

‘Eddie the Eagle’ is Predictable But Pleasant Tale

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on February 27, 2016 - 8:32am

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Rating: **4.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – “Eddie The Eagle” is thoroughly predictable underdog story, but this picture won me over with a plucky persistence fitting for its peculiar protagonist. It’s an admittedly minor but mostly true tale of an oddball outsider overcoming overwhelming odds.

“Eddie The Eagle” was a not terribly talented but incredibly motivated British ski jumper who managed to compete in the 1988 Winter Olympics. He made the British Olympic team because no other British athletes had even thought to compete in that particular sport.



Taron Egerton and Hugh Jackman in ‘Eddie the Eagle’

Photo credit: 20th Century Fox

Taron Egerton, from last year’s surprisingly enjoyable “The Kingsman,” stars as Eddie. He’s a milk drinking, awkward, sexless nerd outfitted with giant dorky glasses and a wisp of a mustache. Egerton juts out his chin, hunches his back and perpetually seems on the verge of letting his glasses slip off his nose entirely. But he captures what made people like Eddie in the first place – what he lacks in talent he makes up for in oddball charm and his stubborn refusal to give up.

Everyone from his disbelieving dad, to the British Olympic Committee, to the ski jocks – seemingly right out of an 1980’s comedy – seem to stand in his way at every turn. But thanks to his mom, he starts to train at a ski jump facility in Germany. There he runs into a broken down

alcoholic former Olympian (Hugh Jackman) who reluctantly agrees to coach him. Cue the vaguely inspirational montage set to predictable 80's hits like "Jump," and you get the idea.

While most of the film is based on a true story, Jackman's character is entirely fictional. Jackman plays him as something of a caricature of American cowboy machismo in search of some redemption of his own. It's gentle feel-good comfort food even when it stretches the lengths of credibility – by having Jackman smoke a cigarette and throw back whiskey on his way down a death defying ski jump. I minded it, but not too much to let it detract from the overall spirit of the picture.



Plotting Strategy in 'Eddie the Eagle'

Photo credit: 20th Century Fox

The film switches easily between slapstick comedy showing Eddie's many tumbles down the slopes, and uplift. I knew I wasn't watching great art by any means, but I also couldn't help but be won over by its clean cut and persistent charm. Eddie came in last in the Olympic games, but he at least he got onto the stage...and that was enough for him

It's the sort of flight-of-fancy family movie that they don't make much anymore, an underdog story that might have run on the "Wonderful World Of Disney" back in the day. If you think about it, there is not that much of a stretch from "Eddie the Eagle" to "Gus" (the field goal kicking mule!).

"Eddie the Eagle" is in theaters everywhere. Featuring Taron Egerton, Hugh Jackman, Keith Allen, Mark Benton, Iris Berben, Jim Broadbent and Christopher Walken. Screenplay by Sean Macauley and Simon Kelton. Directed by Dexter Fletcher. Rated "PG-13"



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