

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

Alright, let me just say this right off the bat: No matter what's written here, everyone should still see *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* because it was such a great *movie*. If you haven't seen it yet you probably shouldn't even be reading this, but for those of you who just love spoilers and unmerciful critiquing, let us begin.

First things first: for those of you who remember, the first major event of the book and the movie was the Quidditch World Cup. The way the book described it, it was the most magnificent sight ever. The fans were incredibly wild, the excitement was unmatched, and the magic of it all just blew your mind. Unfortunately, I didn't seem to get that feeling. There's more magic in a Browns game than there was in that Quidditch match. I don't blame director Mike Newell for having to use computer graphics to make that scene (he probably couldn't do much else), but he could have at least tried to make the excitement a little more...exciting. More than half of the occurrences described in the book were completely missed in the movie. The major fanfare and displays of team pride were either cheapened or completely forgotten. The scene in which the team mascots fought was skipped and I was a little annoyed to hear Draco Malfoy's (Tom Felton) annoying voice making pathetic taunts again. The time spent on that scene could have been used to improve the tournament match. We didn't even get to see the match played out! Also (this came before the Cup), how did Harry get to the Weasley's house in the first place? Anyone who's read the book knows that Harry Potter started that year off at the Dursely's and only got to the Weasley's by invitation. The way the movie portrayed it, Harry lived at the Weasley's all summer long. But I guess the dramatic Death Eater scene made up for those failures...at least some of them.

Second: I am sure that I can speak for everyone who has seen the movie when I say that the Weasley twins stole the show. They were just as nutty as ever and made a couple of scenes genuinely funny. However, the movie left out one important thing about the twins. The fourth book mentioned the Weasleys' Wizard Wheezes, the joke shop Fred (James Phelps) and George (Oliver Phelps) were planning on opening. It would have been nice to get a preview of it before it becomes important in the next installment, but I guess it wasn't important enough. It would have given the audience something to think about till 2007.

Third: Character development. Now I know the story is called Harry Potter, but the focus of the film was ridiculously lopsided. More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the story concentrated on Harry (Daniel Radcliffe) while the supporting roles were completely forgotten and/or reduced in significance. Ludo Bagman was forgotten, Draco Malfoy was seen a total of three to four times, and Doby the house elf completely disappeared (although he has a significant role in book five). The role of Cho Chang (Katie Leung), Harry's crush, was almost insignificant. The emotions Harry truly felt for her were not made important. She did not have much of a speaking role, which left the audience to be more confused than interested in her, which is a shame considering her role in book five. Fleur Delacour (Clémence Poésy), the Champion from Beauxbatons School of Magic, was made out to be a complete wimp. Her lack of appearances in the movie and the way she appeared as a helpless little girl did nothing to stress the importance of her as one of the champions in the Triwizard Tournament. Voldemort, one of the most essential characters to understanding the plot of the story, was portrayed incorrectly. He is supposed to be a

feared wizard who gives off an air of strength and power. All I could see was an ugly alien-like bully. He wasn't as overwhelming a character as Tom Riddle was in *The Chamber of Secrets*. Sirius Black (Gary Oldman) was seen once when he was in the fireplace. Sirius was mentioned / had appeared in the book more than just once and had a more hands on role in the events that shaped Harry's year. Igor Karkaroff (Pedja Bjelac) and Professor Snape (Alan Rickman) lacked the presence they were supposed to have. Actually, Karkaroff had more important appearances, but in general, both of the characters' significance in the flow of the story was lost. The fact that they were both former Death Eaters was not stressed enough, and Snape didn't take off as many points from Gryffindor this year as he was meant to.

Four: Important forgotten events. Where was the House-Elf Liberation Front? It wasn't mentioned *at all*. The movie made no reference to it, which is probably why Doby was missing as well. It was an essential part of Hermione's year at Hogwarts, not to mention it was a funny plot twist. And did the students of Hogwarts even go to school during their fourth year? I wouldn't have been able to tell from the movie that's for sure. The focus was too much on the Triwizard Tournament. The events surrounding Mr. Crouch (Roger Lloyd Pack) and his house elf were lost. The animagus form of Rita Skeeter (Miranda Richardson) was left out. The mystery/controversy around Potter becoming a champion and Cedric Diggory's (Robert Pattinson) death were replaced with weak complaints and sobbing.

Fifth: Female characters. Ok, there has to be a serious problem when it turns out the girl who's supposed to be the geeky bookworm is more beautiful than the characters who are supposed to be beautiful! I am speaking of course about the stunning Emma Watson playing the success oriented Hermione. The way the book described the other female leads, Fleur and Cho, I expected supermodels to play those roles, but instead I got just two average teenagers. I guess it was the combination of both those roles being very distant and average and their lack of real appearances. We barely saw either of the characters and their weak portrayals were a bit of a turn-off. Maybe Cho's role will become stronger in the next film...maybe.

But I guess there were some things to be happy about. At least the three tasks in the tournament were rendered correctly and the action kept the audience engaged. The dragon scene was beyond words. I'm sure everyone in the theatre jumped out of their seats when Harry's broom swooped down to carry him away to safety. The maze scene was especially good in that it brought out the true nature of all the characters involved. At that point, it was obvious the true mystery was about to be revealed and the dramatic build-up was perfect. The cemetery scene with Voldemort was especially well-done. I will never forget the *Priori Incantatem*... I'll repeat what I said earlier: Go see the movie; I'm just salty. **Grade B+**

By Tony Hilal