

X-Men Origins claws on to screen

The bad: Cameos kill concept

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The Clackamas Print

"X-Men Origins: Wolverine," what the comic book world calls the "hockey sticks." It's a phrase that fits the movie. Watching this movie that being sent to a time out. They promised us Gambit, they promised us Emma Frost, they promised us Dead Pool... well, we got... for a whole 15 minutes each.

"X-Men Origins" starts out good. At the beginning, we are thrown into the world of Victor Creed (later known as Sabretooth) and James (A.K.A. Logan or Wolverine). Here the viewer watches James with his father figures and run off into the world with his older brother Victor... right into a series of wars. Little by little we see Victor become more of an "animal" and start attacking him back.

Thank I learned more about their past in a four minute blip than I did in the rest of the movie.

With a little luck, they catch a plane ride to their future, meeting up with some new mutants: Wade Wilson and his quick wit; Weapon X, the man Nightcrawler wishes he were on the big screen; Frederick J. Dukes, who punches a tank and it explodes; Chris Braddock, who plays with electricity; and David North (Agent Zero), the man with the guns. I'm not going to put this team down. They work well together filled with delightful moments and each have a kick-ass fight scene which are our first introduction to the terrible effects that lets the jaw drop.

But, this isn't enough for a guy with a conscience. Logan walks away from his team and the rest of the team.

Six years later, the movie finally starts. Kayla Silverfox, while sitting on Logan's lap, shadows the rest of the movie with the moon, her lover and the trickster. Logan makes an off-comment joke referencing the Beatles and Kayla reveals the English name of the moon's lover's name as "Luna".

But, this relationship is going to last about as long as I can fly. Of course, she's got to die. Victor is the one to do it.

Logan sets off a path to find and kill Victor in the name of revenge with fits of macho acts from Hugh Jackman.

With a bit of a skirmish after being infused with adamantium metal, he runs off and meets a couple on a farm who are way too understanding. Perhaps they are old Superman's parents? It would explain why they didn't die when Logan brings out their sliced bodies from sink offering to pay for the damage. Just as Victor had to take away Kayla, Logan got to kill the knock-offs of Clark Kent's adoptive parents. After the well placed cut of the helicopter scene, Logan discovers a human John McKaine (a Bruce Lee character), he can't take a helicopter with a land vehicle. He can, however, use the propeller blades to ribbons.

He tracks down John and Fredrick (now the Blob) who are perhaps the only morally good members left alive. Logan and the Blob

do a dance of manliness before Logan can get his answers.

Fredrick tells him to go find some Cajun boy who had escaped from the island.

Enter: the card-playing hunk of a man named Remy LeBeau (Gambit) that fan girls have been waiting for. Exit: the fan girls' dreams and hopes.

Someone must have forgotten to tell Taylor Kitsch to go and visit New Orleans and study their accent. Instead, the audience is left with a barely noticeable and somewhat strained southern-boy accent. At least, Kitsch is still pretty to look at and shows off his quite promising fighting skills in a pointless fight with Logan.

At least Kitsch's character is adding to the plot in a small contribution sort of way.

At this point, we're left wondering who let Scott Summers (Cyclops) into the picture? Was it just for some pissed off fan boy who wanted to see Cyclops knocked around a few times? Victor randomly hunts down Cyclops like some highschool bully in what seems a totally unneeded and rather poor placed clip.

Finally, the plot picks up again. We are introduced to a series of plot twist after plot twist. This is the point where the viewer stares at the screen, leans forward, and says, "What the fuck just happened?"

The last pointless character to appease the audience is introduced: Emma Frost. Her only real useful quality in the movie is to turn into a glittering-diamond-shaped human and help Cyclops get the rest of the teens out alive.

Now if you've been waiting this whole time to see Wade Wilson again, you'll be even more disappointed than Gambit's fan girl club. Wade is now the product of William Stryker's "Weapon XI" project... with his mouth sewn shut, so much for his witty dialogue.

Eventually, 20 minutes after it should have, the movie ends when Victor shows one of his only redeeming qualities.

In the end, I suggest conning someone into paying your ticket to watch the slaughter of this potentially good film.

The good: Wolverine's worth \$7

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We all know that when you go see a movie, there's good chance it won't be worth the 10 bucks you shelled out for the ridiculously expensive ticket. But, every once and a while, you see a movie that was worth the money. "Death at a Funeral" was one for me. "X-Men Origins: Wolverine" was worth about seven of the \$10 I had spent.

Now, I don't like to dwell on the bad and the ugly of movies. Instead, I tend to focus on what was actually good. Call me overly optimistic, but I don't like to have my hopes and dreams crushed and then salt poured into the wounds. Plus, you don't need to be reminded of the not-so-good parts; you'll remember those quite clearly yourself.

Although some of the acting was sub-par,

the writing wasn't all that horrible. Yes, at times, the powers of authority relied a little too much on the dialogue to tell the story, but it was not overdone.

I do wish that those powers had seen fit to expand on the beginning sequence for those of us that had missed the first 20 seconds because we were spending more money getting popcorn.

Undoubtedly, the war-to-war opening was well done, if not one of the best scenes in the movie. As a friend of mine pointed out to my ignorant self, the guns they used were era-appropriate. So, it seemed that the movie was off to a good start. Then the character William Stryker came into the picture. But, I won't say more on the subject other than this: anyone else could've played the part better.

The visuals were pretty well done. The scenes were interesting to watch, even if the content wasn't all that great. At the

beginning of the movie, you could easily tell that the CG was off, but they picked up the ball quickly, making the rest of the movie a stunningly interesting piece of work.

When Logan and Victor join a special ops team of sorts, we discover that each team member has a unique ability, much like the brothers. The director and the special effects guys took great care to make each member's introductory scene amazing and intricate. David North (Agent Zero) displays his insane gun work as he takes down nearly every security guard in a manner of seconds. The Blob punches a tank and blows it up. Wade Wilson slices and dices his way through a bombardment of bullets. This last bit was the best out of the bunch. You can tell that a lot of work was put into it. The camera focused on the sword as it cuts a bullet in half in a very Matrix-like fashion. The whole scene is well done and looks like it would fit in any blockbuster action flick.

The whole Africa scene seemed to me a little ridiculous. Everyone but Hugh Jackman (Wolverine) and Liev Schreiber (Victor) were under acting. The aforementioned pair were doing the exact opposite. My guess was that Jackman wanted to show off his muscles and Schreiber was just responding. Either way, I found myself waiting for the moment when Wolverine left the screen in a huff.

Jump to six years later. Logan is trying his best to lead a normal life with his girlfriend, Kayla Silverfox. (Both myself and another writer at *The Print* found this to be amusing.) This relationship seemed immediately strained with no real chemistry but that is easily explained by Wolverine's reluctance to let go of his past.

What I found to be particularly strange was the way Kayla reacted to Logan's nightmare: with a calm smile and a comment about needing new sheets. Now, if I had been in her situation, I sure as hell wouldn't be so calm. Therefore this tranquility led me to believe that these nightmares were a regular occurrence. Still, why would Kayla have stayed after the first time Logan's claw-shaped bones shot out and cut her?

That gets explained later in the movie when everything comes together after a series of plot twists that I won't bother boring you with. Let it suffice that it is actually a surprise.

Something else that was actually entertaining was the character of Gambit. I, along with who knows how many others, couldn't wait to see what Hollywood hottie would play my favorite from the old cartoons. And although the actor who landed the roll was quite attractive, the small amount of screen time irked me. Yes, Gambit did get an amazing, although ultimately pointless, fight scene with Wolverine. Yes, his card tricks were well-done. Yes, his accent was horrible, but it would've been worth it to have him in for just a few more minutes.

All in all, if you want a good action flick, look no further. But if you happen to be a die hard X-Men fan, you might be a tad disappointed.

The Ugly: Logan's origin story mutilates fan hopes with inaccuracies

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Wolverine is the quintessential badass of the comic book world, and his origin story was for more than 20 years one of the biggest untold mysteries in the Marvel world.

When Marvel handed over the rights of this icon to Fox, they should have told them to "handle with care... or else!"

Hearing about X-Men Origins: Wolverine was kind of like finding out you got a date with the girl of your dreams.

Watching the movie, however, was more like going on a date with her and finding out in the end that she wasn't a

girl at all. The movie strays so far from the true origin story of Wolverine and especially his days in Weapon-X, that I started wondering if I had gotten a few mind-wipes myself.

From here on out, I'm issuing a spoiler alert. I want to clear up a few of the ugly lies that this movie has told.

Deadpool was not the culmination of every mutant's genes being spliced together to create the perfect anti-mutant; he is an aborted attempt at cloning Wolverine and can't teleport or shoot lasers out of his eyes.

Sabretooth was never mentioned as being Wolverine's brother. It has been hinted that he is both his father and half-brother but neither have ever been stated clearly.

Stryker is not a general anywhere in Wolverine's past. There is one mention of Stryker in X-force and in that he is a fanatical priest bent on destroying mutants.

Romulus is a veiled but essential figure in Wolverine's past that the movie completely ignored. He is the figure who is always in the shadows and pulling the strings that decide what Logan's fate will be. He is the one that all throughout Wolverine's life has bent him into being a killer by killing anyone Logan gets too close to. Leaving Romulus out of a Wolverine origins movie is like writing the Bible but forgetting to put God in there somewhere.

The Magic bullets: Two adamantium bullets lodged themselves in Wolverine's

brain blocking his entire past from memory in the movie. Yet again, Fox swayed away from the story like a drunk driver trying to make it through S-curves. Wolverine's memories were erased by weapon-X, and before that, he had been trying to block out his childhood since he was working at a mine around the time of the Alaskan gold rush. Adamantium bullets just knock him out, but like anything else, he recovers.

These are among a few of the problems I had with the movie and are to be taken only as the rants of a crazed comic fan, who loved the true Wolverine Origins story because it was the **true Wolverine Origins** story. Fox should stick to what it does well, like right-wing news, instead of ruining Marvel's characters.