

Ex-Hab Ken Dryden examines 'The Game'



Bob Spence
Entertainment
Thompson News Service

In a six-part TV mini-series, Ken Dryden examines the role hockey plays in the fabric of Canadian life.

The former National Hockey League all-star goaltender roams from NHL games to minor hockey games, from dressing rooms to living rooms.

"For me," Dryden said in a Toronto telephone interview, "it was a chance to look at a whole lot of different things about Canadians... kids growing up, their relationship with their parents, how things have changed in the past 10 years. And community life... what things do we have in common? What brings us out of our separate homes?"

"As much as anything, hockey is a part of life in this country, it is not a life apart. Because of this, it offers a very interesting reflection. People will behave in hockey as they do elsewhere."

Minor hockey provides parents and children with the opportunity to see each other in unguarded moments, said the former Montreal Canadiens goaltender.

"Parents in the stands, 50 feet away, see their child involved in something the parent cannot control. You look out on that ice surface and you see the kid who never gives up and you see the kid who quits."

"It is also fascinating for the child to look into the stands and see his parents react in an uncontrollable environment. Around home, it is a comfortable, controlled routine."

Portions of the mini-series, Ken Dryden's Home Game, are based on chapters of his second book, Home Game, which was released shortly before Christmas.

In the mini-series, Dryden looks at the anatomy of the game (how players react on the ice and why); the impact of hockey on a Scarborough family; how the traditional Canadian childhood game co-exists with the cash circus of the NHL; reflects back on the 1972 Canada-Russia series; looks at the impact of hockey on a community and the magic of the game.

Ken Dryden's Home Game will be telecast on six consecutive Sundays by CBC-TV, starting Feb. 4.

In his two most successful TV series - Vegas and Spencer For Hire - Robert Ulrich starred as a likeable private detective who tracked down the bad guys.

In many of his movie roles, he has portrayed more complex characters.

Feb. 11, he shows up in two productions in opposite roles.

In Blind Faith, a two-part mini-series on CTV, Ulrich portrays Rob Marshall, a seemingly model husband and father. That portrait is quickly shattered. Marshall's wife is murdered and he is suspected of having arranged the murder. Initially, his sons have blind faith in their father.

The mini-series, which concludes Feb. 12, is based on Joe McGinness's best-seller of the same name, about a murder in New Jersey.

The character pendulum swings the other way in Spooner, a Disney movie making its Canadian debut on Family Channel Feb. 11.

Ulrich portrays a forger who escapes from prison after being denied parole. He assumes the identity of a teacher, after reading the teacher's obituary. The escapee takes a job as an English teacher and wrestling coach at a small-town high school and ultimately becomes more concerned with helping students than avoiding recapture. He takes on the school system to try to help a class troublemaker who is illiterate.

This delightful tale is Family Channel's prime offering during the pay-TV channel's free preview weekend, Feb. 9-11.

The CBC is adding another weekly episode of the British series Coronation Street to its schedule.

Granada TV, the British company that produces the series, has expanded its production by an additional half-hour episode each week.

The CBC, which airs Coronation Street on Mondays and Tuesdays at 2 p.m., is adding a Wednesday episode. All three 30-minute weekly episodes will be repeated Sunday mornings, starting at 10.

'Tremors' high on Richter Scale

By DIAHANN NADEAU
Herald Special

Oh the joys of a good monster movie. They don't come along very often, and when they do, no one wants to believe that such a thing exists. But it does, and Tremors is a wonderful romp into scaryland - with tongue firmly in cheek.

AT THE MOVIES

Kevin Bacon and Fred Ward are Val and Earl, two down-to-earth handymen who do every job imaginable in the minuscule village of Perfection, Nevada. No job is too dirty, including emptying septic tanks with a broken hose. The septic tank mess is the last straw though, and Val and Earl load up all their worldly goods and head out of town, intent on success.

On the way out they discover the town drunk seated on a hydro pole. Val goes to rescue him, only to find him dead. That is the beginning of the invasion of the giant worms, four of them, creatures with spiky bodies and huge mouths filled with hideous tentacles and blessed with rapacious appetites.

Our brave heroes go back to town ("Looks like we should have left yesterday") to warn the others. Soon the villagers are holed up in the general store, cut off from the outside world, and besieged by the "graboids." The beleaguered citizens include Rhonda (Finn Carter), a graduate student studying seismic movements in the area, and a survivalist couple (perfectly played by Reba McEntire and Michael Gross) with enough ammo to win the Sandinista's war.

The worms are no fools, and manage to circumvent every move

Entertainment

the villagers make to secure themselves. Finally, the group heads towards the mountains and the final confrontation with the last worm.

The direction is flawless; there are no slow moments, and the delicate balance between comedy and terror is maintained perfectly. The worms are destroyed in satisfyingly flamboyant ways, splattering blood and guts across the screen, to the delighted yucks of the audience.

Bacon is excellent as the quietly heroic Val; a brave but earthy fellow who is completely mystified by the phenomenon - but hell, he's not going to let them win. Fred Ward is his stalwart, solid companion, an older, more sensible man, with a streak of heroism of his own. Finn Carter is well cast as Rhonda, a pretty woman who finds herself attracted to Val - but there isn't any time for romance when you're battling crafty, hungry, giant earthworms.

Tremors is a tremendously satisfying film - lighthearted but scary, visually stunning (the scenery is gorgeous and the special effects impressive), and fun in a way movies rarely are these days. This is a must-see movie for anyone looking for a good time and a bit of terror.

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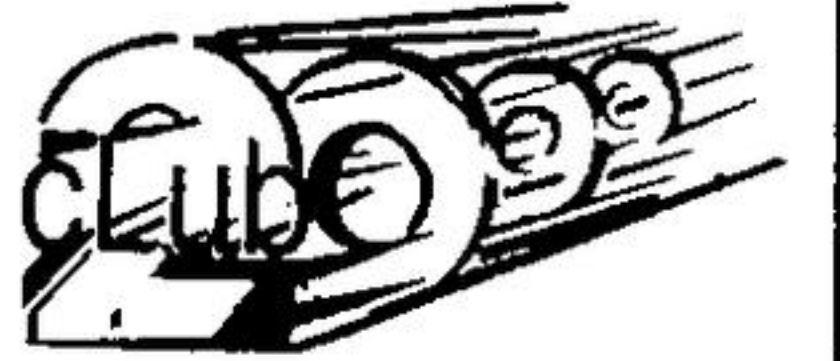
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