

TALLADEGA NIGHTS

THE BALLAD OF RICKY BOBBY

*“If you ain’t first, you’re last...” --
NASCAR racing legend Ricky Bobby*

All Ricky Bobby (Will Ferrell) ever wanted to do was go fast ... real fast.

Columbia Pictures’ comedy *Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby* tells the story of a dreamer who can only count to #1. After winning and losing it all, Ricky Bobby must claw his way back to the top the only way he knows how — the hard way.

Will Ferrell, John C. Reilly, Sacha Baron Cohen, Gary Cole and Michael Clarke Duncan star in Columbia Pictures’ *Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby*, which is directed by Adam McKay and written by Will Ferrell & Adam McKay. Jimmy Miller and Judd Apatow are the producers. Will Ferrell, Adam McKay, David Householter, Richard Glover, Sarah Nettinga and Ryan Kavanaugh are the executive producers. The supporting cast includes Leslie Bibb, Jane Lynch, Amy Adams, Andy Richter, Molly Shannon, Greg Germann, David Koechner, Jack McBrayer and Ian Roberts.

Columbia Pictures Presents in Association with Relativity Media An Apatow Company/Mosaic Media Group Production *Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby* starring Will Ferrell, John C. Reilly, Sacha Baron Cohen, Gary Cole and Michael Clarke Duncan. The film is directed by Adam McKay and written by Will Ferrell & Adam McKay. The producers are Jimmy Miller and Judd Apatow. The executive producers are Will Ferrell, Adam McKay, David Householter, Richard

Glover, Sarah Nettinga and Ryan Kavanaugh. The director of photography is Oliver Wood. The production designer is Clayton R. Hartley. The editor is Brent White. The costumer designer is Susan Mattheson. The music is by Alex Wurman. The music supervision is by Hal Willner.

Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby has been rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association of America for Crude and Sexual Humor, Language, Drug References and Brief Comic Violence.

Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby will be released by Columbia Pictures on August 4, 2006.

SYNOPSIS

Ricky Bobby (WILL FERRELL) has always dreamed of driving fast — real fast — like his father, Reese Bobby (GARY COLE), who left the family to pursue his racing dreams. Early on, Ricky's mother, Lucy Bobby (JANE LYNCH) worried that her boy was also destined to end up as a professional daredevil on wheels.

Ricky Bobby first enters the racing arena as a “jackman” for slovenly driver Terry Cheveaux (ADAM MCKAY) and accidentally gets his big break behind the wheel when Cheveaux makes an unscheduled pit stop during a race to gorge on a chicken sandwich. Ricky jumps into the car and ... so begins the ballad of Ricky Bobby.

Ricky quickly becomes one of NASCAR's top stars, supported by his pit boys — the impressively large crew chief Lucius Washington (MICHAEL CLARKE DUNCAN), a trio of lovably moronic but loyal crew members, Herschell (DAVID KOECHNER), Kyle (IAN ROBERTS) and Glenn (JACK McBRAYER), as well as racing partner and boyhood best friend, Cal Naughton, Jr. (JOHN C. REILLY). They are all part of the Dennit Racing team, headed by wealthy Dennit Senior

(PAT HINGLE) and his petulant son, Dennit Junior (GREG GERMANN), whose jealousy of Ricky Bobby increases with every victory.

In a short time, Ricky Bobby is on top of the world. He has everything a championship NASCAR driver could ever want — a gorgeous wife, Carley (LESLIE BIBB), a lakeside mansion, two hell-raising sons, Walker (HOUSTON TUMLIN) and Texas Ranger (GRAYSON RUSSELL), huge sponsor endorsements and a string of victories from Daytona to Darlington.

Ricky Bobby's "win at all costs" approach has made him a national hero. But as he quickly realizes, in racing, as in life, you have to watch out for the curves.

After a frightening crash sends Ricky Bobby to the hospital, he loses his nerve and falls on hard times. When his career and his wife are taken over by his friend Cal, Ricky Bobby turns his back on racing and takes his sons back to his small hometown to live with his mother.

But Ricky just isn't cut out for the slow life away from the race track and soon hits rock bottom. His mother reluctantly turns to the only person she can think of to help her son — his estranged father Reese Bobby. His old man still has a few old racing tricks to help Ricky conquer his fear of driving.

Ricky Bobby will do anything to find a way back to the top, no matter how many speed bumps life throws his way.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

The idea for *Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby* was the brainchild of co-writers Will Ferrell & Adam McKay, who have been writing partners since meeting on the set of "Saturday Night Live" — where Ferrell was a fledgling cast member and McKay a show writer — nearly a decade ago. Their collaboration

continued after they left the show, most recently on the outrageous send-up of 1970s newscasters, *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy* (produced by Judd Apatow, who also produced *Talladega Nights*).

A comedy about NASCAR had been racing around their minds for several years. “Will and I talked about NASCAR racing while he was making *Elf*,” McKay recalls.

“We were in New York City and he was set to take a break before we started work on *Anchorman*. We noticed how fascinating the world of NASCAR racing had become. It’s gigantic. We weren’t even huge NASCAR fans at the time, but after we started going to the track, we got swept up in the phenomenon.”

It was *Talladega Nights* producer, Jimmy Miller, who first invited them to join him at a NASCAR race in Fontana, California, where they experienced the heady sights, smells and sounds of a NASCAR event.

“As soon as we heard the roar of the engines, we knew there was something here to make a movie about,” says McKay. “The crowd was huge — like a city, with campers and bonfires outside of every race. I was told that during the Talladega Race [the UAW-Ford 500 at the Talladega Superspeedway] each year, the speedway becomes the second largest city in Alabama.”

Ferrell is a longtime sports fan and studied sports information for his degree from the University of Southern California before choosing acting as his career. Although he was previously aware of stock car racing, he had never been to a race before that fateful day in Fontana.

“I knew a fair amount about NASCAR just because it had grown in popularity,” says Ferrell. “I knew some of the top drivers and had a fairly good working knowledge of the sport. But I never understood the intensity of it all until we started writing the character of Ricky Bobby. The challenge for us became writing

a movie that was both a comedy and a racing film, because we really wanted the audience to experience the amazing visceral reaction we had had while watching these cars fly around the track at 200 miles per hour.”

The character of Ricky Bobby owes a great deal to classic sports films. “Ricky is a typical sports movie character,” Ferrell claims. “He came from simple beginnings and, as a boy, enjoyed the need for speed. His motto became ‘If you ain’t first, you’re last’ — something his daddy taught him early in life. That meant either winning or wrecking, a go-for-broke attitude that eventually would lead to his downfall.”

“As soon as Will came up with the voice for Ricky, I was hooked,” says McKay. “I told him then that it looked like our lives for the next two years would be dealing with race cars.”

Ferrell and McKay continued attending NASCAR events and became friendly with the drivers such as Dale Earnhardt, Jr. and Jimmie Johnson.

As the project began to take shape, the participation of the NASCAR organization became a reality, enabling the filmmakers the possibility of filming in the pits and garages of some of America’s most popular racing arenas. “We were very lucky to get NASCAR involved in the movie,” says producer Judd Apatow. “We showed them the script early and hoped they would come onboard. If they didn’t, we would have to come up with a new racing league. But they got it and we were excited that NASCAR could have a sense of humor about it and really allowed us to be a part of their world. During filming, occasionally some guy at NASCAR would pitch us a better joke than we had, and then we were embarrassed that they could ride cars at 150 miles per hour *and* be funnier than us.”

NASCAR executives Richard Glover and Sarah Nettinga became closely involved with the film and monitored the accuracy of its design and content, as well as facilitating access for the production crew to actual racing events. Production designer Clayton Hartley, who had also worked on *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*, joined with costume designer Susan Matheson to ensure the sets, cars and uniforms (called “fire suits”) were in keeping with real NASCAR drivers and events.

“NASCAR approved our sponsors of our fictional drivers’ cars,” says Clayton Hartley, who previously provided the production design for such films as *American Wedding* and *Kicking & Screaming*, “which included Terry Cheveau’s fictional 1996 Laughing Clown Malt liquor stock car, as well as Ricky Bobby’s contemporary #26 Wonder Bread/POWERade stock car, Cal Naughton, Jr.’s #47 Old Spice stock car and Jean Girard’s #55 Perrier stock car. We also knew that we had to come up with designs for all of the cars and purchase the cars themselves. We hired NASCAR designer Sam Bass to help us refine our look and keep it real.”

Stunt coordinator Andy Gill, who had just worked with NASCAR on *Herbie: Fully Loaded*, was prepared to work closely with NASCAR to achieve the realism needed for the exciting races in *Talladega Nights*, as well as the breathtaking collisions called for in the script.

“I had worked in the NASCAR world and understood the high level of their involvement,” says Gill, who previously served as stunt coordinator on such films as *Bad Boys™ II* and *Pearl Harbor*. “They get very involved in every aspect of the film. You just can’t throw any car in there and expect it to be okay. It has to have the right look for the right model year. All the designs and sponsor decals have to be in the right places. That kind of coordination would have otherwise been impossible since we were working with 35 cars and wrecking them all the time.”

With NASCAR on board, producers Apatow and Miller and executive producer David Householter were able to secure the film's locations and cast. Charlotte, North Carolina, with its majestic Lowe's Motor Speedway, was chosen as the film's main location, with the actual Talladega Superspeedway in Alabama slated as well.

"The footage you pick up at a real race can't be created any other way," says Gill. "You've got the cars, the motor homes, the support vehicles. You have everything in the racetrack arena there waiting for you. And when the crowds arrive, it all springs to life. You could never afford to recreate that on your own."

Authentic locations locked in, the filmmakers now turned their attention to bringing together a strong comedy cast. As on *Anchorman*, director McKay and star Ferrell planned to shoot as many improvisational variations on their scripted scenes as time would allow. "In a typical film comedy, you may do a scene as written 90 percent of the time," explains Ferrell. "And you might do a take or two for fun off script. In our films, we pretty much do one take that is from the script and take off from there. A lot of actors aren't used to working in that style and sometimes view improvisation as a burden. But once everyone gets into the flow of it, it becomes a really fun process."

With that in mind, several of the actors chosen for the film had a background in improvisation. Performers like Jane Lynch, Ian Roberts and Jack McBrayer had done improvisational work for Chicago's Second City. Others, like Gary Cole and Michael Clarke Duncan, had also trained on the Chicago stage.

Sacha Baron Cohen, who plays the flamboyant French driver Jean Girard, was also no stranger to improv, it being the core of his popular HBO television series "Da Ali G Show."

“I think how Adam and Will work is brilliant,” says Baron Cohen. “Will is such an amazing improviser. He has the ability to take any scene in a totally different direction. He’s so earnest and always so in character that it is incredibly easy to improvise with him.”

Two actors who were surprisingly very talented at improvisation were Oscar® nominee (for *Chicago*) John C. Reilly and former model Leslie Bibb, a current regular on the popular television series “Crossing Jordan.”

“We had actually offered John a part in *Anchorman*, but he couldn’t take it because he had committed to working with Martin Scorsese on *The Aviator*,” recalls McKay. “He was so funny, he blew us away. So when we wrote this film, we knew we had to find a role for him. He is incredible, a revelation. We were amazed at how well he did with improvisation.”

Bibb also took to the loose improv climate on set. Although she had done several films, this was the first that enabled her to showcase her flair for comedy. “Leslie did so well improvising with Will, we immediately knew she was right for the part,” says McKay. “But the character of Carley Bobby is a blonde bombshell, and when Leslie read for us she was dressed down and a short haircut. Once we saw her in all of her blonde glory, with the sunglasses and the tight jeans, we were shocked at her transformation. She possesses that rare combination of talents, an actress with movie star looks who can create a strong character and flow right along with all the improv around her. She is terrific.”

Unlike many of her co-stars, Bibb actually had a connection to NASCAR racing that dates back to her Virginia childhood. “When I was a kid, we went to the Daytona 500 in Florida,” she says. “I remember my Mom getting a picture of herself with [former NASCAR champion] Richard Petty. I was dazzled by Richard and his blue car from then on. I became a pretty big racing fan after I got the part in this movie, though. Now I know all the drivers’ names and their cars. Getting to

work in the actual pits and garages was truly exciting and dangerous at the same time.”

Preparation to film the movie required Ferrell, Reilly and Baron Cohen to learn the driving fundamentals for sleek stock cars that are capable of reaching speeds of almost 200 miles per hour on the track. Along with director McKay, the trio enrolled in a (hopefully) no-crash course at Lowe’s Motor Speedway to learn how to race a car on the track. With instructors from the Richard Petty Driving Experience, these Hollywood novices quickly found themselves behind the wheel of a powerful NASCAR race car.

“The first thing they do is have you ride shotgun with a real NASCAR driver at about 180 miles an hour around the track. It was one of the most unpleasant experiences of my life,” admits Baron Cohen.

After the ride along, the actors were then required to get behind the wheel themselves. “We did about eight or nine laps following a pace car,” says Ferrell. “They taught us how to take a line on the track, how to approach curves. I think I was going about 135 miles an hour. You kinda’ get hooked right away.”

It was Reilly, however, who ultimately won the right to be called “the world’s fastest actor,” according to Ferrell. “I think John got up to 143 miles an hour. Throughout, the three of us had only one goal: to beat Britney Spears, who had once gone 112 miles an hour. Fortunately, we all did.”

McKay came away with new found respect for the NASCAR drivers after his experience on the speedway. “As soon as we heard those engines roar, we all turned into terrified chickens,” he laughs. “When we got to drive, though it was exhilarating taking the curves and banking at a 45 degree angle. It was like climbing a wall — truly insane, because they tell you to accelerate into the bank, but your natural instinct is to slow down. The experience really came in handy

when it actually came time to suit up and film the actual scenes on the track, as well as in the garages and the pits.”

The production’s pit crew consisted of Michael Clarke Duncan, David Koechner, Ian Roberts and Jack McBrayer, who attended “pit school” to learn how to jack up cars, change tires and refuel racecars in record time. Ferrell also joined in, to master the trade of “jackman,” the person responsible for jacking the car up for wheel changes.

“As pit crew chief, all I had to learn was how to tell the other guys what to do,” says Duncan, who plays the imposing Lucius Washington. “I was in my shorts and tank-top ordering them around, because it’s my job. Those guys were in a constant sweat for two hours since the tires weigh about 75 pounds. The real NASCAR pit crews are athletes — football and baseball players — recruited especially for their athletic ability.”

After a few hours of grueling study, the actors were able to actually get their pit stop time down to a remarkably fast 22 seconds. “Real NASCAR crews can do it in 13 seconds,” admits Roberts, who plays pit crew member Kyle. “Even though we got it down to 22 seconds, in the real NASCAR world, that long of a pit stop would probably cost us the race.”

“I was actually impressed that we got our pit stop time down to 22 seconds,” says Ferrell. “Some of the drivers told me that 22 seconds might be OK for a lower race division such as the Busch series or ARCA races, so in a way, we were actually competitive. Now I have something to fall back on if this whole film acting thing goes away,” he muses.

NASCAR went to great lengths to grant the production full access to the inner workings of their speedways and ensure their safety as well. Everyone was required to wear protective ear devices and taught to be attentive to fast-moving

cars and other dangers that can occur at the racetrack. Many of the scenes at Lowe's Speedway and Talladega Superspeedway required patience because the production was granted space to gather in a vacated pit only when a particular team had wrecked a car or blown an engine and had been eliminated from the competition.

"We had a great deal of help from NASCAR," says McKay. "They were completely open and gracious to us from start to finish. We also won over the team owners and drivers. Without them, we could never have secured the access we did. Still, it was tough to shoot at the actual races, because we had to wait to use a garage or a pit. And when they came available, we immediately had to man the battle stations to get everyone ready to film on a moment's notice."

The film's pit crew worked in the actual pits during races at both Lowe's and Talladega and shot extensively in the working garages. Although much of the dialogue was looped in later due to the thunderous noise all around, these scenes enabled the filmmakers to capture the real urgency of an actual NASCAR event.

During filming at the speedways, the production mingled with real NASCAR crews and drivers, some of whom wound up with small roles in the film. "Many of the drivers came up to say hello," says Ferrell. "And they often asked to be in the film. We met real mechanics and pit crews, who were very accommodating the entire time we were on their turf. They actually shut off their engines for us sometimes so we could get a take. They were extremely gracious and generous."

"NASCAR drivers do a lot of television interviews and commercials," says McKay. "So they are relaxed and totally natural. Dale Earnhardt, Jr. has a moment in the film, as does Jamie McMurray. Dale was surprisingly funny, too. He has great comic timing. I was impressed."

Filming at the 2005 UAW-GM Quality 500 at the Lowe's Motor Speedway presented new challenges since it takes place at night. Extra precautions were required in the garage areas and pits during the race, and cast and crew had to be on the lookout for cars rumbling in from the track at any moment.

Perhaps the most affecting true-to-life moment for the actors came when Ferrell, Baron Cohen and Reilly were introduced as their characters to the Talladega crowd of 200,000 screaming fans. When Ricky Bobby and Cal Naughton, Jr. were announced, the crowd went wild. But when Frenchman Jean Girard hit the stage, there was a collective — and deafening — boo.

"Adam said he was worried that I would get depressed after the whole stadium booed me," says Baron Cohen. "I wasn't surprised. It reminded me of the last time I went to Alabama, when I was playing a gay Austrian character for my show and was booed by 90,000 drunken men at the Alabama-Mississippi football game. The only way I got out alive was by switching clothes with the sound man."

Prior to production, McKay and his producers considered avoiding shooting during real races, but access to large cheering crowds and the overall ambience of the races made it impossible to resist taking the chance to capture the immediacy and excitement of NASCAR events.

"Our executive producer, David Householter, convinced us that we had to give it a try," recalls McKay. "He believed that you couldn't beat the production value of filming during an actual live race. There is no substitute for a track crammed with 200,000 screaming fans. It gives the film a feel that is impossible to fake. In terms of feasibility, it was absurd to have our crazy characters performing in the midst of all this real action. But we never missed a single shot. We got everything we needed during those races."

Director of photography Oliver Wood, who has shot such fast-paced action films as *The Bourne Identity* and *Fantastic Four*, collaborated closely with McKay to capture the reality of the races. “Oliver is the best there is when it comes to shooting action,” McKay attests. “He believes that each movie should be shot the way it needs to be shot. He sold me on using handheld, a rarity in comedy films. But he was right. It added energy to the shots and actually helped the comedy. Because the races look so real, you care more about what happens to the characters. The angles and cameras we came up with for the wrecks and stunts were unbelievable. It gave the movie a ‘big picture’ feel — which is exactly what we wanted, because if you don’t believe the racing, you won’t believe anything else about the story either.”

Although the actors are shown behind the wheels of their cars, they did very little actual driving. Trained stunt men were responsible for most of the driving, which averaged 180 miles per hour. The races were filmed at Lowe’s, Talladega and an older NASCAR track, the North Carolina Speedway (The Rock) in Rockingham, North Carolina, which is located about an hour east of Charlotte and was a famous racing destination in the earlier days of NASCAR.

“I loved shooting at Rockingham because it was one of the legendary Southern tracks,” says Ferrell. “It’s also the site of one of my most dangerous scenes when Ricky returns to racing after his debilitating wreck. He is so scared he can only get up to 25 miles per hour. All the other drivers just whiz past him. For the shot, I was actually being towed while the other cars passed me at 150 miles an hour.”

Another risky proposition for Ferrell’s Ricky was a scene when his father, Reese (Gary Cole), decides to help his son conquer his fear of driving by putting a live cougar in the car with him. Fortunately, the cats they used, Dylan and his sister Kasey, were total pros trained by Steve Berens and his company Animals of Distinction.

“The scene with the cougar in the car was one of my favorites,” McKay admits. “The real cats turned out to be sweet and very demure, so it was hard to make them look menacing. You wanted them to snarl and growl, but they were like kitties. Still, as soon as they were let out of their cage to walk to the set, the whole crew froze in fear. So, I guess I’d take a happy cougar over an angry cougar any day.”

For Ferrell, one of the most daunting aspects of the production wasn’t having to act with a live mountain lion, but suiting up every day in his thick driver’s uniform, which is called a fire suit. “It is kind of like wearing a moving blanket,” he says, “and just as hot. But they are beautiful pieces of clothing. Maybe they’ll be the next fashion thing — fire retardant clothing.”

The film was shot in and around Charlotte, North Carolina, using hundreds of locals as extras and crew members. Communities such as Gastonia and Cramerton stood in for Ricky Bobby’s boyhood fictitious hometown of West River, North Carolina. Girard’s sprawling estate was located in the heart of Charlotte and Ricky’s mansion was situated on a lake near Cornelius.

To bolster the authenticity of the film, real NASCAR sportscasters and announcers were used, including analysts Darrell Waltrip, Larry McReynolds, Mike Joy, Benny Parsons, Bill Weber, Wally Dallenbach, Bob Jenkins and Dick Berggren. With the help of NASCAR, the filmmakers were able to pack in the power and excitement of the real thing.

“The racing stuff is fantastic,” says McKay, “and in addition you have this absurdist comedy with great comic actors like Will, John, Sacha and Jane Lynch, as well as such world-class performers as Michael Clarke Duncan, Gary Cole, Amy Adams and Leslie Bibb. We have a lot going for us and I think it’ll be entertaining to a wide audience.”

After the experience of shooting NASCAR races, many of the cast and crew became immediate and big fans of stock car racing. "I watch all the races now on Sunday," says McKay. "I know all the drivers and their cars. I think that once you've experienced the spectacle of NASCAR racing, with all of its strategy and mechanics, you can't help but become a fan. There is a part of me that will always be hooked."

ABOUT THE CAST

WILL FERRELL (Ricky Bobby/Written by/Executive Producer) has become one of the film world's most popular performers following his hilarious tenure as a versatile cast member of television's "Saturday Night Live" for seven memorable seasons from 1995 to 2002. Concentrating on the big screen, he has excelled as the star of such recent successful comedies as *Elf*, *Bewitched*, *Old School*, *Kicking & Screaming* and *The Producers*, for which he was nominated in 2005 for a Golden Globe as Best Supporting Actor in a Musical or Comedy. He also recently worked with director Woody Allen on *Melinda and Melinda* and voiced the Man in the Yellow Hat in the animated hit *Curious George*.

Born in Irvine, California, he attended the University of Southern California and studied sports information, working occasionally as a sportscaster on a local cable channel. He decided to enroll for improvisational comedy classes at the famed Groundlings Theatre in Los Angeles and became a regular performer soon thereafter. Within a short time, he auditioned for "Saturday Night Live" and became one of the series' most valuable cast members.

Small parts in television series, ("On Our Own," "Grace Under Fire," "Living Single"), led to roles in such films as *Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery*, *The Thin Pink Line* and *The Suburbans* before he starred with "SNL"

alumnus Chris Kattan in the screen comedy *A Night at the Roxbury*, which they co-wrote featuring two of their most popular TV characters, nightclub hoppers the Butabi Brothers.

He went on to appear in the films *Dick*, *Superstar*, *Drowning Mona*, *The Ladies Man*, *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*, *Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back*, *Zoolander* and *Boat Trip* before breaking through as aging frat brother Frank the Tank in the film comedy *Old School* and the naïve Santa's helper Buddy in the boxoffice blockbuster *Elf*. He soon followed with his portrayal of stuffed-shirt 1970s newscaster in *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy* (which he co-wrote), further cementing his status as a top leading man in major films.

Upcoming for Ferrell are *Blades of Glory* co-starring Jon Heder and Will Arnett and director Marc Forster's *Stranger Than Fiction* with Oscar® winners Dustin Hoffman and Emma Thompson, as well as Maggie Gyllenhaal and Queen Latifah.

JOHN C. REILLY (Cal Naughton, Jr.) has the opportunity to explore his comedic side in *Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Rocky Bobby* after earning substantial acclaim in recent dramatic films such as *The Aviator*, *Dark Water*, *Gangs of New York*, *The Hours* and *Chicago* (for which he earned Academy Award® and Golden Globe nominations as Best Supporting Actor).

The Chicago-born actor studied his craft at DePaul University and later became a member of the prestigious Chicago-based drama troupe The Steppenwolf Theatre. He made his film debut in director Brian DePalma's *Casualties of War* and went on to create memorable characters in such features as *Hoffa*, *Days of Thunder*, *Shadows and Fog*, *State of Grace*, *We're No Angels*, *The River Wild*, *Dolores Claiborne*, *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*, *Georgia* and *The Thin Red Line*. His association with director/writer Paul Thomas Anderson began with his role in

Hard Eight, leading to the actor's celebrated portrayals in *Boogie Nights* and *Magnolia*.

Over the past few years he's appeared in such films as *Never Been Kissed*, *For the Love of the Game*, *The Anniversary Party*, *The Good Girl*, *The Perfect Storm*, *Criminal* and *Anger Management*. He was most recently seen in director Robert Altman's *A Prairie Home Companion*, playing Dusty, a singing cowboy.

SACHA BARON COHEN (Jean Girard) is perhaps best known on both sides of the Atlantic as befuddled faux talk show host Ali G in the acclaimed television series "Da Ali G Show," which led to the release of the motion pictures *Ali G Indahouse* in 2002, and the upcoming comedy film *Borat*, all written by and starring Baron Cohen.

After attending Christ's College in Cambridge, England and majoring in history, he moved into comedy performance and created the Ali G character on British television's "The 11 O'Clock Show" in 1998. His creation of the characters Ali G, Bruno and Borat on "Da Ali G Show" in 2000 led to popular and critical acclaim in the United Kingdom. Baron Cohen and the series won two BAFTA Awards in 2001 and Baron Cohen also was bestowed a 1999 British Comedy Award for his work on "The 11 O'Clock Show." Baron Cohen also won a Royal Television Society Award for Best Comedian and a Golden Rose of Montreux. The series moved to HBO in the United States in 2003 and garnered four Emmy Award nominations. He became such a phenomenon that he was instrumental in bringing a new lexicon into the English language and even the late Queen Mother of England was a fan. The show's worldwide fame led to Baron Cohen being the only performer to host the European MTV Awards twice, once as Ali G, and last year as Borat.

Most recently, the actor found another niche as the voice of regal lemur Julien in the successful animated feature *Madagascar*. He also appeared in an episode of HBO's "Curb Your Enthusiasm."

GARY COLE (Reese Bobby) maintains one of the busiest schedules in motion picture and television acting, constantly in demand for both lead and supporting roles. He most recently filmed a new television pilot "Company Town" for CBS and starred in the TNT television series "Wanted," as well as the features *Breach*, *Cry Wolf* and *Mozart and the Whale*.

The Illinois native studied drama at Illinois State University and formed the Remains Theatre Ensemble in Chicago with fellow actor William Petersen. His breakthrough role in television came with his portrayal of accused murderer 'Jeffrey MacDonald' in 1984's "Fatal Vision," followed by his starring role in the series "Midnight Caller" and leads in such television projects as "American Gothic," "Son of the Morning Star" and the HBO miniseries "From the Earth to the Moon." He made an uncredited cameo appearance in 1985 in *To Live and Die in LA*, which starred his friend Petersen. He went on to win a featured role in the film *Lucas* and appeared as a Secret Service agent in the Clint Eastwood thriller *In the Line of Fire* before breaking through as the ditzy dad in *The Brady Bunch Movie* and its successful follow up *A Very Brady Sequel*.

Memorable roles followed in such films as *Office Space* (as the slimy Bill Lumbergh), *A Simple Plan*, *The Gift*, *One Hour Photo*, *I Spy*, *Win a Date with Tad Hamilton!*, *Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story* and *The Ring Two*. He also recently appeared as Vice President Russell on the acclaimed television series "The West Wing" and voiced characters for such animated series as "The Family Guy" and "Kim Possible."

MICHAEL CLARKE DUNCAN (Lucius Washington) came to prominence as the convicted killer John Coffey in 1999's *The Green Mile*, a role that earned the

actor nominations for an Academy Award® and a Golden Globe as Best Supporting Actor.

Duncan was born in Chicago and attended Alcorn State University. He tried his hand at professional football with the Chicago Bears, but turned to acting after a series of odd jobs including digging ditches for the gas company. He traveled to Los Angeles and became a club bouncer and bodyguard, studying acting on the side and occasionally landed small roles in television series such as "Married With Children" and "The Fresh Prince of Bel Air." Warren Beatty cast him as a bouncer in the film *Bulworth* in 1998, leading the actor to success in larger roles in films such as *Armageddon*, *A Night at the Roxbury*, *The Whole Nine Yards*, *See Spot Run*, *Planet of the Apes*, *The Scorpion King*, *Daredevil*, *D.E.B.S.*, *American Crude*, *Sin City* and *The Island*.

He also is a much in demand voiceover actor, lending his distinctive baritone to such films as *Cats & Dogs*, *Brother Bear* and *Racing Stripes*.

He will next appear opposite Billy Bob Thornton in *School for Scoundrels*, which will be released in September 2006.

LESLIE BIBB (Carley Bobby) is currently starring in the popular television series "Crossing Jordan" as Tallulah Simmons and has appeared in such other television series as "Nip/Tuck," "Capital City," "Line of Fire" and "ER."

Born in North Dakota and raised in Virginia, she started her professional life as a teenage fashion model. She decided to pursue acting and studied her craft until landing her first small film role in 1997 in *Private Parts*. Larger roles in such films as *The Skulls* and *See Spot Run* followed, as well as starring roles in the TV series "Popular" and "The Big Easy." She went on to appear in the films *This Space Between Us*, *The Young Unknowns* and, most recently, *Wristcutters*.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

ADAM McKAY's (Director/Written by/Executive Producer) first film was a successful one: *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*, which he also co-wrote with Will Ferrell. The two had been longtime friends since spending several years together on "Saturday Night Live," where McKay had served as head writer and the creator of many of that series' most memorable sketches and short films from 1995-2001.

Born in Philadelphia, he trained in improvisational theatre with the Second City and Upright Citizens Brigade performance groups in Chicago. He also wrote for Michael Moore's TV show "The Awful Truth."

WILL FERRELL (Written by/Executive Producer/Ricky Bobby) See bio in "About the Cast" section above.

JIMMY MILLER (Producer) has long been regarded as one of the most successful talent managers in show business, and now has become a film producer as well on such recent hit features as *Elf* and *Kicking & Screaming*. As a partner in the Mosaic Media Group, Mandalay Mosaic Television Group and Werner-Gold-Miller, he is currently involved in the creation of wide-ranging television and film projects.

He has been a producer on such television productions as "Reelmadness," "The Guardian" and "Happy Hour." He formed the management company The Gold-Miller Company in 1994 and guided the careers of such comedic talent as Jim Carrey, Jay Roach and many others before merging with Atlas Entertainment to form the Mosaic Media Group.

Among his future film projects as a producer are *Land of the Lost* and a movie version of the popular 1960s television comedy series, *Get Smart*.

JUDD APATOW (Producer) has created one of the most prolific and successful careers in the entertainment industry. As a director, he guided the critically acclaimed boxoffice hit *The 40 Year Old Virgin* (which he also wrote and produced). As a writer, he has created the acclaimed television series “Undeclared,” as well as such hit films as *Fun with Dick and Jane* and *Celtic Pride*. As a producer, he has worked on such popular films as *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*, *Kicking & Screaming* and *The Cable Guy* while also producing television series such as “Freaks and Geeks” (for which he wrote and directed several episodes).

The New York State native attended film school at USC and became a stand-up comedian after graduation. He decided to concentrate on writing and producing comedy, beginning with cable television specials for comedians such as Roseanne Barr and Jim Carrey. He went on to co-create and executive-produce “The Ben Stiller Show” and continued as head writer and consulting producer on the hit series “The Larry Sanders Show,” becoming the show’s co-executive producer in its last season.

He made his feature film debut as a co-writer and executive producer of the comedy *Heavyweights*. He also directed episodes of “The Larry Sanders Show,” “Freaks and Geeks” and “Undeclared.” He produced and wrote for television series such as “The Critic,” “North Hollywood,” “Life on Parole” and “Sick in the Head.”

He most recently directed the film *Knocked Up* from his own original screenplay.

DAVID HOUSEHOLDER (Executive Producer) most recently worked as executive producer on *Just Like Heaven* a romantic comedy starring Reese Witherspoon and Mark Ruffalo. He also co-produced *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy* and *Elf*, both starring Will Ferrell. In addition, David co-produced

the 2003 sci-fi film *The Core* starring Aaron Eckhart and Hilary Swank, as well as the teen movie *Clockstoppers*.

Householter began working on films in 1984 as a set production assistant on Wes Craven's seminal horror film *Nightmare on Elm Street* and soon took the next step up the ladder as a second assistant director on Paul Verhoeven's *Robocop*. His credits as a first assistant director include *Drugstore Cowboy*, *The Marrying Man*, *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*, *Heavy Weights* and *The Nutty Professor*. As a unit production manager, he worked on a number of projects beginning with *The Chamber* and such films as *Mystery Men* and *Little Nicky*.

RICHARD GLOVER and **SARAH NETTINGA** (Executive Producers) supervised all activities pertaining to NASCAR during the production of *Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby*.

Richard Glover is vice president of broadcasting and new media for both NASCAR and NASCAR Digital Entertainment. He manages NASCAR's Los Angeles office. [In addition to](#) the entertainment programming and promotion on behalf of the sport, he is responsible for oversight of NASCAR's national broadcasting partnerships [and](#) new media [businesses](#). Glover spearheads the valuable relationships NASCAR's Los Angeles office has established throughout the television and entertainment industries and leads NASCAR's marketing, licensing, sales, public relations and strategic communications functions on the West Coast.

A 20-year veteran of broadcasting and media, Glover spent over a decade with ABC and ESPN, where he held multiple roles for the companies that included broadcasting, new media, online and programming oversight.

Sarah Nettinga is director of film, television and music entertainment for NASCAR Digital Entertainment and is charged with the oversight of the

entertainment division of NASCAR, a division responsible for the development and management of original film and television concepts for NASCAR and connection of the sport to celebrity talent and the music industry. Nettinga oversaw the day-to-day NASCAR partnership for the filming of *Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby* and brought Walt Disney Pictures *Herbie: Fully Loaded* feature film to NASCAR. In March 2003, she also ushered in the record-breaking launch of NASCAR's first IMAX film, *NASCAR 3D: The IMAX Experience*. Additionally, Nettinga has established on-going creative relationships with a multitude of television networks and produced dozens of television programs for NASCAR, as well as fostering NASCAR's association with celebrities from all parts of the entertainment industry.

Nettinga brought over a decade of entertainment industry experience to NASCAR, working in production, sales and marketing capacities for motion picture studios Warner Bros. and Sony Pictures Entertainment, as well as a number of major television stations.

RYAN KAVANAUGH (Executive Producer) is a principal of Relativity Media, LLC, an entertainment industry boutique that uniquely blends film financing and structured finance as its core businesses. Prior to his work with Relativity, Kavanaugh started a venture capital company at the age of 22, and raised and invested hundreds of millions for venture and private equity transactions.

While at Relativity, Kavanaugh has been responsible for creating business and financial structures for a number of studios, production companies and producers, and introduced over \$2 billion in capital to such structures. Clients/deals include Marvel Entertainment, Atmosphere Entertainment MM, the French distributor/sales agent Exception-Wild Bunch S.A., Warner Bros., Sony and Universal, among others. Relativity also consults and advises a number of bulge bracket banks and hedge funds as to their investment activities in the film arena.

OLIVER WOOD (Director of Photography) most recently worked on the films *Fantastic Four*, *The Bourne Supremacy* and *Scooby Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed*. The London-born cinematographer began his career in 1970 with *The Honeymoon Killers* and went on to work on an array of television and film projects that includes the television series "Miami Vice" and the motion pictures *Die Hard 2*, *The Adventures of Ford Fairlane*, *Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey*, *Rudy*, *Terminal Velocity*, *Mr. Holland's Opus*, *Celtic Pride*, *2 Days in the Valley*, *Face/Off*, *Switchback*, *Mighty Joe Young*, *U-571*, *The Bourne Identity*, *The Adventures of Pluto Nash*, *I Spy*, *National Security* and *Freaky Friday*.

CLAYTON R. HARTLEY (Production Designer) most recently designed the films *Kicking & Screaming*, *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy* and *American Wedding*. Beginning his career as an assistant art director on *The Return of the Living Dead* and *Hoosiers*, he became an art director on such motion pictures as *Getting Even with Dad*, *Jerry Maguire*, *The Other Sister* and *Double Take*, and co-designed Cameron Crowe's *Almost Famous*. He also was production designer for the television series "Going to California," and most recently designed the film *The Perfect Sleep*.

BRENT WHITE (Editor) worked with Adam McKay on *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy* and with producer Judd Apatow on *The 40 Year Old Virgin* as well as on the television productions "Freaks and Geeks" and "Undeclared" and most recently, the film comedy *Knocked Up*. He began his career as an editor for the Sundance Film Institute's summer lab program and has assisted on such films as *The Milagro Beanfield War*, *Glory*, *Fluke* and *Home for the Holidays*. His other credits as editor include *A River Runs Through It*, "And The Band Played On," *Matilda*, *Wildflowers*, *Panic*, *The Slaughter Rule* and the television series "Desperate Housewives."

SUSAN MATHESON (Costume Designer) started her costume career by designing for Barbie. The Vassar College graduate went on to design costumes for both film and theater. Some of her projects include *Best Laid Plans*, *Crazy/Beautiful*, *Blue Crush* and *Friday Night Lights*. She is currently working on *Kingdom*.

ALEX WURMAN (Music) is truly a versatile composer who has displayed a broad musical palette from the eerie, spare piano melodies of *Confessions of A Dangerous Mind* to the lush 85 piece orchestral chases of *Hollywood Homicide*, the avant-heartland score to the Emmy nominated HBO film "Normal," the groovy '70s themes for the outrageous comedy *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*, the contemporary interpretations of French impressionism for *Thirteen Conversations About One Thing* and the soulful melodies combined with ethereal orchestrations for *March of the Penguins*, in which the music gives voice to the characters. His signature style is defined by an emphasis on harmony, rhythm and melody, not sound design.

Wurman's talents are the result of both nature and nurture. He hails from a family that spent generations devoted to the study and performance of music. His father Hans Wurman is an arranger and composer who not only pioneered the world of electronic music by recording intricate works on the first Moog synthesizer, but was also the owner of a thriving business recording radio plays featuring well known actors such as Richard Burton, James Earl Jones and Woody Allen. Alex initially spent afternoons at his father's workplace as a child. He attended the Academy of Performing Arts High School in Chicago. He went on to study composition at the University of Miami in Coral Gables and the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago.

After graduating and beginning his career composing for commercials, Wurman moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career in film scoring. He immediately got to

work scoring AFI student films. During this time, he met Hans Zimmer and began working with the composer by providing composition and arranging services. This valuable experience proved to be the launching pad for Wurman's independent career. Soon thereafter, assignments came his way from the indie world as directors discovered a fresh and versatile composer whose music lent depth to their films.

In a relatively short period of time, the film composer's talents have won the respect of directors and film reviewers alike. Director Ron Shelton said, "Alex wrote an amazing score for me on *Play It to the Bone*, rich with musical variety, earthy, melodic, rhythmic. I don't think there is any kind of music he is not conversant in. I hope to work with him in the future." The director kept his promise and subsequently hired Wurman to score *Hollywood Homicide*. Jill Sprecher, the director of *Thirteen Conversations About One Thing*, explained, "He is a born storyteller whose work gets to the heart of the matter and expresses what words cannot. The music he creates is unique, complex and stunning." The Los Angeles Times wrote: "Alex Wurman's spare, elegant score contributes strongly to creating and sustaining the film's shifting moods." Percy Adlon, director of *Bagdad Café* and *The Hotel Adlon* described Wurman's abilities by saying, "He has a wonderfully wide range of styles. You can travel with him from Schubert to Thelonius Monk, from Jamaican to Baroque, from noise to ballroom, from rich to sparse. He will never give you a cheap imitation. You will always get an original."

Wurman's other current works include *Baggage* and *Call of the North*.

HAL WILLNER (Music Supervision) is among the most eclectic and original producers in contemporary music, helming a series of wildly ambitious concept albums which tapped the talents of artists running the gamut from pop to jazz to the avant-garde. Born in Philadelphia in 1957, he first earned notice in 1981 with "Amarcord Nino Rota," a tribute to the legendary composer best known for his collaborations with filmmaker Federico Fellini. In addition to contributions from

pop icon Debbie Harry and jazz piano great Jaki Byard, the collection also featured appearances by then unknowns Wynton Marsalis and Bill Frisell. That same year, Willner also signed on as the music supervisor for the long-running NBC sketch comedy series "Saturday Night Live," a position he holds to this day.

"That's the Way I Feel Now – A Tribute to Thelonious Monk," a showcase for acts ranging from Dr. John to Joe Jackson to John Zorn, followed in 1984, and a year later Willner launched "Lost in the Stars – The Music of Kurt Weill," which featured contributions from Sting, Tom Waits and Lou Reed. A year later, after turning to film he worked on a pair of 1987 projects *Heaven* and *Candy Mountain*. Willner earned considerable notice for "Stay Awake," a tribute to the classic music of Walt Disney's animated films which featured Ringo Starr, Sun Ra and Sinead O'Connor. Music for animated films remained one of his preoccupations in the years that followed and, in 1990, he assembled "The Carl Stalling Project," a collection of vintage cartoon scores from the legendary Warner Bros. studio composer. (A sequel appeared in 1995.)

In 1989, Willner began a stint as producer on the innovative but short-lived syndicated television series "Michelob Presents, Night Music," followed in 1992 by "Weird Nightmare – Meditations on Mingus," another all-star tribute this time featuring Elvis Costello, Keith Richards and Henry Rollins. A year later, he collaborated with filmmaker Robert Altman on the acclaimed *Short Cuts*, a working relationship which extended to 1996's *Kansas City* and its accompanying "Robert Altman's Jazz '34." After wrapping up 1998's "Closed on Account of Rabies: Poems and Tales of Edgar Allan Poe" (spotlighting performances by Iggy Pop, Ken Nordine and Jeff Buckley), Willner signed to Howie B.'s Pussyfoot label to release his proper solo debut "Whoops, I'm an Indian!"

Other record-producing assignments followed, notably albums for Lou Reed ("Ecstasy," Warner Bros.) and Laurie Anderson ("Life on A String," Nonesuch), as well as a series of live-event tributes to Edgar Allan Poe, Allen Ginsberg, Harry

Smith, Lenny Bruce and the Marquis De Sade, which featured an incredibly diverse group of performers, including Lou Reed, Wynton Marsalis, Elvis Costello, Will Ferrell, Gavin Friday, Beck, Steve Earle, Anthony and the Johnsons, Marianne Faithful, David Johansen, Chloe Webb and Philip Glass.

More recent music supervision projects in film include building a score from obscure Miles Davis and Ornette Coleman recordings for Gus Van Sant's *Finding Forrester*, collaborations with Bono, Daniel Lanois and Brian Eno on Wim Wender's *Million Dollar Hotel* and Adam McKay's *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy* starring Will Ferrell.

Willner is currently producing Lucinda Williams' new album.

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