

'The Longest Ride' is a Journey to Nowhere

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on April 10, 2015 - 12:15pm

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Rating: **1.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – “The Longest Ride” is sentimental schlockmeister Nicholas Sparks’ latest attempt to remix “The Notebook.” It’s got an old man recounting lost love, handwritten letters, young lovers kissing in the rain, breakups, reunions, corny dialogue and of course those North Carolina backdrops. He’s playing all the same notes, but this time he’s lost the melody.

The first of two love stories this time around revolves around young Wake Forest art student (Britt Robertson). She’s got two months until she leaves for the big city and heads to Manhattan for an internship at a prestigious art gallery. Her sorority sisters drag her to a bull riding event and she locks eyes with handsome cowboy Scott Eastwood (Clint’s youngest son). He’s a pro rider trying to bounce back from a debilitating injury the year before. Just like that romance is born. But the chemistry never materializes. He looks good in cowboy gear, she looks good in cowboy boots, and they look good together in a series of North Carolina backdrops.



Saddling Up for 'The Longest Ride'

Photo credit: 20th Century Fox

All these characters are supposed to be simple country folk, but the actors are each members of Hollywood dynasties. Oona Chaplin is the granddaughter of Charlie Chaplin, Britt Robertson is a distant cousin of Elvis Presley, Jack Huston is the grandson of John Huston, and Scott

Eastwood is the son of Clint. Scott in particular evokes some of his famous father's mannerisms, and bears a striking resemblance (especially in off-moments when he's staring off into the fields). He's more model than movie star though, at least at this stage, with none of the grit that made his father so compelling.

These parallel love stories ramble on predictably for more than two hours, before wrapping up in an unbelievably contrived third act that may make even the stoutest Sparks loyalist bury their head in their hands. "The Longest Ride" is agonizingly too long indeed.

"The Longest Ride" opens everywhere on April 10th. Featuring Scott Eastwood, Britt Robertson, Jack Huston, Oona Chaplin, Alan Alda and Lolita Davidovich. Screenplay adapted by Craig Bolotin, from the novel by Nicholas Sparks. Directed by George Tillman Jr. Rated "PG-13"



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