'The Hurricane' will win over audiences

ASSOCIATO PRESS

LOS ANGELES - The fittional Rocky Balboa found his vindication in the ring. The real-life boxer Rubin "Hurricano" Carter achieved his in the courts after 20 agonizing years, and he had to do it from prison.

Norman Jewison's "The Hurricano" bears little resemblance to "Rocky" except that the proteopists of both are prizefighters facing long odds. "Rocky" was a heartwarming the of an

facing long odds. "Rocky was a heartwarming tale of an unknown who makes an unlikely climb to become champion. "The Hurricane" tells of a contender whose career is ended when he is snared in a legal trap of revenge

and bigotry.
Rubin Carter, whose slashing style earned him the name Hurricane, seemed destined for the middloweight title in the early 1990s. Then in 1966, he and a fan were arrested and charged with the shooting of three people in a New Jersey bar. The sole evidence was the testimony of an ex-con who claimed to have seen the nair Gesing from the har

Even though they had been exonerated by the police and a grand jury, Carter and the fan were convicted and given three life sentences. After years of trying to prove his innocence, Carter was aided by an American youth and Canadian social

Obviously this is first-class film material. The wonder is why it took so long to reach the

it took so long to reach the screen. "The Hurricane" traces Cartor's life from his early days, when he fights a pedophile who preys on slum kids. A bigsted cop named Della Pesca (Dan Hedaya) accuses Rubin (Mitchell Taylor Jr.) of attacking a pillar of the community, and the boy is sentenced to a juvenile detention prison.

sentenced to a juvenile detention prison.

As an adult, Carter (Denzel Washington) transfers his anger into boxing, and his ferocity wins him victories and the adulation of the crowd. But at the peak of

his career, he is again hounded by Pesca, the relentless Javert to Carter's lean Valjean. The detec-tive falsifies evidence and Carter is convicted. Carter remains aloof from the other prisoners, sleeping by day and educating himself by night. His efforts for justice fail, even after his book, "The Sixteenth Round," is published. Pleas from Bob Dylan – who championed Carter in a song he wroto - and Carter in a song he wrote "and Muhammad Ali fail to sway the

Muhammad Ali fail to sway the courts.

An underprivileged city boy (Vicellous Reen Shannon) living in Toronto ie inspired by the book and he makes contact with the prisoner. He also induces his three Canadian mentors (John Hannah, Deborah Kara Unger and Liev Schreiber) to help uncover evidence that would free Carter.

Having 'trained for a year and

Garter. Having 'trained for a year and shed 35 pounds, Washington looks every inch the professional boxer. He is convincting in the ring and brings forceful emotion to Carter's long struggle for freedom. Shannon as the idolizing youth plays a perfect counterpoint to the anguished fighter, saving him from despair at his lowest monitoits.

lowest mortaits.

The rest of the cast, most of them unfamiliar faces, perform admirably. Rod Steiger, who won an Academy Award for Jewison's

THE HURRICANE
The story of Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, middleweight boxing champlun who is accused of a crime he dildn't commit.
After 20 years in jail, he is released.
Stars Denzel Weshington.

Fight of his life: Rubin "Hurricane Carter" (Denzel Washington) is a boson conference. Washington) is a boxer sentenced for a crime he didn't commit in "The Hurricane."

"In the Heat of the Night," makes a brief but stirring appearance as the federal judge who recognizes the long injustice to Carter.

Jewison is at his best in social Jewison is at his best in social drames such as "In the Heat of the Night," "... And Justice for All" and "A Soldier's Story" (Washington's first starring role as an adult), and he proves his talent again with "The Hurri-

cane."

Armyan Bernstein and Dan Gordon wrote the script, which was based on Carter's book and Lazarus and the Hurriense by Sam Chaiton and Terry Swinton. The Universal Fictures release was produced by Jewison, Armyan Bernstein and John Ketcham. Running time is 140 minutes.

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