



Burt Reynolds is J.J. and Dom DeLuise is Victor, who disguise themselves as Army officers and drive a "Hukmobile," in "Cannonball Run II."



the movies
Dan Greenberg

'Cannonball Run II' has lots of violence but very little humor

I went to "Cannonball Run II" expecting the worst. I wasn't disappointed.

But I was dismayed that all those talented, well-known, successful actors would participate in a boring, humorless celebration of anti-social values and violence.

The film is rated PG and on the surface it is quite mild. There is one brief frontal nudity shot and some fight sequences that are played for comedy not violence. However, the film is about illegal racing across country at high speeds, outwitting authority and wrecking expensive sports cars, police cars and any other property that happens to get in the way. That may be PG but it teaches bad values.

Besides all that, it wasn't funny.

In this "Cannonball Run" the infamous race is being run because an Arab King (Ricardo Montalban) is angry that his son the Sheik (Jamil Farouk) lost the original race. Good reason! Naturally, having all the petrodollars in the world to squander on irrelevant entertainment, the King and the Sheik are sponsoring another run.

THE RACERS, besides the Sheik, include Fenderbaum (Sammy Davis Jr.) and Blake (Dean Martin); Jill (Susan Anton) and Marcie (Catherine Rich), and in the lead J.J. McClure (Burt Reynolds) and Victor (Dom DeLuise). The last team gets involved with a duo of bogus nuns, Betty (Marlin Hennen) and Veronica (Shirley MacLaine).

Along the way, the racers meet up with an inept Mafia family headed by Don Don (Charles Nelson Reilly), whose hunching mob includes Henry Silva and Abe Vigoda. Don Don — that's one of the funnier lines in the movie — is heavily in debt to another Mafia type, Hymie (Telly Savalas).

Near the end, which didn't come soon enough, Frank Sinatra and his sidekick, Jilly, played by Frank Sinatra and his sidekick, Jilly Russo, make a flat and humorless cameo appearance to set matters right.

If the movie hadn't been made in the first place, they could have stayed home and avoided an embarrassing, sterile performance. No one in this mortal vale can set matters right with this movie.

Even for those who think it's pleasantly irrelevant to race illegally across the country — as the actual Cannonball Run does in honor of the legendary, pioneer long-distance auto racer, Cannonball Baker — enough's enough. There is only so much visual enjoyment possible from watching sleek sports cars zoom by the camera. Even the most ardent racing fan tires of the roar of engines while the mechanic tightens a cam shaft, or whatever they do.

IT IS QUITE apparent from the box office reports on "Cannonball Run I" that audiences do enjoy such films, but there has to be a limit to how many times the same film can be made.

The producers seem to think that adding a slight new twist will make all the difference. In the case of "Run II" the brilliant idea was to use every name performer available. In that, they were successful.

Unfortunately they didn't give those talented people any clever lines but instead relied on tired old visual gags (drunken doctor gives injection to wrong person) and the misguided idea that if Reynolds and DeLuise look at each other and giggle at some private joke, great comedy has been achieved.

Well, they're wrong. Such self-indulgence on the multimillion-dollar scale is a tragic waste. It's about as funny as watching Aunt Tillie's home movies or Uncle Pete's slides from his trip to Davenport, Iowa.

Then there's the question of violence. Many will, no doubt, say that I'm carping about a film that's "just fun." Well it isn't just fun to constantly show police officers as inept fools while heroic types in sleek sports cars get their kicks destroying property. That's not the kind of fun I want my kids to enjoy.

Unless you're kidnapped and dragged off to see it, don't go to "Cannonball Run II." If you are forced to the theater, close your eyes and plug your ears. It isn't too bad under those circumstances.



When the Cannonball Run II starts, the cars are shown in a line, not in a race.

table talk

Lighter menu

Diamond Jim Brady's has gone lighter with its new menu for the restaurant at 3000 Town Center in Southfield. Pasta, salads and seafood dishes are getting attention. Pasta primavera is \$2.95, pasta salad \$4.95. A fresh catch, crepe and omelet of the day also are offered. Brady's burgers and other popular fare continue on the menu.

Mexican fiesta

An authentic Mexican dinner, which host Jim Lark distinguishes from "Cal-Tex-Mex fast food," will be served at 7 p.m. Tuesday-Wednesday, July 24-25, at the Lark restaurant in West Bloomfield. Lobster tails sautéed in garlic with tortillas will be the main course of this 10-course feast. Dinner price is \$37.50 plus tax and gratuity. Live Mariachi music will accompany the meal. Reservations are required.

'Summer Garden'

Mequite-Grilled Green River Halibut Trout, with Citrus Beurre Blanc Sauce or Mequite-Grilled Chicken with Fresh Rosemary and Lemon Sauce are the two choices for entrees at the monthly Regional Dinner on Wednesday in July at the Meeting Place in Orchard Lake. An appetizer, soup, salad and dessert are included for \$13.95. The dinner is called "America's Summer Garden," with most of the items served being locally grown.



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Detroit Symphony Orchestra
Stanislav Konarsky, conducting
Dmitry Shostakovich, violinist
Brahms — Violin Concerto No. 1
Mahler — Violin Concerto No. 4
11:15-12:15 Pavilion \$9.50 Lawn

SUNDAY, JULY 22
Detroit Symphony Orchestra
Stanislav Konarsky, conducting
Dmitry Shostakovich, violinist
Brahms — Violin Concerto No. 1
Mahler — Violin Concerto No. 4
11:15-12:15 Pavilion \$9.50 Lawn

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