

Film Review: Sylvester Stallone in Formulaic ‘The Expendables 2’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on August 18, 2012 - 7:22am

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CHICAGO – Face it, it is fun to see the major action stars of the 1980s, ‘90s and now – Sylvester Stallone, Jason Statham, Jet Li, Chuck Norris, Dolph Lundgren, Bruce Willis and Arnold Schwarzenegger – together again for “The Expendables 2.” Why the hell can’t anyone write a decent story for them?



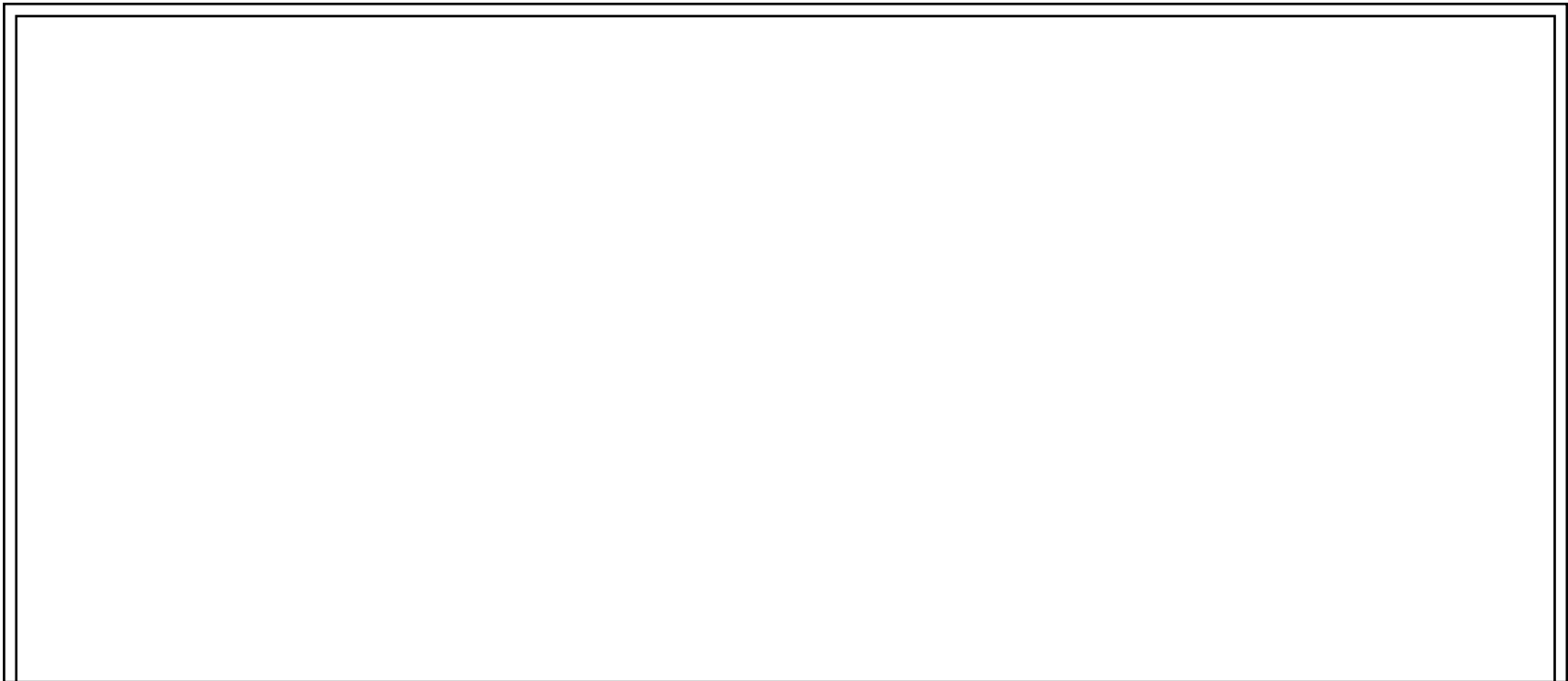
The film improves on the first movie, not that there was that a long way to go. The action is more relevant and bolder, plus the villainy of Jean-Claude Van Damme is smarmier, but the overall product is the same formulaic crap that plugs into any action film. There is a sense that this joke-filled concept should rise above the usual, and it doesn’t. Additionally Stallone (who co-wrote the screenplay) seems very tired going through the same action poses. It would have been better if the Expendables main mission prevented him from plotting “Rocky 7.”

The elite mercenary force known as the Expendables is shown in the middle of a mission as the story unfolds. They are trying to spring a Chinese billionaire in the middle of armed camp, and the subsequent shootout, hand-to-hand combat and weaponry use would make Sgt. Rock blush. Ross (Sylvester Stallone) is back at commander, Christmas (Jason Statham) sharpens his knives expertise, Ying Yan (Jet Li) uses expert martial arts, Gunner (Dolph Lundgren) is still dangerous, Billy the Kid (Liam Hemsworth) is still young and Hale Caesar (Terry Crews) handles all the weapons. Along the way a so-called “lone wolf” named Booker (Chuck Norris) helps them out.

In saving the billionaire, they also free Trench (Arnold Schwarzenegger), who now owes Ross a favor, and connects their next mission to Mr. Church (Bruce Willis), a CIA operative who needs to retrieve a secret plutonium stash – and provides the reluctant Expendables with a code expert named Maggie (Nan Yu). The appropriately named Jean Vilain (Jean-Claude Van Damme) is also after the treasure, and kidnaps Billy the Kid to trade for information. This mission just got personal.

“The Expendables 2,” opens everywhere on August 17th. Featuring Sylvester Stallone, Jason Statham, Jet Li, Chuck Norris, Dolph Lundgren, Bruce Willis, Terry Crews, Jean-Claude Van Damme and Arnold Schwarzenegger. Screenplay by Richard Wenk and Sylvester Stallone. Directed by Simon West. Rated “R”

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Ross (Sylvester Stallone), Christmas (Jason Statham) and Caesar (Terry Crews) in ‘The Expendables 2’

Photo credit: Frank Masi for Lionsgate



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