



The Children's Film Foundation Collection The Race is On

Three more classic and top quality British films from the much-loved and fondly remembered Children's Film Foundation (CFF) are released together on DVD on 18 February 2013 in *The Race is On*.

In this second BFI collection of CFF films, a young Michael Crawford stars in *Soapbox Derby* (1957), there is the imaginative, air-borne adventure *The Sky-Bike* (1967) and cult favourite *Sammy's Super T-Shirt* (1978), one of the most sought-after CFF gems, is finally available to be enjoyed again by its original fans and a new generation of youngsters.

For over 30 years the Children's Film Foundation produced quality entertainment for young audiences, employing the cream of British filmmaking talent. After many years out of distribution, the BFI is releasing a selection of the films in specially curated and themed DVD editions, newly transferred from the best available elements held in the BFI National Archive.

In one of his earliest acting roles, aged about 15, **Michael Crawford** (*Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em*, *Phantom of the Opera*) stars in ***Soapbox Derby*** (dir: Darcy Conyers) as Peter, leader of the Battersea Bats. Determined to win the soapbox derby go-kart race, Peter enlists the brains of the bunch to design a superfast car, and persuades their ace driver to take the wheel. But then local rivals, the Victoria Victors, get in on the act... Filmed on location in south London, this action-packed adventure features an excellent slapstick performance from **Denis Shaw** (*The Colditz Story*, *Curse of the Werewolf*).

Writing for the DVD booklet, Michael Crawford says what great fun it was making the film: "We were all required to do numerous 'daredevil' stunts...being paid to do things that you would ordinarily be arrested for!"

In ***The Sky-Bike*** (dir: Charles Frend), all Tom Smith can think about is becoming a pilot. When he accidentally stumbles across a prototype man-powered flying machine, he convinces its eccentric inventor, Mr Lovejoy, to let him help get it off the ground. Working in secret, the two prepare their 'sky bike' for a high-stakes race. Liam Redmond (*Night of the Demon*) plays the mastermind behind the flying machine.

Despite his size, 12-year-old Sammy, star of ***Sammy's Super T-Shirt*** (dir: Jeremy Summers), has set his heart on winning the Junior Superstar Challenge Cup track race. His secret weapon, a lucky tiger t-shirt, takes on a life of its own when it accidentally becomes part of a top-secret scientific experiment, which gives its wearer awesome super-strength. Featuring a comic double-act by Richard Vernon (*Goldfinger*) and Julian Holloway (*Carry On*, Disney's *A Christmas Carol*) as the nefarious scientists, this is one of the best-remembered CFF productions, which has even generated an online petition for its release.

Special features

- Brand new High Definition transfers of all films
- Illustrated booklet with essays by Andrew Roberts and Vic Pratt and a note by Michael Crawford

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BFI National Archive curators are available to talk about the films and the CFF.

Product details

RRP: £19.99 / cat. no. BFIVD949 / Cert PG

UK / 1957 + 1967 + 1978 / black & white, and colour / English / 62 + 59 + 55 mins / DVD9 / Original aspect ratios 1.66:1 + 1.85:1 (16x9 anamorphic) / Dolby Digital mono audio (320 kbps)

For further information and DVD review copies please contact:

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Images are available at www.image.net under BFI DVD

BFI DVDs are available from all good DVD retailers or by mail order from the BFI Shop

Tel: 020 7815 1350 or online at www.bfi.org.uk/shop

About the origins of the Children's Film Foundation

The CFF was a non-profit making pan-industry initiative, set up in 1951 by the owner of the Odeon and Rank cinema chains to make home-grown entertainment for young cinemagoers to see at the 'Saturday morning pictures'.

One of the Foundation's major contributions to the British film industry was encouraging directorial and acting talent. Michael Powell, Lewis Gilbert, Alberto Cavalcanti and John Krish all worked for it and famous film and TV names such as Francesca Annis, Michael Crawford, Susan George, Richard O'Sullivan, Dennis Waterman, Keith Chegwin, Gary Kemp, Leslie Ash, Phil Collins, Sadie Frost and Matthew Wright all started out in CFF films.

Key themes of the films include adventure, mysteries, monsters, science-fiction, ship wrecks, races and animals, with regional content from Scotland to South West England.

The CFF collection is now preserved in the BFI National Archive.

The CFF became the Children's Film and Television Foundation in 1982 and film production finally stopped in 1987. The Children's Film and Television Foundation is now known as The Children's Media Foundation.

About the CFTF

CFTF films have won well over forty prizes at major film festivals and the CFTF itself received The Michael Balcon Award, presented by the British Academy of Film & Television Arts, for outstanding British contribution to Cinema.

More recently the Foundation had been involved in script development for both film and TV but this function has now ended.

From November 2011 the Children's Film and Television Foundation has been known as The Children's Media Foundation. The CFTF has merged with the campaigning group Save Kid's TV and in the future will act on behalf of the audience as an advocate for quality range and diversity in the media choices presented to children and young people in the UK. More information can be found at: www.thechildrensmediafoundation.org

About the BFI

The BFI is the lead body for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

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