

## Blu-Ray Review: Explosive 'The A-Team' Offers Tongue-in-Cheek Entertainment

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on December 22, 2010 - 11:33am

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CHICAGO – What did audiences expect from “The A-Team” that Joe Carnahan’s explosive blockbuster didn’t deliver? Were they upset by the lack of Murdock’s character development? The lack of shading in Hannibal’s dialogue? Come on. “The A-Team” is about ridiculous, over-the-top lunacy and it totally works as testosterone-enhanced entertainment. It may have disappointed in theaters, but audiences will love it on Blu-ray.



Blu-Ray Rating: **4.0/5.0**

I grew up in an era when summer movies were almost solely designed as escapist entertainment. They were meant to thrill adults pissed off that they had to work on the most beautiful days of the year and keep kids busy in air-conditioned environments as temperatures rose. Joe Carnahan's “The A-Team” has no grander aspirations than to give you a nice rhythm with which to drink your soda and eat your popcorn before pushing you back to the real world. No, it's nowhere near as ambitious as “Inception,” but it's an old-fashioned summer action movie that delivers on what anyone should expect from a movie based on the show that turned Mr. T. into a star. It's a B-movie about “The A-Team.”

The opening of “The A-Team” plays like a compacted origin story for the group, introducing us to mastermind Col. Hannibal Smith (Liam Neeson), tough guy Bosco ‘B.A.’ Baracus (Quinton ‘Rampage’ Jackson), smooth character ‘Face’ Peck (Bradley Cooper), and borderline maniac Murdock (Sharlto Copley). Years later, the team crosses paths with a C.I.A. agent named “Lynch” (Patrick Wilson) and a General named Morrison (Gerald McRaney), who ask Hannibal and his men to stop the hijacking of some counterfeiting plates from Baghdad. After they do, Morrison is killed, the plates are stolen, and the men are blamed for going on an unassigned mission. They are stripped of their rank and sent to prison. Of course, no walls can stop these men from clearing their names and finding the people responsible for burning them in the first place.



The A-Team was released on Blu-ray and DVD on December 14th, 2010

Photo credit: Fox

The driving creative motto is best-captured by Hannibal, who says as the group is planning their final action sequence, “Overkill is underrated.” It was probably printed on all pages of the script as well. This is not a subtle film, even for its genre. It’s a movie in which a tank falls from a plane and its basically flown to the ground. I couldn’t believe the number of critics who questioned the logic of this sequence in their reviews. Really? Of course it doesn’t make sense. But it doesn’t need to in order to entertain. It just needs to be confident and well-executed, which most of “The A-Team” is.

As for negatives, the opening sequence is a little poorly-cut (another complaint of critics was that they couldn’t follow the action; a problem I didn’t have after the first scene), I’m not sold that Quinton Jackson was the right choice to fill Mr. T.’s giant shoes, and Jessica Biel is, once again, simply horrendous. Offsetting those casting problems are great turns by Sharlto Copley, Patrick Wilson, and Bradley Cooper, who finally gets to display the screen charisma that agents and producers have clearly though he’s had for years.

“The A-Team” is not about to break any rules or change the action world, but it never set out to do so. It’s artistic intention is to entertain and with tightly conceived and executed action sequences and a few very solid genre performances, it does just that. A big budget action movie that’s actually entertaining? It may not have taken off with critics or audiences this summer, but this movie will find thousands of fans on the home market, which has always played well to action fans — action was always the highest-selling and highest-rented genre on DVD and I imagine it’s the same story on BD. Give “The A-Team” another shot. You may be surprised.

#### Special Features

- o Extended Cut
- o Digital Copy
- o “The Devil is in the Details” — Inside the Action With Joe Carnahan
- o Character Chronicles
- o “Plan of Attack”
- o Deleted Scenes
- o Gag Reel
- o “A-Team Theme Mash-Up Montage”

*“The A-Team” stars Liam Neeson, Bradley Cooper, Quinton ‘Rampage’ Jackson, Sharlto Copley, Jessica Biel, Patrick Wilson, and Gerald McRaney. It was written by Joe Carnahan & Brian Bloom and Skip Woods and directed by Carnahan. It was released by Fox on December 14th, 2010. It is rated PG-13 and runs 118 minutes or 134 minutes extended.*



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By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [17]

Content Director

HollywoodChicago.com

[brian@hollywoodchicago.com](mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com) [16]

#### Source URL (retrieved on Apr 25 2024 - 6:11am):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/12891/blu-ray-review-explosive-the-a-team-offers-tongue-in-cheek-entertainment>

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