

The '80s were ... RAD?



Bryan Dixon Emerald

■ BMX-bike flick revives the awesome feeling of big hair and parachute pants



FORGOTTEN FILM

'Rad'

Columbia TriStar

★★★★☆

By Lisa Griffing and Mason West
Oregon Daily Emerald

Remember the '80s? The big hair. Those piercing, synthesized sounds coming out of keyboard guitars. Fluorescent everything. The days when you could get away with using words like "gnarly" and even "rad."

In fact, the latter term was once so influential, it was the title of a movie. Every transportation fad will eventually have a movie made about it. The skateboard movie was "Gleaming the Cube." The rollerblade movie was "Airborne." "Meatballs 4" was the water sports movie ... kinda. "Rad" is the cult-classic BMX biking movie from 1986.

Mason — I am pretty sure that within a few years Disney will have a rad movie out about a young boy and his Razor™ scooter.

Lisa — Rejection! I can't imagine 12-year-olds going 10 to 30 miles per hour on Razor scooters while doing airborne back flips. Seems like a scary prediction, Mason.

In "Rad," Bill Allen plays Cru Jones, a BMX-obsessed high-school student from the small town of Cochran. A local entrepreneur, Mr.

Timmer, played by everybody's favorite martian, Ray Walston, brings a national BMX race to the town. Racers from across the country and big bike businesses will compete for \$100,000 and a new Corvette by being the first to complete ... HELL-TRACK.

OK, the plot isn't exactly what makes this movie rad. The real gold is in scenes such as the BMX slow dance to the song "Send Me an Angel," which was in 80 percent of all '80s movies. In this memorable scene, Cru's bike skills are matched by none other than Full House's Aunt Becky, Lori Loughlin. Now, take away the bikes, and the dancing should be watched with wine and crackers.

Mason — Whatever happened to predictability?

Lisa — The milkman, the paper-boy, evening television?

Mason — Ha ha ha ha ha. That was rad.

Lisa — Mason, the correct terminology is radical. Anyhow, why did you quit singing?

Speaking of other notable appearances, Talia Shire, better known as Adrian from the Rocky series, plays Cru's mom. And making a surprising appearance as the BMX rival Bart Taylor is Olympic gold-medalist Bart Conner.

This movie is rad. Really, could it be anything else? Back in '86, the BMX stunts executed in "Rad" represented the pinnacle of "cycle skill." The movie starts and ends with superfluous footage of faceless riders doing tricks, but this movie isn't all about image. There are some real cathartic moments, like

when Cru completes his USA Today™ paper route by 7:15 a.m. That makes us feel all warm and mushy inside.

On the other hand, this movie was forgotten for a reason. The technology didn't allow for the cinematography seen in contemporary flicks and the dialogue fell short of realistic. But, it's humorous when watched with the knowledge that "Rad" is a great shuttle for feeling that '80s nostalgia. Just don't feel inspired to start wearing hot pants and tiger-striped spandex jumpsuits.

As if those didn't make people look bad enough, listen to some of the things they had to say.

"If you don't take that back, I'm gonna punch your lights out." — Wesley Jones, Cru's sister

"OK dudes, let's walk this sucker." — Cru

"How about some applause for our rad dude." — Luke, one of Cru's BMX friends

"You know, it's kind of a shame to bring this up, but this is all your fault." — evil lackey

"I'm beginning to see you as something I might have stepped in." — Mr. Timmer

"Go balls out." — Sergeant Smith

This movie makes you believe in the hometown hero. It makes you believe in miracles ...

Mason — ... and it makes me believe that I will get chicks to like me if I ride a rad BMX.

Lisa — Remember to take off your training wheels.

Mason — Hey, I have an inner ear problem! Rad!

Lisa — Sure you do Mason, sure you do.

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