

Blu-Ray Review: Tony Jaa's 'Ong Bak 3' Takes Series One Movie Too Far

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on February 15, 2011 - 11:29am

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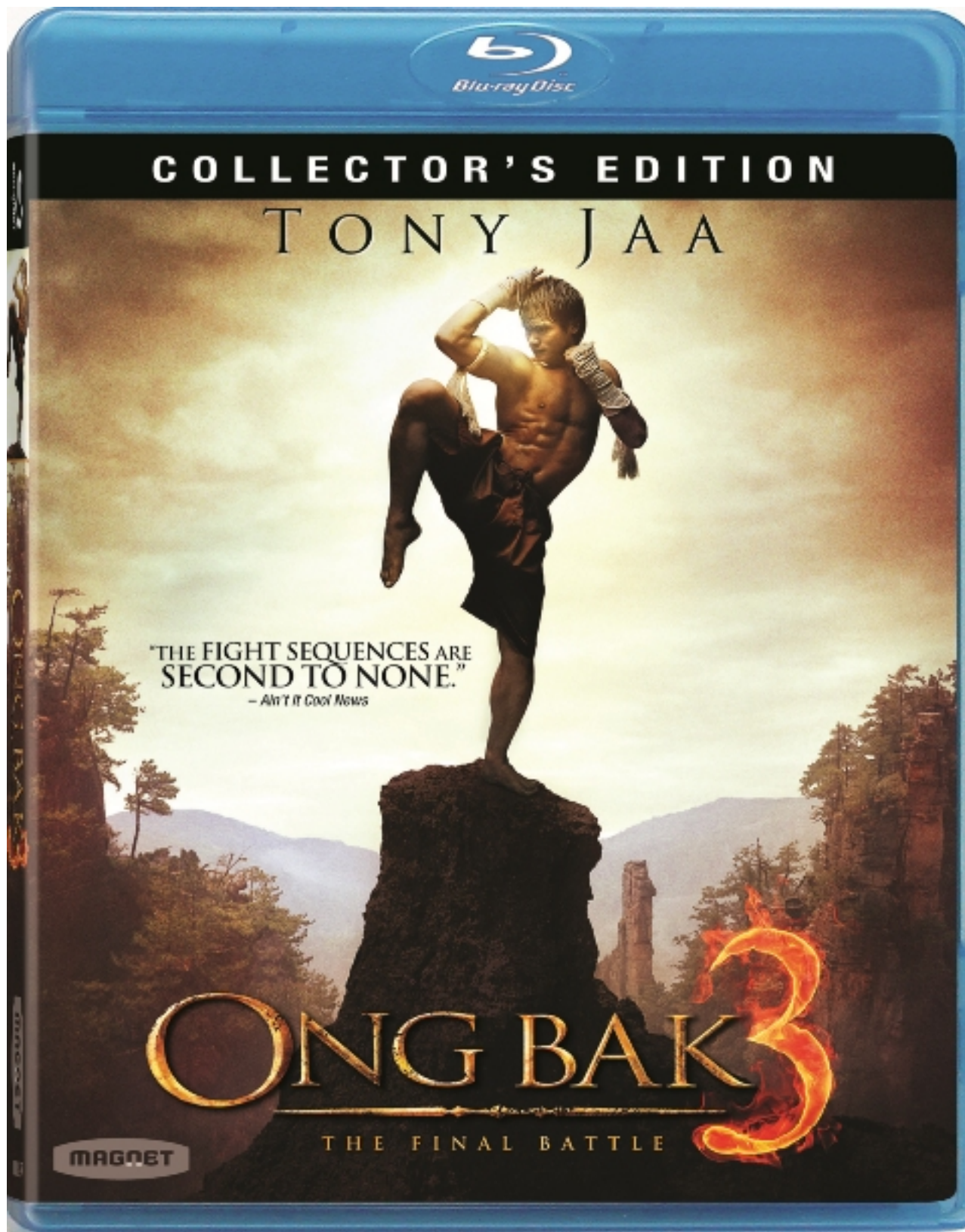
CHICAGO – There just aren't many high-quality martial arts movies making it to the U.S. theaters any more and so the "Ong Bak" series of films deserves a bit of attention for that reason alone. There's no denying that star Tony Jaa is a powerful force of nature with some of the best moves in the genre today. Sadly, the third film in the series, "Ong Bak 3," recently released on Blu-ray and DVD is a mess, as behind-the-scenes drama apparently sabotaged the franchise. Only diehard Jaa fans need check it out.



Blu-Ray Rating: **2.0/5.0**

Budget problems and a star who reportedly disappeared from the set led to problems making "Ong Bak 2" and the story goes that "Ong Bak 3," which incorporates an amazing amount of footage from the second movie and almost feels cobbled together out of subplots and deleted scenes, wouldn't exist without those financial difficulties. It's hard to say what happened but one could easily see a financier saying that they would include enough money to finish the second movie if a cheapo third one was produced as well to increase returns.

Consequently, "Ong Bak 3" not only feels rushed but nearly unfinished at times. It consists primarily of a few martial arts scenes (easily the highlight, of course) linked together by an amazing amount of Buddhist philosophy shots (nothing is less exciting than watching people meditate) and flashbacks to the action of the last film. Jaa is still a great physical presence but he can't save this bloated, mostly dull exercise.



Ong Bak 3 was released on Blu-ray and DVD on February 1st, 2011

Photo credit: Magnolia

If you haven't kept up with the series, the second "Ong Bak" film actually seemed to have no connection to the first one as it changed period and lead (although the philosophical bent of the third film does make the implication that Jaa's character from the second and third film was reincarnated centuries later as his from the first). The second film recast Jaa as Tien, a young man in 15th century Thailand seeking vengeance on the slave traders who beat him and killed his family. At the end of that film, Tien got his revenge but was captured and the movie ended on a cliffhanger. At the beginning of "Ong Bak 3," he is beaten and left for dead but, of course, returns and gets his vengeance yet again.

Martial arts movies are often repetitive but the best ones find a way to keep viewers interested between the action scenes or at least provide enough action to allow viewers to ignore the plot. "Ong Bak 3" fails here. There's just not enough action and the connective tissue is nearly incomprehensible. I actually had difficulty following what was going on with the flashbacks to the second film and the loose plot of the new one. "Ong Bak 3" is a chronological mess, almost as if it was slapped together at the last minute from footage from the cutting room floor of the last movie. Jaa still kicks ass, but it's harder to see that when everything around him simply doesn't work.

Special Features:

- o Digital Copy
- o HDNet: A Look at Ong Bak 3
- o Theatrical Trailer
- o The Making of a Legend
- o Behind the Scenes: Uncovering the Action
- o Interviews with Cast and Crew
- o Behind the Scenes Footage

"Ong Bak 3" stars Tony Jaa, Primrata Det-Udom, and Dan Chupong. It was written and directed by Tony Jaa & Panna Rittikrai. It was released by Magnolia on Blu-ray and DVD on February 1st, 2011. It is rated R and runs 99 minutes.



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