

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/3898/any-given-sunday-blu-ray>

Any Given Sunday - Blu-ray

Can the Blu-ray edition bring the game to life?

by Stuart Miles published on 11 March 2009

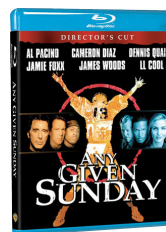
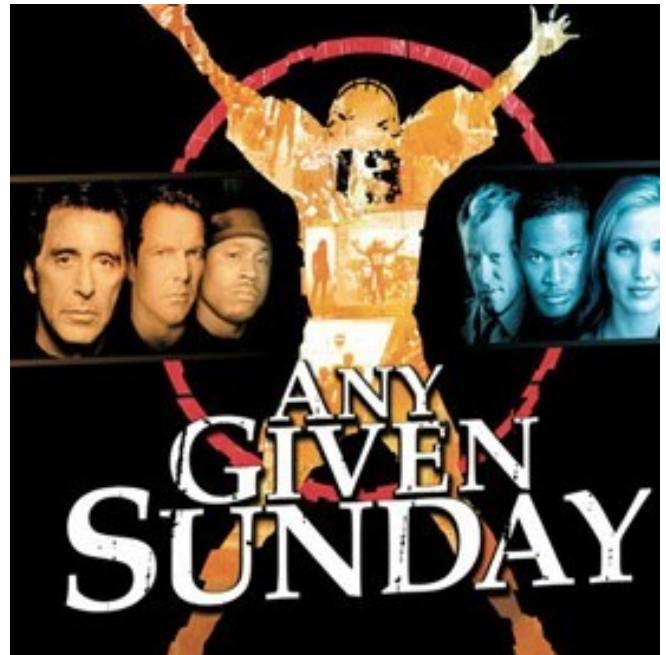
Oliver Stone's take on the high and lows of a failing American football team towards the end of the season has been re-released on Blu-ray, 10 years after it first came out in the cinema. But should you bother upgrading your DVD version? We see if we can get to 1st down to find out.

For those not aware of the story, Al Pacino plays football coach Tony D'Amato, struggling to prove his old school ways against an offensive line of young blood. Everyone, it seems, is against him: the new headstrong quarterback, the new marketing-savvy club owner, one of the other coaches, the team medic. It's a tough life.

Not that you'll have time to notice the story mind you as the pace is blisteringly fast. Not wanting to waste time getting to the story, director Oliver Stone uses some 3000 shots in the 157 minute opus to the "big" American game against a soundtrack of some 120 songs. If those stats give you anything it's the sheer raw edge of this film.

Of course this being Blu-ray all those close-ups, multiple camera angles and array of colours just work to appease the eye and the whole experience is nothing short of mind-blowingly luscious. It's a shame therefore that the storyline doesn't really match up to the visual feast.

It's the usual battle of a team and the individual characters trying their best to fight through. All the clichés are present: the white bosses (Al Pacino, James Woods, Cameron Diaz) towering over the black superstars (Jamie Foxx and LL Cool J). The lying medic tricking players into playing, the conniving owner happy to sell her daddy's club, the white aging quarterback (Dennis Quaid), and Pacino the loner coach with a drinking problem playing a cross between a gangster and a cop as he tries to keep his team in line.



...cont.

Get past the film and you'll find the same extras as you did on the DVD version. That means a fairly interesting Commentary by Oliver Stone and Jamie Foxx (they are actually separate), 6 minutes of unseen footage, making of documentaries, a polished gag reel of giggles and the option to turn off the dialogue and watch the film with just the music. For the hardened American Football fan there is also the chance to see the "football" bits without all the filler in the middle (if only they did that for all action movies).

VERDICT

While the storyline is average, this is Oliver Stone giving you a 157-minute visual and sound feast and it's probably worth a viewing just for that reason. The crispness of Blu-ray clearly helps the action pop out of the screen (certainly compared to the DVD version) and the punch of sound from both the effects and soundtrack also shine through.

Fans of Pacino won't be disappointed, after all this is another solid performance from the actor and the film gives him plenty of chances to shout rousing speeches.

All that said, don't expect to jump of the sofa believing you've seen the most thought-provoking film of the last 10 years at the end of it.

Rating: 15

Staring: Al Pacino, Cameron Diaz, James Woods, LL Cool J, Jamie Foxx

Directed by: Oliver Stone

Extras: 6 minutes of footage not seen theatrically, commentaries by Oliver Stone and Jamie Foxx, Full Contact: the making of Any Given Sunday documentary, Deleted/Extended scenes, 3 music videos: LL Cool J's Shut 'Em Down and Jamie Foxx's Any Given Sunday and My Name is Willie, Jamie Foxx Audition Tape/Screen Tests, Gag reel, Football Outtake and landscape outtake montages, Instant Replay: Direct access to exciting game moments, Production stills and ad material galleries, Music-only audio track,

At a glance

What is it?

American football movie

Good

Visual feast, sound

Bad

Not much originality

Verdict

A visual treat just don't expect to jump off the sofa believing you've seen the most thought-provoking film of the last 10 years at the end of it

Price £12.99

Our score

7/10

Your score

?/10

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/3898/any-given-sunday-blu-ray>

...cont.

Theatrical trailer

This Blu-ray was kindly loaned to us by Play.com, the UK's favourite online entertainment retailer.