

‘Greyhound’ is a polished WWII flick that provides some pulse-pounding thrills

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

Running Time: 92 minutes

This film will be available for streaming July 10 on Apple TV+.

It's been a busy period for war movies recently. It's difficult to determine the exact reason for the proliferation of genre titles. Still, one thing is for certain ... they keep on coming. The latest is a sea-bound feature from a big Hollywood name, who serves as both the star and writer of the project.

Greyhound may not be a masterpiece like *Dunkirk* or *1917*, but it is a slick, polished, and effective combat flick that should keep viewers on the edge of their seats.

During WWII, it was common for ships to sail across the Atlantic Ocean in order to deliver much needed items to Great Britain. The story begins with U.S. Navy veteran Ernest Krause (Tom Hanks) being promoted and given his first assignment as a captain. In February, 1942, Conoy HX-25, comprised of 37 troop and supply ships, headed across the ocean to Liverpool, escorted and protected by four light warships, including one commanded by Krause. To reach their destination, they had to traverse dangerous waters known as the "Black Pit" in the middle of the

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Atlantic.

Almost immediately, German U-boats began to appear on radar and Krause’s ship, as well as the entire fleet, came under fire from dangerous enemies beneath the water’s surface.

Admittedly, the movie dispenses with a lot of traditional character development. Beyond a single scene early on between Krause and his girlfriend Evelyn (Elizabeth Shue), the movie dives right into action and conflict on the high seas. As such, we don’t get to know anything personal about the people onboard and only see them react to various life-threatening incidents as they attempt to perform their jobs. The downside to this dramatic tactic is that viewers might not feel as attached to every crew member as they could be.

While the movie may be lacking in character depth, the benefit of the approach is that it is very briskly paced and remarkably tense from beginning to end. In fact, it doesn’t let up for a moment. Over the course of a two day period, the group had to identify hidden submarines and try to protect as many ships as possible. In the process, they were forced into guessing where to set off depth charges, as well as avoid torpedoes hurtling toward them.

While the movie mostly consists of Krause taking information from his crew and delivering commands, viewers learn about strategies employed to help them all survive.

The photography by Shelly Johnson (*The Wolfman*, *Captain America: The First Avenger*) is slick and polished, as are the visual effects. The filmmakers also try to keep much of the action confined to the ship bridge. Of course, there are plenty of exterior images of the boat and others moving around, but the filmmakers work to keep things as claustrophobic as possible. As for the villains, there are only a couple of shots in the entire film of the U-boats advancing toward the Greyhound.

Even though they only do this on a couple occasions, it’s actually unnecessary as the film is even more tense and unsettling when one can’t see the enemy.

Still, the occasional cutaways to subs in the sea are a minor complaint. Hanks is compelling

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throughout and tries to imbue Krause with some humanity and even a hint of fear and uncertainty about what he is doing. Some comments from others at one point in the film even make him a bit teary-eyed. It works well, yet this reviewer thinks it could have been taken even further.

Knowing that all of his decisions could lead to the possible deaths of others, one might have expected even more emotional exhaustion, or a quiet outburst when the stoic character retreated to his private quarters.

While we don’t really get to know the personal stories of most of the characters, Hanks’ familiarity to the audience helps the movie overcome this burden to some degree. Additionally, the film is technically sound and expertly edited in a zippy and rapid manner, delivering consistent thrills and anxiety throughout. In the end, *Greyhound* is a good war movie that should entertain and appeal to genre fans looking for a pulse-pounding experience.

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