concludes matters with a present-tense bookend, as in *SCHINDLER'S LIST*, that drills the point home.

Stars

Tom Hanks, Adam Goldberg, Barry Pepper, Bryan Cranston, Dennis Farina, Edward Burns, Giovanni Ribisi, Harve Presnell, Jeremy Davies, Matt Damon, Paul Giamatti, Ted Danson, Tom Sizemore, Vin Diesel

Description

Director Steven Spielberg's World War II tour de force chronicles the journey of a GI squad on a dangerous mission behind enemy lines. Led by Captain John Miller (Tom Hanks), the unit is under orders to track down a soldier, Private Ryan (Matt Damon), so he might return home to his mother in

America, where she is grieving the unimaginable loss of her three other sons to the war. The first unforgettable 20 minutes of *SAVING PRIVATE RYAN* realistically and horrifically depicts the Normandy invasion as Miller, his second-in-command, Sergeant Horvath (Tom Sizemore), and the others in the unit land at Omaha Beach. Before the film began shooting, Hanks and the actors in his squad went through a one-week boot camp in the woods. All the actors, except Hanks, wanted to quit, but Hanks rallied their spirits by reminding them of the incredible tribulations endured by the real veterans of World War II. Production designer Tom Sanders found a beach in Ireland that perfectly matched the landscape of Normandy. Spielberg gave great credit to the Irish army who helped re-create the Omaha Beach scenes.

Film Notes

The film was shot in England, Ireland, and France. Steven Spielberg won an Academy Award for Best Director for *SAVING PRIVATE RYAN*. In preparation for their roles, the actors went through a week of boot camp with retired Marine Dale Dye-- except Matt Damon (Private Ryan), who was excused from the training so that a real-life resentment of him by the others would be formed. D day, June 6, 1944, was the largest invasion in military history--175,000 soldiers of the Allied Expeditionary Force invaded Normandy. Spielberg was honored with the Stanley Kubrick Britannia Award for Excellence in Film, presented to him by Prince Andrew for the British Academy of Film and Television Arts, in Los Angeles in November 2000.

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***REMEMBER THE TITANS* (2000)**

Stars

Denzel Washington, Will Patton, Craig Kirkwood, Donald Faison, Ethan Suplee, Hayden Panettiere, Kate Bosworth, Kip Pardue, Nicole Ari Parker, Ryan Hurst, Wood Harris

Description

While on the surface, high school football may seem like an innocent game played by the young, for the young, it is, in fact, much, much more. For millions, including many fans who are well removed from their high school years but who love to sit in those creaky bleachers every Friday night/Saturday morning, it is something akin to a religion. Director Boaz Yakin's *REMEMBER THE TITANS* captures the heart of high school football while tackling the sins of its fathers, chronicling the true story of the undefeated 1971 T.C. Williams team of Alexandria, Virginia, which was the first integrated high school team in the state. Denzel Washington brings his ever-powerful presence to the role of coach Herman Boone, who is brought in to oversee the transition to integration. Though Boone is eventually successful as a coach, the townspeople disapprove of him because he replaces the popular, entrenched former coach, Bill Yoast (Will Patton). At first, coach Yoast resents being supplanted, while coach Boone is told that his promotion was just for show--to help the integration--and that he's likely to be lifted if the team loses a game. Will the coaches and players be able to overcome their adversity and make T.C. Williams a beacon for integration in sports? Those viewers who follow history already know the answer. But *REMEMBER THE TITANS* portrays the story and delivers the inspirational result with a passion and glory that will warm the hearts of all those dedicated high school football fans who continue to bring pride to the sport.

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***THE ENDURANCE* (2000)**

In August, 1914, Sir Ernest Shackleton, a renowned explorer set sail with 27 men on his ship *The Endurance*. His plan was to be the first expedition to cross the Antarctic continent - on foot--something no other explorer has attempted before. Only a day's journey from his final destination, Shackleton's ship, *The Endurance*, is trapped in pack-ice, where she will remain frozen for the next ten months, all throughout the harsh Antarctic winter. With dwindling rations, blizzards, boredom, and illness to contend with, and only each other and their faithful sled dogs for company, the crew grows restless, and

Shackleton has his hands full trying to keep the peace on board. A turning point occurs when ice floes finally threaten to crush the ship, and the men are forced to take to the lifeboats. Now Shackleton, abandoning any remaining notions of completing the mission, decides instead to bring back his crew alive at any cost, even though the nearest outpost of civilization is on an island 800 miles away.

The Endurance is considered by many experts to be the greatest of all adventures. Miraculously much of the original story was captured on film and in pictures by the ship's photographer. Historic film clips of The Endurance shot by expedition photographer Frank Hurley, new color footage of the eerily beautiful Antarctic landscape, as well as commentary by surviving family members and narration by Liam Neeson all combine to make watching this documentary a gripping experience. To make The Endurance, the modern filmmakers went to all original locations to capture this astonishing story in color in one of the most remote motion picture shoots ever recorded.

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WHITE SQUALL (1996)

In this coming-of-age story, director Ridley Scott examines the relationships within a group of high school teens sailing the Caribbean on a year-long cruise. The crew is headed by Sheldon, a tough, fair-minded skipper who must exercise his best judgment and control when their vessel encounters one of the deadliest of all seafaring terrors--a storm of mythical proportions known as a white squall.

Stars

Jeff Bridges, Balthazar Getty, Caroline Goodall, David Lascher, David Selby, Eric Michael Cole, Ethan Embry, Jason Marsden, Jeremy Sisto, John Savage, Julio Mechoso, Ryan Phillippe, Scott Wolf, Zeljko Ivanek

Description

Eclectic director Ridley Scott here tries his hand at a coming-of-age tale, which stars Jeff Bridges as ship captain Christopher Sheldon. Based on a true story, the film is set in 1960 as a group of teenaged prep students signs on to Sheldon's floating summer school, conducted on a two-masted brigantine bound for South America. It soon becomes clear that the gruff but humane captain runs a tight ship as he drills his neophyte crew on the importance of teamwork and discipline. The boys possess a wide range of temperaments--there's the bully, the daredevil, the one plagued by insecurities, the one with demanding parents. Sheldon uses the shipboard chores as tools for dealing with their problems, reining in the obnoxious and encouraging the anxious. Since they are, after all, sailors, they also get a chance to get drunk in port and stop over at a whorehouse. Finally, the crew must confront the fabled white squall, a deadly storm so rare that even Sheldon has never experienced one. Bridges, Ryan Phillippe, Balthazar Getty, and Jeremy Sisto give fine performances in Scott's film of spectacular visual beauty.

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HOOSIERS (2000)

Basketball is king in the small town of Hickory, Indiana, so local residents are outraged when the new coach makes a few unorthodox choices concerning the high school team. But the coach's mixture of patience and toughness eventually wins over the town, and succeeds in delivering the athletes to the state championship.

Stars

Gene Hackman, Barbara Hershey, David Neidorf, Dennis Hopper

Description

Based on the incredible true story of how a small-town high school's basketball team became Indiana State Champs in 1954. This film follows the controversial outsider who came to town to teach high school history and coach basketball and who was not afraid to make big waves in a small pond. Academy Award Nominations: Best Supporting Actor--Dennis Hopper, Best Original Score.

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PATCH ADAMS (1999)

Stars

Monica Potter, Robin Williams, Bob Gunton, Peter Coyote, Philip Seymour Hoffman

Description

Tom Shadyac's (ACE VENTURA) film tells the true story of Hunter "Patch" Adams (Robin Williams), an aspiring doctor in the 1970's who attempted to treat his patients with a medicine that modern science had totally disregarded: humor. After a stint in a mental hospital where he discovers his need to help others, a young Patch enters medical school. There he develops his own methods of reaching patients as an antidote to the pomposity he witnesses in his instructors and fellow students. While his patients and fellow staff members appreciate his approach, the powers-that-be frown upon his "unschooled" methods and attempt to prevent him from practicing. Philip Seymour Hoffman (MAGNOLIA) and Monica Potter (ALONG CAME A SPIDER) co-star in this crowd pleaser based on a book by Adams.

Film Notes

Awards Golden Globes (1999); Best Actor in a Musical or Comedy: Robin Williams o Best Motion Picture, Musical/Comedy ; Academy Awards (1999) Best Original Musical Comedy Score: Marc Shaiman

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LADYBUGS (1992)

Chester Lee, a salesman gunning for a promotion, tries to butter up his boss by agreeing to coach his daughter's soccer team. One problem: the team is terrible, and it doesn't look as if they're going to have a winning season -- until Chester comes up with the novel idea of dressing up his fiancée's very athletic son in drag and having him join the team.

Stars

Rodney Dangerfield, Ilene Graff, Jackee, Jonathan Brandis, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Vinessa Shaw

Description

Chester is an under-appreciated corporate employee who, hoping for a promotion, volunteers to coach the "Ladybugs," a girls' soccer team sponsored by his boss. Previously a championship team, this year they are 13-year-old novices who know nothing about soccer. Out of desperation, Chester convinces his

fiancee's jock son to join the team ...as a girl.

LONESOME DOVE (1991)

Two former Texas Rangers leave the South Texas town of Lonesome Dove on a 2500-mile cattle drive to the unsettled ranch country of Montana.

Stars

Robert Duvall, Tommy Lee Jones, Anjelica Huston, Chris Cooper, D.B. Sweeney, Danny Glover, Diane Lane, Frederic Forrest, Rick Schroder, Robert Urich

Description

LONESOME DOVE is the acclaimed TV Western saga based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Larry McMurtry. As the story begins, two former Texas Rangers (Robert Duvall and Tommy Lee Jones) leave the Texas town of Lonesome Dove on a 3,000-mile cattle drive to the unsettled ranch country of Montana. This epic film features outstanding performances by an impressive cast that also consists of Anjelica Huston, Danny Glover, Frederic Forrest, Chris Cooper, and many more. This comprehensive release includes: "Part 1: Leaving," "Part 2: On the Trail," "Part 3: The Plains," and "Part 4: Return."

Film Notes

Winner of the 1988-89 Television Critics Association Awards for Outstanding Achievement in Drama and Outstanding Program of the year. Winner of the 1990 George Foster Peabody Award for television drama. Shot on location in Texas, New Mexico and Arizona.

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THE BIG GREEN (1996)

When Englishwoman Anna Montgomery arrives in a small Texas town to teach school, she finds a group of surly, uninspired students with no self-confidence. So she decides to form a soccer team in hopes that the competition and discipline of sports will help these misfit kids to gain some self-esteem. She is assisted in her efforts by Tom Palmer, the local sheriff who becomes Anna's assistant coach -- and then gets a serious crush on her. They call their rag-tag team the Big Green, and at first, they don't do too well in the junior league. But by season's end they have improved enough to make it to the finals. They're up against some skillful, intimidating and downright mean opponents, however; worse yet, these antagonists are coached by Tom's high school rival! Can the Big Green buck the odds and win it all?

Stars

Olivia d'Abo, Steve Guttenberg, Billy L. Sullivan, Bug Hall, Chauncey Leopardi, Hayley Kolb, Jay O. Sanders, John Terry, Jordan Brower, Patrick Renna, Yareli Arizmendi

Description

In this Disney family comedy a group of awkward, small-town misfits, inspired by an understanding new teacher, transform themselves into a championship soccer team. Elma, Texas seems like a boring place -- that is until it's transformed into a hotbed of soccer rivalry! When British teacher Anna Montgomery (Olivia D'Abo) decides to inspire her students by creating a soccer team, she recruits the past-his-prime sheriff Tom Palmer (Steve Guttenberg). Once he begins coaching the team, Sheriff Palmer seizes the opportunity to finally beat his archenemy, who has become the coach of the more sophisticated team, the Knights. Will the kids find a purpose in sports, and will Sheriff Palmer learn about victory?

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RUNNING BRAVE (1996)

Based on the true story of Sioux athlete Billy Mills. Billy attended the University of Kansas in the 60s, where he excelled in sports but had to contend with his fellow classmates' virulent racism. Billy's athletic career culminated in 1964, with the winning of a gold medal for long distance running at the Tokyo Olympiad. Mills' victory is considered by many to be one of the biggest upsets in the history of the Olympic Games.

Stars

Robby Benson, Claudia Cron, Jeff McCracken, Pat Hingle

Description

This fine production tells the true and unique story of Billy Mills, the South Dakota Sioux Indian who became the only American ever to win the Olympic Gold Medal in the 10,000 Meter Run. With an exceptional degree of determination, Mills was able to accomplish this feat under extremely adverse conditions. Filmed on location in Alberta and on the Edmonton and Drumheller reservations in Canada. Financed by the Ermineskin Band of the Cree Indians.

FIELD OF DREAMS (1989)

Kevin Costner plays a former Sixties idealist who runs a farm in Iowa with his wife and young daughter. After hearing a mysterious, heavenly voice one day, Costner turns one of his cornfields into a baseball diamond. Of course, everyone thinks he's crazy, but in time "Shoeless" Joe Jackson and other ghostly outcasts, who had previously languished in a sort of baseball purgatory, show up to play the game they still love. Soon men from all over the country join them at this baseball shrine, some just to play with the greats, others to mend the broken relationships they had with their fathers -- But all are trying to get back in touch with simpler times through the purity of America's grandest game.

Stars

Kevin Costner, Amy Madigan, Burt Lancaster, Dwier Brown, Frank Whaley, Gaby Hoffman, James Earl Jones, Ray Liotta, Timothy Busfield

Description

In this film that epitomizes the American love for baseball, Ray Kinsella, a struggling Iowa farmer (Kevin Costner), obeys a mysterious voice in his cornfield that tells him to replace part of his crop with a baseball diamond, resulting in the magical meeting of baseball heroes from the past, including Shoeless Joe Jackson, and the seven other Chicago White Sox players who were suspended for purposefully losing the 1919 World Series. Even after building the diamond, Ray continues to hear voices, and seeks the help of a hermit-like author in sorting out the mystery, which allows the confrontation of ghosts of other sorts.

Film Notes

The baseball playing field created for the movie still stands in Iowa as a popular tourist attraction. The field is actually owned by two different farmers, and they have competing souvenir stands. From November 18 to December 15, 1994, MCA/Universal offered this video for \$5.99 through a special promotion with participating McDonald's restaurants. Awards Academy Awards (1989)
o Best Original Score: James Horner
o Best Picture
o Screenplay Based on Material from Another Medium: Phil Alden Robinson

Quotations

"If you build it, he will come." -- an unearthly voice heard by Ray Kinsella (Kevin Costner)

"Oh, you're from the Sixties. Get out! Go back to the past while you can!" -- reclusive writer Terence Mann (James Earl Jones) to Ray Kinsella (Kevin Costner)

"I am pitching to Shoeless Joe Jackson." -- Ray Kinsella (Kevin Costner)

"Do you think I'm crazy?" -- Ray Kinsella (Kevin Costner) to his wife Annie Kinsella (Amy Madigan)

ICE CASTLES (1979)

Stars

Lynn-Holly Johnson, Robby Benson, Colleen Dewhurst, David Huffman, Jennifer Warren, Tom Skerritt

Description

A young skater with Olympic dreams is blinded in an accident and attempts to overcome the tragedy with the help of her loving boyfriend. Robby Benson and Lynn-Holly Johnson headline this beautiful tearjerker, getting excellent support from Tom Skerritt and Colleen Dewhurst. Academy Awards (1979) Best Song

RUDY (1994)

An ordinary kid pours his heart and soul into playing for the Notre Dame football team. Based on a true story.

Stars

Sean Astin, Charles S. Dutton, Lili Taylor, Ned Beatty

Description

High School student Rudy Ruettinger dreamed of one day playing football for Notre Dame's Fighting Irish champions. But Rudy's got two obstacles to overcome: his runty build and mediocre academic record make him an unlikely candidate for a school with Notre Dame's athletic and scholastic reputation. When college chaplain Father Cavanaugh -- won over by Rudy's commitment and perseverance -- helps him get into an affiliated community college, the young man makes good on his promise to work hard. After pulling up his grades and transferring to Notre Dame, Rudy gets the chance of a lifetime, the golden opportunity to realize his life-long dream.

Film Notes

"Rudy," the true story of Daniel E. "Rudy" Ruettinger, was written by the screenwriters of "Hoosiers" -- Angelo Pizzo and David Anspaugh. The real Rudy Ruettinger attended Holy Cross before gaining acceptance to Notre Dame. He applied to Notre Dame three times before he was accepted. After being admitted to Notre Dame, Rudy promised football coach Ara Parseghian, he'd make the team. Rudy's tenacity eventually earned him a spot on the team's scout squad. After Rudy Ruettinger accomplished his goal of playing for the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame, he realized a second goal: seeing his story on the big screen. At first it wasn't easy. "Hollywood is one crazy damned place," Ruettinger told the Boston Globe's Michael Blowen. "It was a mess... I just barged right into it, and trusted people in Hollywood."

CHARIOTS OF FIRE (1981)

This Academy Award-winning film, based on a true story, follows the rivalry between two long-distance runners competing for Britain in the 1924 Paris Olympic Games.

Stars

Ben Cross, Ian Charleson, Cheryl Campbell, Ian Holm, Nigel Havers

Description

Director Hugh Hudson's absorbing drama, based on a true story, deals with the personal struggles faced by two very different long-distance runners competing for Britain in the 1924 Paris Olympic Games. Eric Liddell (Ian Charleson) is a devout Christian who sees victory as a testament to the glory of God, while the other, Harold Abrahams (Ben Cross), is a Jewish Cambridge student who sees victory as a challenge to anti-Semitism and his ongoing struggle for acceptance by Britain's elite. Eric, a hometown Scottish hero to the people, gives rousing sermons after victory and works at a local missionary. Harold runs with a zealous commitment, upsetting Cambridge's educational upper crust (played with enjoyable wit and candor by Sir John Gielgud and Lindsay Anderson) while enjoying social life with his university chums and his beautiful showgirl girlfriend (Alice Krige). But when faced with such a competent challenger, Harold hires trainer Sam Mussabini (Ian Holm) to further his dreams of winning the gold. Ultimately, the two runners meet in Paris to run for British victory in a rousing finale. Featuring an unforgettable soundtrack by Vangelis, this Academy Award-winning film is an inspirational story of athletic excellence and spiritual awakening that captures the zeal of post-WWI Britain and the glory of the Olympics.

Film Notes

CHARIOTS OF FIRE was the official British entry in the 1981 Cannes Film Festival. The film is the directorial debut for Hugh Hudson. The film also features one of the first film roles of Ben Cross. CHARIOTS OF FIRE was nominated for seven Academy Awards and won four, including Best Picture, Best (Original) Screenplay and Best Original Score.

APOLLO 13 (1996)

Talk about Teamwork....The true story of the near-disastrous Apollo 13 mission. On April 11, 1970, gung-ho astronauts Jim Lovell, Fred Haise and last-minute, less experienced replacement Jack Swigert blast-off towards the moon. But while in space, an oxygen tank explodes, putting the trio in peril: they quickly lose oxygen, run out of power, and get exposed to dangerously high amounts of carbon dioxide. Unbeknownst to them, there are more problems to come, including emotional friction when Jack is (wrongly) blamed for the explosion. Intensifying the situation is the fact that these mishaps catch the scientists and technicians at Mission Control by surprise, and they're not sure how to remedy the situation. Everyone must work together to come up with the right answer -- if the astronauts are to survive...

Stars

Kevin Bacon, Tom Hanks, Bill Paxton, Chris Ellis, Clint Howard, Ed Harris, Kathleen Quinlan

Description

A vividly rendered dramatization of Apollo 13's true-life brush with disaster on the way to the Moon in 1971. This mesmerizing film combines computer graphics, archive footage and seamless special effects to recreate the adrenalized odyssey of Astronauts Jim Lovell, Fred Haise and Jack Swigert who battled

astronomical odds to make it back to Earth. Academy Award Nominations: 9, including Best Picture, Best Supporting Actor--Ed Harris, and Best Supporting Actress--Kathleen Quinlan. Academy Awards: 2, including Best Film Editing.

Film Notes

The film won two 1995 Academy Awards for Best Editing and Best Sound. Although Ron Howard won the Directors Guild of America award for best direction, he failed to get an Academy Award nomination. This was only the fourth time in almost 50 years that the DGA winner wasn't picked from those directors nominated for an Oscar.

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***BREAKING AWAY* (1979)**

Stars

Daniel Stern, Dennis Christopher, Dennis Quaid, Jackie Earle Haley, Barbara Barrie, Paul Dooley, Robyn Douglass

Description

BREAKING AWAY is a winning coming-of-age story with unusually well drawn characters, smart social commentary, and a terrific ensemble of fresh-faced actors soon to be famous. The rivalry between townies and college kids sets the scene for the story of four friends trying to figure out their future after high school graduation in Bloomington, Indiana. Raised together in the working-class quarry town, the boys consider themselves Cutters, proud of their father's heritage as limestone workers in the once prosperous factory town. But there is no future for the boys as Cutters, and not one of them has plans for college. So now that Mike (Dennis Quaid) is no longer a star quarterback, Moocher (Jackie Earl Haley) can't decide if he wants to break up or marry his girlfriend, and quick-witted Cyril (Daniel Stern) can no longer play the class clown, they have no idea what to do with themselves. Luckily, avid cyclist Dave (Dennis Christopher) knows exactly what he wants. He aspires to be one of the world's best bicyclists. There's only one obstacle: The leading racers are Italian, and Dave is not. A romantic dreamer, he races around his hometown, singing opera, speaking in an Italian accent, and stumping his parents with his newfangled Italian ways. When his affair with Katherine (an Italian exchange student) evokes jealousy from a few big boys on campus, Dave decides that a bike race is the only way to settle the score and prove that Cutters are not losers. The film features a remarkable performance from character actor Paul Dooley, who shines as Dave's befuddled and frustrated working-class father. Screenwriter Steve Tesich's script is an intelligent and humorous masterpiece, full of subtle humor and insightful dialogue. All the components combine to make one of the most charming comedies of all time.

Quotations

"I want an answer, Evelyn. What are we going to do with him?" Dad (Paul Dooley)

"I don't know, dear. We could strangle him in his sleep."--Evelyn (Barbara Barrie)

"They're gonna keep calling us Cutters. To them its just a dirty word. To me, it's just something else I never got a chance to be."--Mike (Dennis Quaid) to Cyril (Daniel Stern), Dave (Dennis Christopher), and Moocher (Jackie Earle Haley)

"What's the matter?"--Evelyn "He's shaving!"--Dad "Well, so what!"--Evelyn "He's shaving his legs!"--Dad

"Refund?! Refund!?"--Dad

Film Notes

Filmed entirely on location in Bloomington, Indiana. Footage from Indiana University was shot during the

summer, but director Peter Yates had to wait until September to fill the stadium with 10,000 for the bicycle race. The bicycle race is known as the Little 500. The film spawned a brief television series in 1980 with Shaun Cassidy reprising the role of Dave Stohler. The film marked the acting debut of actress Robyn Douglass. Dave's serenade is from the opera MARTHA by Friedrich von Flowtor.

Awards

Academy Awards (1979)

o Best Director: Peter Yates o Best Original Song Score and Adaptation o Best Picture o Best Screenplay Written Directly for the Screen: Steve Tesich o Best Supporting Actress: Barbara Barrie

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LAST SAMURAI (2003)

Stars

Tom Cruise, Billy Connolly, Hiroyuki Sanada, Ken Watanabe, Masato Harada, Timothy Spall, Tony Goldwyn

Description

Edward Zwick directs this sumptuously designed, action-packed period epic that stars Tom Cruise as Captain Nathan Algren. Algren, a former Civil War hero, is adrift in 1870s San Francisco after the war, a lost soul struggling to stay afloat in a booze-soaked stupor. When he is recruited by the Japanese government to train the Emperor's army, he departs for the unknown shores of Japan and begins training the soldiers in American military tactics. But these skills are useless against a band of samurai rebels led by the proud warrior Katsumoto (Ken Watanabe), and Algren is easily defeated. He is taken to a remote samurai village where he learns samurai warrior codes and ways of life, developing a deep bond with Katsumoto and sharing philosophical conversations with him. Caught between the feudal culture of the ancient samurai warriors and the encroachment of modern society, Algren is forced to choose between his own culture or Katsumoto's. THE LAST SAMURAI is lavish in its dramatic period costumes and intense performances, and will thrill fans of both historical drama and action films.

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GLADIATOR (2000)

An epic adventure that calls to mind the big-budget Hollywood films of the past, Ridley Scott's thrilling film is a raucous, engaging, and highly impressive spectacle. Maximus, a well-respected general, is stripped of his rank when the scheming Commodus takes over the Roman Empire in 180 AD. Maximus finds himself fighting for his life in the vicious gladiator arenas, where he uses his fame to spark unrest among the oppressed Roman citizens, firing up Commodus's anger and setting the stage for the ultimate battle.

Description

Ridley Scott (BLADE RUNNER, ALIEN) transports Hollywood to second-century Rome in this rousing historical epic that proudly harkens back to such films as BEN-HUR and SPARTACUS. Russell Crowe plays Maximus, a Roman general who leads the troops in conquering Germania for the empire. When an aging Marcus Aurelius (Richard Harris) tells Maximus that he'd like him to rule Rome once he's gone, a classic confrontation ensues between the brave and charming soldier--who wants to return home to his wife, son, and farm--and the jealous and conniving Commodus (Joaquin Phoenix), the emperor's only son, who is thirsty for power. Bought as a slave by the profiteering Proximo (Oliver Reed, in his last role), Maximus must kill or be killed in the ring, battling to save not only himself but the future of the very empire that he loves and honors. The film features a terrific battle sequence (that recalls the beginning of

SAVING PRIVATE RYAN), huge crowd scenes of thousands of people, and even a little romance, albeit mostly taboo. The impeccably choreographed gladiator scenes are violent yet thrilling, flashing by like lightning. GLADIATOR is a glorious spectacle filled with heart and soul.

Quotations

"At my signal, unleash hell."--Maximus (Russell Crowe) to his troops

"Are you not entertained?!"--Maximus to the arena crowd

Film Notes

Richard Harris accepted the part of Marcus Aurelius after Ridley Scott agreed to shoot his scenes on seven consecutive days. Russell Crowe had a hand in fixing the original script. Although the script is fiction, some of the characters are based on historical fact. Commodus was indeed the son of Marcus Aurelius; he took over after his father's death and fought many times in the Colosseum, although the battles were usually setups. Oliver Reed died shortly before the end of filming; his final scene had to be shot with a body double, with the help of some FORREST GUMP-style computer animation. Derek Jacobi played the emperor Claudius in the 1976 miniseries I, Claudius, which ends approximately 130 years prior to the beginning of GLADIATOR. The majority of the crowd in the Colosseum was computer-generated. The look of the film was based on Jean-Leon Gerome's painting "Thumbs Down," featuring a gladiator scanning the crowd to see if he should kill his fallen opponent. Awards Academy Awards (2000)
o Best Actor: Russell Crowe o Best Picture

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DEAD POETS SOCIETY (1989)

An unconventional English teacher in an exclusive New England preparatory school in 1959 uses poetry to inspire his students to make the most of their lives and embrace life.

Stars

Robin Williams, Allelon Ruggiero, Dylan Kussman, Ethan Hawke, Gale Hansen, James Waterston, Josh Charles, Norman Lloyd, Robert Sean Leonard

Academy Award Nominations: 4, including Best Picture, Best Actor--Robin Williams, Best (Original) Screenplay. Academy Awards: Best Original Screenplay. Shot on location at St. Andrew's School in Middletown and New Castle, Delaware.

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CONRACK (1985)

Pat Conroy just accepted a teaching assignment at an under-funded school on a remote South Carolina Island. When he arrives, Pat discovers that his pupils are all illiterate, retarded, or both. To make matters worse, the rigid administration refuses to aid him in his quest to stimulate designated "slow" students. But Pat won't give up; he's determined to give these kids all he's got. With a little pizzazz, a lot of commitment and tons of love, he'll manage to teach these kids to everything from yoga to Beethoven.

Stars

Hume Cronyn, Jon Voight, Antonio Fargas, James O'Reare, Madge Sinclair, Paul Winfield, Ruth Attaway, Tina Andrews

Description

A creative teacher in an impoverished school district in South Carolina comes into conflict with the school superintendent because of his unusual common sense teaching methods. Based on Pat Conroy's book The Water Is Wide.

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ENDURANCE (2000)

Description

The inspirational story of Haile Gebrselassie, Gold Medal winner at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. The film documents his life, from the farms of Ethiopia to international glory. A stirring and original documentary that avoids the cliches of the sports movie.

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Since the USA success at the 2004 Athens games, the following movies were added to the list for coaches and players to enjoy, from other's favorites and as new releases.

GLORY ROAD (2006)

This film tells the true story of a team that changed college basketball, and perhaps the nation, forever. Fighting racism and unbelievable odds, the Texas Western Miners learn about teamwork, commitment, and the love of the game, and surprise a nation in the process.

Stars

Josh Lucas, Derek Luke, Austin Nichols, Evan Jones, Mehcad Brooks

Description

Coach Don Haskins of Texas Western University sticks to his philosophy of playing the best five players he can find, and in the process creates history's first all-African American lineup. In a country undergoing severe social and political change, the success of the underdog Miners creates uproar in the sport of basketball. Haskins' coaching helped to break down barriers of segregation as the team makes it all the way to meet legendary Adolph Rupp and the powerhouse Kentucky Wildcats in the 1966 NCAA Championship game to play their hearts out in front of a watching world.

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COACH CARTER (2005)

Samuel L. Jackson plays the controversial high school basketball coach who benched his undefeated team due to their collective poor academic record in 1999.

Stars

Samuel L. Jackson, Robert Ri-chard, Rob Brown, Ashanti

Description

The new Coach Carter finds himself in the center of controversy when he locks out his entire Varsity basketball team (including his own son) in order to motivate and push them to improve their grades. Not only does the coach close the gym, but he also bans any and all basketball-related activities, and even threatens to cancel his entire season after 15 of his 45 players failed to live up to the classroom standards they agreed to in a contract they had signed earlier in the semester. This film brings to light just how much athletes can achieve when someone believes in them.

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THE GREATEST GAME EVER PLAYED (2005)

A golf drama based on the true story of the 1913 US Open, where 20-year-old Francis Ouimet defeated reigning champion Harry Vardon.

Stars

Shia LaBeouf, Michael Weaver, Elias Koteas, Stephen Dillane, Peter Firth

Description

Francis Ouimet was a working-class immigrant kid who--flanked by a 10-year-old caddie smaller than his golf bag--started with nothing and came out of nowhere to break down the barriers and become America's first golf hero nearly a century before Tiger Woods. In a world where it was believed only the wealthy and privileged could play, and win, at golf, it took an outsider to change the rules forever.

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SEABISCUIT (2003)

A true story of the undersized Depression-era racehorse whose victories lifted not only the spirits of the team behind it but also those of the nation as well.

Stars

Tobey Maguire, Jeff Bridges, Chris Cooper, Gary Stevens, Chris McCarron

Description

The tale of three lost men--Johnny "Red" Pollard, a young man whose spirit has been broken; Charle Howard, a millionaire who lost everything; and Tom Smith, a cowboy whose world was vanishing--who found each other and discovered hope in a down-and-out racehorse named Seabiscuit, who took them and the nation on the ride of a lifetime.

.....

BRIAN'S SONG (1971)

Based on the real-life relationship between teammates Brian Piccolo and Gale Sayers and the bond established when Piccolo discovers that he is dying.

Stars

[James Caan](#), [Billy Dee Williams](#), [Jack Warden](#), [Judy Pace](#), [Shelley Fabares](#)

Description

Gale Sayers (Williams) joins the Chicago Bears as a running back and meets the competitive Brian Piccolo (Caan). While at first the two are rivals, they soon form a strong friendship. Things take a turn for the worse when Sayers is injured and when Piccolo begins to suffer from cancer. A poignant and well-acted movie originally made for television.

.....

PRIDE OF THE YANKEES (1942)

The story of the life and career of the famed baseball player, Lou Gehrig.

Stars

Gary Cooper, Teresa Wright, Babe Ruth, Walter Brennan, Ludwig Stossel

Description

Gary Cooper plays Lou Gehrig, the first baseman for the Yanks who suffered from a crippling and incurable disease. Even when Gehrig was a student at Columbia University, the press had already pegged him as a top ballplayer. Soon the New York Yankees selected Gehrig for their lineup, and he became an overnight sensation on the baseball diamond. But this dedicated player--who had never missed a game once he stepped onto a Major League Baseball field--suddenly fell ill with a mysterious disease. As his body began to fail him, Gehrig had to say good-bye to the fans who idolized him and to the sport he loved so dearly.

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THE PISTOL (1991)

Biography of pro basketball player "Pistol" Pete Maravich, who died suddenly in 1988 at age 40 from a heart attack.

Stars

Millie Perkins, Nick Benedict

Description

The true story of young Pete Maravich, reveals the courage of a 5-foot-tall, 90 pound 8th grader who played basketball with the innocence of a child and the determination of a champion, Maravich earned himself an unprecedented spot on the high school varsity team as well as an indelible spot in sports history.

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JIM THORPE—ALL AMERICAN (1951)

The life and career of the Native American athlete.

Stars

Burt Lancaster, Charles Bickford, Steve Cochran, Phyllis Thaxter, Dick Wesson

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COOL RUNNINGS (1993)

Based on the true story of the First Jamacian bobsled team trying to make it to the winter olympics.

Stars

Leon Robinson (II), Doug E. Doug, Rawle D. Lewis, Malik Yoba, John Candy

Description

Cool Runnings goes for the gold with hilarious results. A tale of pride, determination, and dignity based on the true story of four Jamaican athletes going to extremes to compete as Olympic bobsled racers and somehow make their impossible dreams come true.

.....

FOLLOW THE SUN (1951)

Glenn Ford stars in this rites of passage drama which follows the rise of Ben Hogan, a young caddie who rises to become a golf world champion. After a horrific car crash, Hogan must find the courage to learn to walk again.

Stars

Glen Ford, Anne Baxter, Dennis O'Keefe, June Havoc, Roland Winters

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LITTLE MO (1778)

Biography of tennis star Maureen Connolly, the first woman to win all Grand Slam titles in one year.

Description

This made-for-TV biopic covers the life of teenaged tennis star Maureen Catherine Connolly (Glynnis O'Connor), better known as "Little Mo." Making a spectacular debut during the 1951 US Open, 16-year-old Maureen goes on to become the first female ever to win the Grand Slam of Tennis. But in 1953, her carrer was tragically cut short by illness, culminating in the cancer that would take her life at age 34 in 1969. To fill out the film's nearly three-hour running time, writer John McGreevey weaves in a number of non-tennis details, including her love-hate relationship with tennis instructor Eleanor Tennant (Michael Learned) and her romance with Olympic equestrian Norman Brinker (Mark Harmon).

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EIGHT SECONDS (1994)

Life story of bull-riding rodeo legend Lane Frost, who died in a rodeo at age 25, after being gored by a bull.

Stars

Luke Perry, Stephen Baldwin, James Rebhorn, Red Mitchell, Ronnie Claire Edwards