Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
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Rating: «««« out of «««««

Running Time: 152 minutes

Like the sound of a roaring engine? A car veering down the track at top speed? Then you might enjoy *Ford v Ferrari*, a biopic detailing a rivalry between the two auto manufacturers. This tale specifically follows what happened as two men were assigned to design and build the fastest car in the world, and the various personal and professional difficulties and obstacles they experienced while making the dream a reality.

It may not be the best film of the year, but all parties involved are devoted to telling the tale with as much authenticity as possible, making it an intriguing and interesting biopic.

In the mid-‘60s, U.S. auto company Ford were consistently bested by rival Ferrari on the track and became desperate to defeat them at any cost, not only for pride, but also to promote Ford and sell cars to the public. After an attempt to buy out Ferrari and its racing team leads to even more conflict, the company heads hire manufacturer Carroll Shelby (Matt Damon) to take over the project. He has his own bone to pick with his competitor after being turned down for a position by Ferrari earlier in his life. Shelby enlists the help of Ken Miles (Christian Bale), a talented, but temperamental driver, with plenty of ideas of his own on what features the ultimate car should have.

By 1966, they realize that they will have to beat the Ferrari team during competitions at Daytona, Sebring and most importantly, Le Mans.

From a story perspective, there’s nothing here that viewers won’t have seen a hundred times before. This is a story about independent spirits striving to break new ground and willing to do whatever it takes to complete the task at hand. Their techniques are extreme and it gets them into numerous scuffles with Ford executive Leo Beebe (Josh Lucas). Ken Miles’ unwillingness to compromise also leads to concern among members of his family - his wife Mollie (Catriona Balfe) and son (Noah Jupe).

Alas, we don’t learn as much about Shelby’s personal life (the man was married seven times, but his numerous relationships aren’t given the same kind of onscreen attention as his work). Essentially, these are two men with specific goals who do what they are asked to do, but accomplish their goals employing their own eccentric and individualistic styles.

Even though there are no surprises and the film’s attention to historical detail leads to a somewhat long and shaggy running time, the performers are fun to watch. Whether they’re fighting with their business-minded Ford executives or each other, the men trade plenty of funny insults along the way. And it’s interesting to see just how much conflict there was between the men and their bosses, who soon turn on Miles and add plenty of obstacles for the protagonists to overcome in addition to taking down Ferrari.

The racing sequences are perhaps the best thing this film has going for it. The recreations of several 1966 events, including the 24-hour Le Mans race, feature some remarkable stunt driving and are expertly shot and edited. Viewers get a real sense of the speed and the danger involved when these vehicles are hurtling down the track, narrowly avoiding crashing into each other. On a technical level, when the cars are being pushed to their limits by the drivers, the movie really jolts to life.

Again, there isn’t a lot about *Ford v Ferrari* that fans and even newbies won’t see well ahead on the road, and it is a long journey. Still, the thrilling driving footage and performances manage to keep one engaged in the proceedings, making the film an interesting and enjoyable biopic. Those with an interest in the subject matter will likely enjoy taking this flick out for a spin around the track.

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