

Fonda, Reed star

Action movie filmed in district



MOTORCYCLE OWNER Gary Bluestone of Toronto (right) checks out his bike just before movie star Peter Fonda takes off for a ride down the road. Bluestone rented his antique 1940 Indian motorcycle for use in the film. He says it's worth \$6,000 and the owner was on the scene, "protecting my interests."

Milton looked like a page out of Hollywood for two days last week when a movie crew came to town to film scenes for a new movie, using Fifth Wheel Truck Stop as a backdrop.

The action movie—called *Highballin'*—stars two American superstars, Peter Fonda of *Easy Rider* fame and country and western singer, composer and actor Jerry Reed who rose to fame in *Gator* then clinched it in *Smoky* and *The Bandit*. But the other big names are all Canadian and the film is a Canadian production.

Both Fonda and Reed were in Milton for a total of three days—one day on Sixth Line north of Five Sideroad where some of the action scenes were filmed, and two days at Fifth Wheel for a segment near the film's finale where a truck stop background was required.

Highballin' is about a group of "bad guys" trying to force independent truckers out of business, and Jerry Reed is one of the truckers who rebels

against them. Fonda, according to producer Jon Sian of Mississauga, is once again cast as a wandering type who rides into town on his motorcycle, runs into his old friend Reed and teams up with him to get revenge on the "bad guys".

Reed is killed in the film (that segment was filmed on Tuesday, Dec. 13 on the Sixth Line) but his 12-year-old son jumps on Fonda's motorcycle, races to the local truck stop and rounds up 20 truckers who form a convoy to avenge Reed's demise.

The Fonda-Reed reunion, the convoy formation and a violent fight scene between Fonda and a "bad guy" were filmed at the Fifth Wheel location.

This week the film crew is touring rural roads north of Toronto, doing the climax of the movie—a scene in which the heroes are chased by the villains that features the wrecking and burning of several cars, pick-up trucks and a 1977 Kenworth tractor

trailer.

Helen Shaver, a Canadian with three major pictures to her credit, plays the female lead and provides the romantic interest. (She chases Fonda). Jerry Reed's son is played by 12-year-old Christopher Langevin who was in *Three Card Monte*.

Producer Sian said he hired 20 trucks and drivers for a week's work, for the convoy scene and to use as a backdrop for the truck stop scenes. (There are always plenty of trucks at Fifth Wheel, but they come and go too quickly).

The convoy scene was an exciting one, as the 20 truckers (including one woman actor) come bursting out the truck stop restaurant's doors, dash to their trucks, and race out the laneway to the highway. Halton Regional Police blocked off traffic on Highway 25 to help in the filming of the scene. Police were also on the set, directing traffic and helping keep spectators out of camera range.

Some warehouse scenes were filmed at a warehouse on Queen's Quay in Toronto. Publicist Prudence Emery said *Highballin'* is like a modern day western, with trucks instead of horses. "The picture focuses on Fonda as a former trucker and erstwhile motorcyclist, who becomes enmeshed in trucking industry corruption. Jerry Reed plays a trucker who embroils his friend Fonda in a series of swash-buckling, action-packed adventures as they take on the highjacking crew which has been creating havoc on the highway."

She calls it "a contemporary action-drama, in the genre of F.I.S.T. and *Convoy*" and stressed the entire film was being shot on location in and around Toronto.

Canadian financed, *Highballin'* is one of 40 full length movies being shot in Canada this year. Tax credits have helped bring many of these films to Canada, from Hollywood. Producer Sian says *Highballin'* will cost "a million, plus".

Ms. Emery said Helen Shaver was one of 105 Canadian actresses who auditioned for the lead. "She's the

hottest Canadian property right now," she grinned.

Filming started Nov. 21 and director Carter, who also directed *The Rowdyman* and *Rituals*, hopes to be finished by the end of this month. The movie is scheduled for release by next summer—perhaps earlier.

The 30-member film crew includes five stuntmen—two of them top Hollywood stunt co-ordinators, plus three Canadians. Special effects man is Richard Helmer, whose credits include *Jaws*, *Silent Running* and *Race with the Devil*.

Chief stuntman is Gary Davis, billed as "the world's greatest motorcycle stuntman." He doubled for Evel Knievel in the movie *Viva Knievel*, and broke Knievel's record by jumping 21 cars on a motorcycle.

The team is doing something new in *Highballin'*, called a "flaming cannon roll" which has never been attempted before in motion picture history. Without giving too much away, movie officials hinted it has something to do with blowing up a flaming truck.

At one point in the film, flaming cars are dropped from a speeding car transport, during a high-speed chase.



DESPITE THE RAIN, filming for the movie *Highballin'* continued for two days at Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Milton last week. Stars Peter Fonda and Jerry Reed (in hat) are pictured discussing the action with director Peter Carter (in toque).

Canadian actors also include David Ferry, Chris Wiggins, Mary Pirie and Wendy Thatcher.

The movie was originally titled *P. F. Flyer*, but it was changed during filming to *Highballin'*. Producers said the name may even change again before it is released.

The cars were rolling Wednesday at Brookville

The oval at Flamboro Speedway may be covered with drifting snow and the strip at Dragway Park in Cayuga may be covered with ice, but the track at Brookville Public School was clear and busy Wednesday afternoon.

The Grade Eight boys' industrial arts (shop) class hosted the Second Annual Brookville Pinewood Derby, a series of races using approximately 1-24th scale model, hand-made, wooden replicas of automobiles. The automobiles were

made by all the boys as a class project. Most of them had been working on their cars since September.

"Most of the cars were ready to go in November," said shop instructor Jack Becka. "The boys spent 10 hours working on them at school and as many hours as they wished working on them at home."

There were no particular style regulations for the cars. The boys designed their cars strictly from imagination. "We had some regulations," Becka said.

"Maximum weight for the car had to be 140 grams. Maximum height was set at five centimeters and maximum length was set at 20 centimeters. The body had to be made from a pine block. The wheels could be made from any type of wood the boys wanted to use. Axle modifications and body modifications were allowed and any kind of modification could be used here. Also, plastic modifications were allowed."

Becka said the bodies had to be sanded, painted and finished to be accepted into the derby. All regulations were to be met as well.

Fifty cars qualified for the preliminaries two weeks ago. Of that group, 16 cars emerged as finalists in the Derby, which took place on a 25 foot track in the gymnasium before an audience of Grade Six, Seven and Eight students.

Each race was a best-two-out-of-three affair because the cars were averaging close to five feet per second along the wooden two-lane track—thus heats didn't require much time.

Mark Reichert, John Nicholson, Steven Hill, Kevin Donaldson, Kevin Isnor, Cory Larynowicz, Harold Koughler, Todd Wilson, David Wuebboll, David Brown, Ricky Smith, Morgan Jones, Randy Mayes, Russ Palser,

Rick Greenly and David Danielle qualified for the Derby. Reichert, Donaldson, Isnor, Koughler, Brown, Smith, Palser and Greenly forged onward into the quarter-finals after tough matches.

Reichert, Isnor, Smith and Greenly dragged their way into the semi-finals.

Isnor and Smith, both driving hot, graphite powered racers emerged into the championship, despite having wheel problems and minor track accidents. However, the drivers' respective pit crews had them in racing form in a matter of seconds.

In the final race Isnor beat Smith, after Smith's car had tire problems—the back ones fell off.

Isnor won the fastest car in the derby championship. Brown won the most sportsmanlike driver championship and Jones won the best looking car championship.

Parent questions literacy levels

Claiming literacy standards are dropping, a Halton parent wants to know what local educators are doing about growing problems in schools.

Alice Pelz, RR 6 Milton, wrote a letter recently to Halton Board of Education in which she referred quite a bit to problems in schools south of the border. Trustees received the letter without comment Thursday.

"Nationwide, the statistics on literacy grow more appalling each year," she stated.

She questioned student nutritional habits, recreational activities, reading habits, abilities to read, teaching and marking and work habits.

Mrs. Pelz said her letter and questions were meant to clarify concerns she has brought to trustees' attention in the past.

"Can our children put an intelligent composition together? Can our children carry on an intelligent conversation on a subject that is

not from a superficial book, such as novels or fiction books?" she asked.

She wondered if children in Halton can be protected so problems like violence and crime in schools won't spread to this area.

Mrs. Pelz said children are watching television, listening to the radio and reading things like comic books so much their minds are likely deteriorating and are losing the power "of connected and vigorous thought."

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Choose Seal 'friend'

The Halton Lung Association announced today that a unique award will be presented for the first time in the Association's 45 year history.

The chosen recipient is 14-year-old Sharon Gaudet of Oakville and the presentation will be made at the first meeting of the Executive Council in the new year.

Miss Gaudet has participated in the Family Asthma Program since its inception at White Oaks Pool in 1971, and faithfully adhered to the breathing exercises and relaxation techniques that helped her overcome her handicap.

The Lung Association is justifiably proud that Miss Gaudet now is able to compete successfully in community swim meets and bring credit to herself and her family. As well, Sharon has undertaken the role of junior volunteer in the same Family Asthma Program in which she participated for six years, in order that she may help others to achieve her success.

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