

Blu-Ray Review: Paul Newman, John Wayne Classics For Father's Day

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on May 20, 2011 - 2:49pm

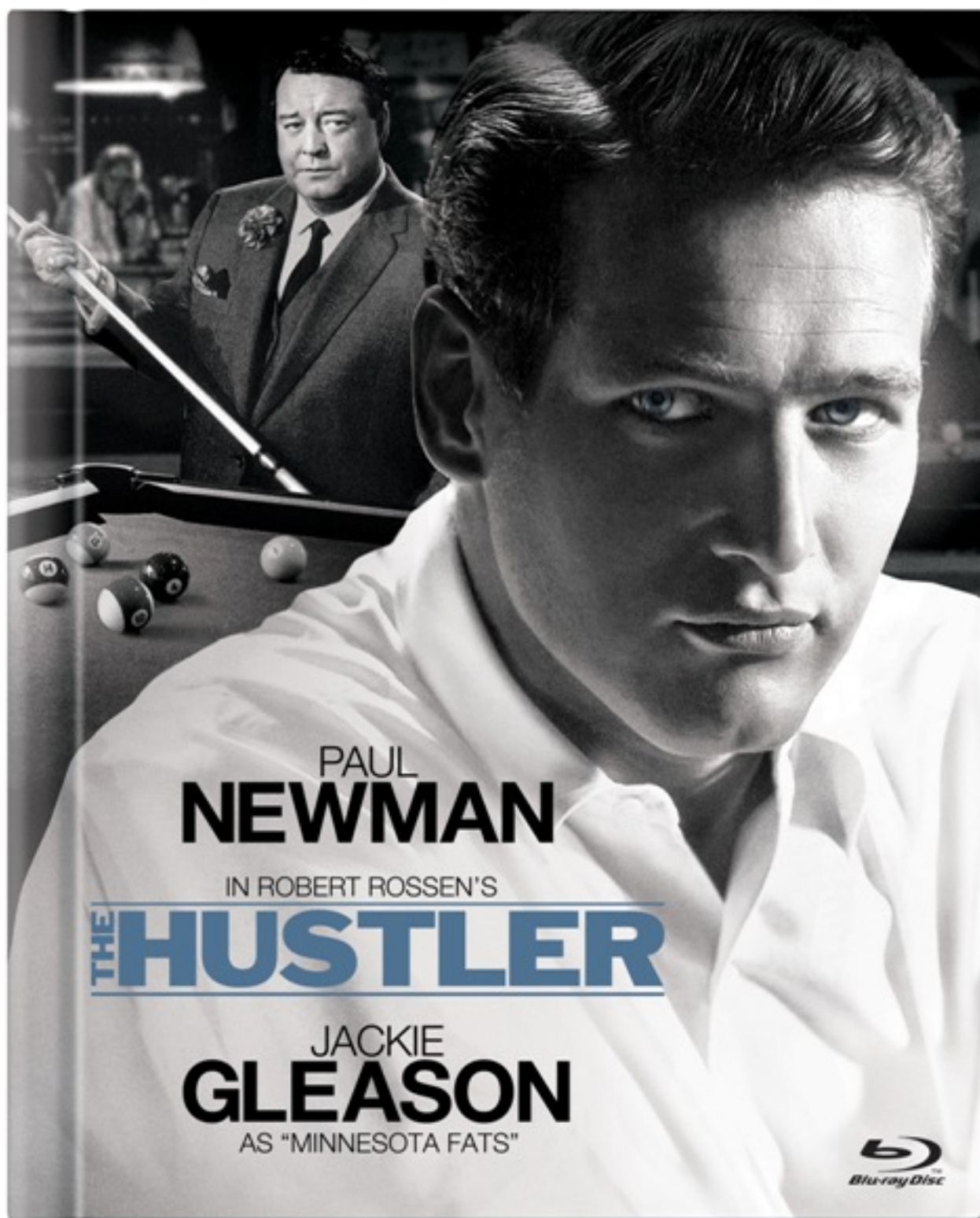
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CHICAGO – Two of cinema's most iconic actors appeared on Blu-ray new release shelves this week with excellent HD transfers and hours of special features for 50th Anniversary Editions of Paul Newman's "The Hustler" and John Wayne's "The Comancheros." History has well-documented that the Newman is one of the best films from one of the form's best actors. The Wayne film may have a more niche audience but they're surely be satisfied with a very solid release.



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

Packaged like hardcover books with photos and essays included in the actual packaging, the releases of "The Hustler" and "The Comancheros" are appealing before the disc has even been put in your machine. There's not a lot of information in the books but they get you in the mood to watch the movie, not unlike leafing through a program before a play.



The Hustler was released on Blu-Ray on May 17, 2011

Photo credit: Fox Home Video

Easily the better film of the two, Robert Rossen's "The Hustler" is a classic. It contains one of Paul Newman's best performances and spectacular turns from Jackie Gleason, George C. Scott, and Piper Laurie. The film racked up NINE Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture, Director, and acting nods for its entire cast (it only won two — Art Direction & Cinematography..."West Side Story" stole Best Picture).

"The Hustler" hasn't aged a bit and the spectacular black & white transfer helps give the film a timeless feel. This is one of the best b&w HD transfers of the year to date. The picture has been perfectly restored.

As for special features, the Fox release includes hours. Most have been available before, but it's remarkable to see this much archival material on a classic film that's not a part of the Criterion Collection. Interviews, special features, and even a commentary with Newman himself — this is arguably the most complete Paul Newman Blu-ray on the market. Which means you must own it.



The Comancheros was released on Blu-Ray on May 17, 2011

Photo credit: Fox Home Video

"The Comancheros" isn't half the film of "The Hustler" but it's a notable release nonetheless. Directed by Michael Curtiz ("Casablanca"), the film almost plays like a parody of Wayne at times as he spits out his trademark swagger with line readings like "MON-SEWER" for monsieur.

And, once again, the transfer is excellent. I wish the recent MGM catalog titles (including "The Misfits" and "Manchurian Candidate") had transfers this impressive. "Comancheros" also comes with hours of special features, including a two-part documentary called "The Duke at Fox," which should be of interest to fans of the legendary man on horseback.

"The Hustler"

Synopsis:

Racking up nine Academy Award Nominations, including Best Picture, this powerful and provocative cinematic masterpiece explodes on screen - as never before - on Blu-ray! Paul Newman electrifies in his brilliant portrayal of Fast Eddie Felson, an arrogant hustler whose unbridled ambition drives him to challenge legendary pool player Minnesota Fats (Jackie Gleason) - but the stakes are higher than either of them can imagine.

Special Features:

- o Audio Commentary by Paul Newman, Film Historian Jeff Young, Film Critic Richard Schickel and Others
- o Paul Newman At Fox
- o Jackie Gleason: The Big Man
- o The Real Hustler: Walter Tevis
- o Life In The Fast Lane: Fast Eddie Felson And The Search For Greatness
- o Milestones In History: The Hustler
- o Swimming With Sharks: The Art Of The Hustle
- o The Hustler: Inside Story
- o Paul Newman: Hollywood's Cool Hand as seen on Biography on the A&E Network
- o Trick Shot Analysis by Mike Massey

- o How To Make The Shot Featuring Five Scenes
- o Theatrical Trailer

“The Comancheros”

Synopsis:

Academy Award-Winning legend John Wayne lays down the law and heats up the screen in this 50th Anniversary Blu-ray Edition of The Comancheros - packed with never-before-seen extras and featuring limited-edition book packaging with rare photos from the Twentieth Century Fox archives.

Determined to bring down a violent gang of gunrunners known as Comancheros, a fearless Texas Ranger (Wayne) forms an uneasy alliance with a notorious outlaw gambler (Stuart Whitman), and the unlikely partners soon realize they must find common ground if they're going to stay alive!

Special Features:

- o Audio Commentary by Stuart Whitman, Nehemiah Persoff, Michael Ansara and Patrick Wayne
- o The Comancheros And The Battle For the American Southwest
- o The Duke At Fox - A Two-Part Documentary
- o Vintage Comancheros Comic Book Gallery
- o A Conversation With Stuart Whitman (Audio Only)
- o Fox Movietonenews: Claude King And Tillman Franks Receive Award For The Comancheros
- o Theatrical Trailers

“The Hustler” stars Paul Newman, Piper Laurie, George C. Scott, and Jackie Gleason. It was written by Sidney Carroll and Robert Rossen and directed by Rossen. It was released on Blu-ray on May 17th, 2011 and is not rated.

“The Comancheros” stars John Wayner, Stuart Whitman, Ina Balin, Nehemiah Persoff, and Lee Marvin. It was written by James Edward Grant and Clair Huffaker and directed by Michael Curtiz. It was released on Blu-ray on May 17th, 2011 and is not rated.



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