



Flying Scotsman Films/Doosra Productions

present

A DOUGLAS MACKINNON FILM

THE FLYING SCOTSMAN

WITH

Jonny Lee Miller

Billy Boyd

Laura Fraser

Morven Christie

Steven Berkoff

with Brian Cox as Baxter

Running time: 96 Minutes

THE FLYING SCOTSMAN

Introduction

The hugely anticipated British film ***The Flying Scotsman***, directed by Douglas Mackinnon, received its world premiere on Monday 14th August 2006 when it was chosen to open the Edinburgh International Film Festival, the world's longest running film festival and now in its 60th year.

Starring Jonny Lee-Miller (*Aeon Flux, Train Spotting*), Billy Boyd (*The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *Master & Commander*), Brian Cox (*Nuremberg, X-Men 2: X-Men United*) and Laura Fraser (*Vanilla Sky, Sixteen Years of Alcohol*), ***The Flying Scotsman*** is directed by Douglas Mackinnon (*Jekyll, Gentlemen's Relish, Bodies*) and written by John Brown, Declan Hughes and Simon Rose, with cinematography by Gavin Finney. The producers are Sara Giles, Peter Gallagher and Peter Broughan.

The Flying Scotsman is based on the remarkable true story of Scottish cyclist Graeme Obree who stunned the international cycling world in 1993 when, as an unemployed amateur from deepest Ayrshire, he smashed the world one-hour record on his own revolutionary design - which he constructed out of scrap metal and parts of a washing machine - only to have his title stripped from him, and mental health problems which have troubled him ever since.

THE FLYING SCOTSMAN

Synopsis

Based on a remarkable true story, ***The Flying Scotsman*** is a heart-warming and compelling film which follows the turbulent life of cyclist Graeme Obree, who, as an unemployed amateur, broke the World One Hour record on a bike of his own revolutionary design, constructed out of scrap metal and old washing machine parts.

From a humble background in Ayrshire, Scotland, Graeme Obree (JONNY LEE MILLER) always had to fight for survival. As a grown man, nothing had changed. When his beloved bicycle shop went bust, Graeme had neither the money nor the sponsorship necessary to realize his dream; to compete at the highest level of world cycling. But it was always clear from his complete passion for the sport and his many local wins that he was destined for greatness. With the unwavering support of his wife Anne (LAURA FRASER) – despite the fact that they had recently had their first baby – and the help of his close friend and newly-appointed manager Malky (BILLY BOYD), he persevered. With the use of the work shop (and occasional mentoring) of a friendly and peaceful minister, Baxter (BRIAN COX) - and of course his racing bike 'Old Faithful' - Graeme was finally on his way to the Hamar Velodrome in Norway and the chance to go for the prestigious World Hour Record.

But despite their determination and back-breaking work, Graeme missed out on the record by some distance... Distraught, but unfazed, he did the unimaginable. He defiantly returned to the track the following morning, and despite being in unbearable pain from the previous day's gruelling race, he smashed the world record, which had stood for almost ten years.

But Graeme had always suffered from mental health problems and he began to slip in and out of debilitating bouts of depression; it soon became apparent that his career was in danger of hitting the rocks. On top of everything, the World Cycling Federation had been studying his unorthodox bike design and racing position – and they could not bear his unusual style tarnishing their sport. Graeme would soon learn the lengths they would go to in order to stop him from competing.

But, defiant, he refused to give up; and with the help of Baxter's sympathetic ear (understanding all too well Graeme's affliction), he made a phenomenal comeback. He built another bike of radical design that squeezed through the WCF's strict guidelines – and against all the odds he won the World Pursuit Championship – astonishingly beating his rival, the Olympic Gold Medal holder Chris Boardman. Graeme's pioneering 'Superman Position' remains one of the most defining images in the history of world cycling.

With fantastic high speed racing sequences, and gripping, heartfelt performances by Jonny Lee Miller, Billy Boyd, Laura Fraser and Brian Cox, this is a truly inspiring story about one man's extraordinary triumph over adversity. ***The Flying Scotsman*** is *Chariots of Fire* meets *Rocky* meets *Shine* – on wheels!

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Graeme Obree	JONNY LEE MILLER
Young Graeme Obree	SEAN BROWN
Child Gang Leader	JOSEPH CARNEY
First Child Bully	CRAWFORD McINALLY-KEIR
Second Child Bully	JAN PLAZALSKI
Graeme's Father	NIALL MACGREGOR
Graeme's Mother	JULIE AUSTIN
First Office Receptionist	MORAG CALDER
Malky	BILLY BOYD
Anne Obree	LAURA FRASER
Woman At Finish Line	JEAN MARIE COFFEY
Baby Ewan	CHRISTOPHER ANDERSON
Baxter	BRIAN COX
Scobie	RON DONACHIE
Katie	MORVEN CHRISTIE
Second Office Receptionist	PAULINE LYNCH
Cycle Courier	GARY HOLLYWOOD
Armstrong	MORAY HUNTER
First Kid In Street	KIERAN TENNANT
Second Kid In Street	STUART GLEN
Ernst Hagemann	STEVEN BERKOFF
Francesco Moser	PHILIP WRIGHT
First Cycling Official	DENNIS MATSUKI
Second Cycling Official	ERICH REDMAN
Third Cycling Official	PETER MAJER
"Specialized" Representative	DAVID HOUNSLOW
Adult Gang Leader	NIALL FULTON
Chris Boardman	ADRIAN SMITH
French Mayor	DANIEL ANDRE PAGEON
Mayor's Assistant	GRANT AYLWARD
Mayor's Wife	GUDRUN MANGEL
Daughter On Bike	CAITLIN BRENNAN
Father On Bike	GEORGE DRENNAN
Doctor	ASHOK SRIVASTAVA
Toddler Ewan	NATHAN McGRATH

THE FLYING SCOTSMAN

Production Notes

Background

In July 1993, 27-year-old Scottish racing cyclist Graeme Obree broke the world record for the longest distance traveled in one hour on a bike, previously held for nine years by Francesco Moser, with a distance of 51km. The record lasted less than a week, when it was broken by his long-term cycling rival, Englishman Chris Boardman. But Obree retook the record in April 1994 and was individual pursuit World Champion in 1993 and 1995. At home he also broke the British 10-mile individual time trial record in 1993, won the RTTC 50-mile championship the same year and won the 25 mile championship in 1996.

These achievements were all the more remarkable because, until he took the 'hour record' for the first time, his riding had been largely amateur, and he certainly did not have large scale sponsorship and development support, unlike other professional cyclists at that time. Instead, in order to develop his technique, he developed a unique riding position (the 'crouch' or 'tuck' position) and constructed a unique bike frame out of household objects to achieve his goal.

But there is also a dark side to his story, as bouts of depression followed his biggest achievements leading to a diagnosis of bi-polar disorder. Meanwhile the world governing body for cycling kept changing the rules on which riding positions were allowed, and Obree often found himself banned from taking part in high stakes racing hours before the event...

An interview with Graeme Obree

The world premiere of ***The Flying Scotsman***, about the celebrated but troubled former world champion cyclist Graeme Obree, opened the 60th Edinburgh International Film Festival in August 2006. He broke the world one-hour record on a bike of his own design, made partly out of sections of a washing machine. The film charts Obree's victories as well as his struggle with mental health problems.

Obree attended the premiere with his devoted wife Anne and two young sons Ewan and Jamie. He is delighted with the results, calling the film "a masterpiece. It's great that it has this platform at the Edinburgh Film Festival, because I guess it means it's already succeeded as a film in an artistic sense, on its own merit." He also insists that the film has helped him move on from the crippling depression he has suffered: "***The Flying Scotsman*** is historical for me. It is a kind of closure, a reminder of the man I used to be. I can get on with my life now."

However he admits that his first reaction when he heard about his life story being turned into a film was "'I'll believe it when I see it', and I still had doubts until filming started. I've been involved in a few documentaries but I was blown away by the depth of preparation involved. Director Douglas Mackinnon put his entire life on hold to make this film.

"Jonny Lee Miller was absolutely sound too. He did a brilliant job and took to cycling like a duck to water, coming into work on his bike even on lashing wet mornings. Within days he was copying my hand movements, almost subconsciously, and my autobiography was never out of his hand. I did some body doubling, not because his legs weren't up to it, but because the sheer quantity of cycling you've got to do is amazing. So Jonny and I took turns."

Director Douglas Mackinnon says that Obree committed himself body and soul to the film: "He was completely immersed in it. He cycled behind Jonny on the velodrome track while filming him with a camera strapped to the handlebars."

The tenacity of both cast and crew mirrored Graeme's approach to his sport which he agrees was partly moulded by childhood bullying and subsequent mental health problems. The son of a firm and distant father, a policeman, the young Graeme never took a friend from school home: "I liked trees more than people. Cycling made

me feel better, winning made me feel better. My worst subject at school was Physical Education. I was also useless at Metalwork and English. I started cycling with my brother when I was about eleven. It was an escape mechanism. I had this idea that one day I go out for a ride, cycle over the horizon and just disappear. I suppose at school I always wanted to be an explorer. The trouble was that the horizon never came.”

Bipolar depression drove Obree to despair, and this is reflected in the film: “The story is surreal. The portrayal of my depression is very intense, but quite subtle.” While Graeme chooses not to dwell on the negative, he makes passing reference to the beneficial effects of counselling in conjunction with short-term medication, which helped him achieve a balance.

Perhaps this goes some way to explaining why breaking the world record was more of a relief than a triumph for the cyclist. “I suddenly felt equal with anyone, that I could breathe the same air,” he recalls. “It seemed to justify my existence as a human being. But I couldn’t have done any of it without the support of my wife Anne; she’s the one person who has always believed in me. A big part of the story is a woman standing by a difficult man. It’s a serious film, but it’s also very funny.”

It was his obsessive fear of failure that drove Obree to have another go at the world record – the day after the official attempt: “It didn’t happen for me on the scheduled day, just didn’t work out. But the moment I finished, I decided I was going to have another go the next day. I was feeling absolutely wretched and knew I had to get back on the bike and try again in the morning. Second time around just about everyone had gone, just a few family and friends and a couple of journalists from France were left behind. I went for it, and I did it. I’m the only person in the world to have broken a cycling speed record in a Winter Olympics stadium, on the wrong day, in front of nine people.

“It was a death or glory moment. I had to do it. The thing had become a complete obsession. When I was going around the track, I noticed nothing but the track in front of me, nothing but the black line I had to cross. I just went for broke.” It was a fantastic achievement, prompting the French sports daily *L’Equipe* to give him front page billing as ‘L’Incroyable Graeme Obree’.

But he admits that he always felt unworthy: “Even when I was training, I was driven by fear. Every day I would really psyche myself up, then ride as though my life depended on it. It was all about fear. If I didn’t train well, I wouldn’t race well. If I

didn't race well, I would never win anything. If I never won anything, nobody would think I was worthy."

Obree felt compelled to write his autobiography, *The Flying Scotsman*, which so impressed former Labour spin-doctor Alistair Campbell that he wrote "that it was one of the best books by a sportsman I had ever read, because of the passion with which he described his sporting endeavours, and the palpable, searing honesty of the accounts of his troubled mental history."

Obree explains: "You put it all down on paper, you try to get out the feelings that are trapped. It started with a psychologist saying it would do me good and ended up as my life story. I had to make the decision either to write a book with lots of pictures but not saying much, or a real autobiography saying everything. I want people to know the real person, I want people to understand what it's like, how it feels."

And the film adaptation of Obree's life certainly does that. *The Flying Scotsman* begins with Obree at his lowest ebb, heading into the woods preparing to commit suicide. It then tells the story of his gritty determination in constructing his handmade bike, Old Faithful, and establishing a new world record for the distance covered in an hour. It charts the triumphs of a sporting underdog, but with an extra human dimension to the story; he wasn't just chasing records, he was fighting personal demons in the shape of depression brought on by childhood trauma, bullying and a sense of his own worthlessness.

Things got worse for Obree, who was diagnosed with manic depression and one day in 2001 was found hanging – barely alive – from the rafters of his barn. It was his third failed suicide attempt. Five years on, he is upbeat: "Since I wrote my autobiography I've found there's more interest in the mental illness thing than the cycling side of the story, and it will probably be the same for *The Flying Scotsman*. But I think in time it'll be seen as a multi-faceted film; one that appeals to people in different ways. It's no longer just a rocky story of a cyclist; it's much deeper than that."

In fact the film was some 12 years in the making: "It's been like diamond mining; it's a dirty, filthy process but at the end there is a real gem, and that's what has happened. I totally believe that a Hollywood director with a budget of £100 million would not have made a better movie than the one that's been made. It was such a great feeling to be the opening film at Edinburgh and to be walking down the red carpet." He feels the film does justice to his incredible story and says it compares with

Chariots of Fire.

But watching it had given him sweaty palms: “The sound of the gun going off at the starting line brought back vivid memories of the feeling that, at that instant, my life changed for ever. I have been trying to dislocate myself from it all, the come-backs, the emotional problems and face the fact that I am no longer a competitive track cyclist. And this movie has brought closure for me.”

Scottish First Minister Jack McConnell, who attended the film’s opening night Gala screening, comments: “It was a really important night for the whole of the Edinburgh Festival season. The film is a great story, and it is particularly pleasing that it is a Scottish story about a real Scottish champion. It is fair to say that part of the reason we have some of the world’s best cyclists now, like Chris Hoy, is down to the inspiration provided by Graeme Obree.”

But powerful emotions are never far from the surface, as Obree explains: “I went to the Tour de France finish on the Champs Elysees in Paris this year because a friend coincided his stag night with the race’s last day. Before the cyclists came past, I actually had to walk away into the park battling with this huge and powerful feeling of resentment – because I still feel I was robbed of part of my career. I was signed up to ride in the Prologue of the Tour back in 1995, but it was made very obvious to me that I would have to take drugs. So there I was, 11 years later, sitting there waiting for the Tour cyclists to come by, and something just welled up, I just disappeared.” His friends thought it was an overreaction, but then a few days later Floyd Landis – the eventual winner – tested positive for testosterone.

Nowadays, Obree still cycles, not least because he doesn’t have a car, occasionally competes, but prefers to go out on the road with friends. He is planning to go to college, to study outdoor pursuits. “You see, in the past it would have had to be maths or astrophysics, to prove that I was something, but now I can actually decide to study what I want to, not something else that I think I should. I hate being asked what I do for a living. The truth is it’s a bit of this and a bit of that, but that sounds like you’re burgling!”

He concludes: “I hope people enjoy ***The Flying Scotsman***. It’s not a cycling movie as such – the director knew nothing about cycling at all. It’s more a human story. I like to think of people coming out of the cinema, buying their fish and chips and my hope is that they’ll feel motivated to do something.”

Jonny Lee Miller plays Graeme Obree

Jonny Lee Miller, who shot to international fame in films such as *Trainspotting*, was drawn to the script of *The Flying Scotsman* by “a combination of strong characters, good dialogue and a wonderfully inspiring story of a family overcoming huge obstacles together. Playing a living person was nerve-wracking and quite a responsibility, especially as Graeme was on set so often, but it was also good for focusing the mind.”

The film famously had a long gestation period, and director Douglas Mackinnon comments: “Jonny had no reason to stick with this project over the years, but he did because he fell for it. There were times when he wasn’t available and we looked at other people and tried to force them into the peg marked Graeme Obree, but none of them really fitted.

“Apart from his fantastic abilities as an actor, Jonny is also very fit – he runs marathons – and he does a very mean Scottish accent. He is impeccable. One of the days he was actually very close to the British record when he was cycling.”

To prepare for this very demanding role, Jonny read Graeme’s autobiography a couple of times, “And I rode my bike a lot! I had a few lessons at the velodrome in Manchester to get used to the completely different art of track riding – no brakes, fixed gear, fixed wheel, very steep inclines at turns, track rules and etiquette – riding, riding, riding in my spare time. I also met up with Graeme and his wife Anne for no-holds-barred Q&A sessions, and I trained for months and every day during filming, even if it meant getting up at four in the morning.”

Jonny also had to learn to ride an unusual bike in a variety of unorthodox positions: “Old Faithful herself is in a museum in Edinburgh, so we used a replica built specially by Graeme for the film. He made two or three for us, which was a great privilege. The cycling extras went nuts when we gave them a go one day! The riding position is torturous and highly unstable - Graeme can fold himself in two. I cannot... it took a lot of getting used to!”

He felt very privileged to have the flying Scotsman himself on hand throughout much of the filming: “Graeme is a very kind man who opened up his heart to us. He also gave great encouragement to me with the psychological parts as well as the physical. He was invaluable to the props department in dealing with all the bikes and was a true joy to have around. The entire crew would testify to this.”

As for the depiction of Graeme's famous battle with manic depression: "I felt the script dealt with this very well. I just performed it to the best of my knowledge."

Jonny managed to get himself into pretty good cycling shape for the film, which meant he was able to do all the track riding in the film, "apart from a couple of shots when Graeme whizzes by in the background. When it comes to whizzing, I can't compete with Graeme. I have never sweated so much at work in 25 years!"

The character of Malky, played by Billy Boyd, is actually an amalgam of several people who helped Graeme out during this period, as Jonny explains: "There is no real life Malky, but that helps the film flow for the audience. Billy and I get on brilliantly. I really rate him as an actor, so natural and instinctive, and a stupendous laugh – he's not at all hobbit!"

The Flying Scotsman was the first feature film for TV director Douglas Mackinnon: Jonny comments: "Douglas is fiercely protective of his cast, the story and more importantly of the Obree family's feelings and privacy. It was a pleasure working with him."

The film has had a somewhat troubled journey to the big screen; it was back in 1994 that writer Simon Rose first hear about Graeme Obree. But there was soon a tremendous buzz of anticipation, especially when it was selected to open the 60th Edinburgh International Film Festival. Jonny was delighted when he heard the news: "I was gobsmacked and somewhat emotional. What an honour and a reversal of fortune! Hopefully this will lead towards the solving of the film's financial problems – hard work doesn't always pay off." The Surrey-born actor adds: "I don't have any Scottish blood in me whatsoever; I just hope once the Festival is over that they let me back in!"

Jonny concludes: "It won't just be keen cyclists who are drawn to Obree's story. ***The Flying Scotsman*** is about an underdog and his family overcoming dark problems in their own way. It is positive, uplifting stuff."

Laura Fraser plays Anne Obree

When director Douglas Mackinnon sent a copy of Graeme Obree's autobiography to Laura Fraser in preparation for her role as Graeme's wife Anne, she admits that she initially had misgivings:

"I wasn't expecting to enjoy it as I thought it would be all about sport," explains Laura, "but I got into the book straight away, it was absolutely compelling. It's an inspiring story and Graeme comes across as the amazing person he is, particularly in the way he overcame his childhood experiences."

She continues: "Fortunately my character didn't have to be sporty, although Anne did manage Graeme at one stage in his career. Anne has a very matter-of-fact, grounded and practical personality, which informs everything she does. I don't think we're particularly similar as I tend to have crazy, impulsive ideas."

This is the first time Laura has played a real person: "There's huge pressure to make sure you don't mess it up!" Having the Obrees on set was extremely helpful for Laura who was particularly struck by the close nature of the couple's relationship: "There's something quite inspiring about being around Anne and Graeme. What you notice is how lovely they are to each other. There's a shorthand between them, right down to predicting each other's sentences.

"Before we started filming, Jonny and I quizzed them for hours and obviously there are some things you pick up and others you leave out. Although it's not in the script, both Anne and Graeme have lost their brothers, which might partly explain the bond between them."

By the end of the project, Laura's antipathy to sport had all but dissipated, particularly when it came to filming the scene in the velodrome in Germany where Graeme is set to break the one-hour world record.

"It's such an exciting scene," recalls Laura. "The crowd is cheering, the real Graeme was there, and I found it all very emotional. I hope people will catch the mood of what is a heart-warming and powerful story."

Billy Boyd plays Malky

Lord Of The Rings star Billy Boyd, who plays Graeme Obree's manager Malky McGovern, admits that he had only known the basic elements of the story before he read the script: "I knew what most people know – that he was a guy who had turned his washing machine into a bike and set world records. But I didn't know much about the depression he suffered or the other battles he had to face. It was a great script about a Scottish hero. I love the story. For me it is important to promote Scottish film as much as possible."

By playing the friend that the lead character never really had during his moving road trip, Billy Boyd ended up forging a real life friendship with Graeme Obree: "Malky is an amalgamation of all the people who helped Graeme along the way. My character is asking the kind of questions an audience would ask, sharing the same doubts. Whether it's fact or fiction, it's a cracking script, intelligently written. It would have been only too easy to write a *Rocky* scenario, but that's not Graeme's story, it's about real people helping this breathtaking outsider. It's a magnificent, brilliant story."

Billy reflects on the experience with great affection, particularly as he was working in his home city of Glasgow where he gets around on a mountain bike. To prepare for his role as Graeme's right hand man, Billy swapped it for a racing bike, taking part in serious road runs.

"It's quite difficult to film a race on a velodrome and capture the excitement," Billy explains, "but Douglas Mackinnon had such inventive ways of filming which helped interpret the excitement of Graeme breaking the record. I really hit it off with Jonny and we talked a lot about the subtleties of the relationship between the two men. I also looked into the depression element, which is something Scottish men find difficult to deal with, but it's an illness like any other."

Billy believes this difficult strand of Graeme's journey adds validity to his innovative thinking: "Graeme truly believes that anyone can do what they want to, providing they set their mind to it. He doesn't start where the sport is or look at the greatest bike; he asks what would make him faster and then builds one his way. I love to surf and when I promised to take Graeme along for the first time, he started redesigning the surfboard before going near a wave; but that's Graeme."

Brian Cox plays Douglas Baxter

Scottish actor Brian Cox sprung to international fame in such Hollywood heavyweight films as *Troy* and *Braveheart*. He now plays Douglas Baxter, the minister who helps Graeme fulfill his dreams. Cox comments: “***The Flying Scotsman*** is a great story, a very Scottish story of perseverance and passion. I always enjoy going back to work in Scotland and as I was in Europe for the summer anyway, it fitted in perfectly. The end result is even better than I hoped – it’s a masterpiece. The opening scene is incredible – I was very impressed.” And he salutes director Douglas Mackinnon for his work: “Douglas is extremely talented – the man is a genius. This was his transition from TV to film, and he has done so well.”

Originally from Dundee, Cox knew very little about Graeme Obree: “It was fascinating to meet up with him, there’s much more to him than meets the eye. He’s a pioneering spirit who has faced a lot of adversity; you’re not dealing with anyone typical. Graeme is not a company man, which can make for a solitary existence.”

In his role as church minister Baxter, someone who fought his own demons when his wife committed suicide, Brian attempts to breach that sense of isolation, helping Graeme through what his character refers to as the ‘dark night of the soul’. Although Baxter is a fictional almost mythical character, Brian appreciated Graeme’s understanding of cinema and its need for the dramatic.

“That is the interesting thing about Graeme,” points out Brian, “he’s not precious and having him on set was helpful in as much as you respect the subject even more. He’s a man of essence, powerful, even in the way he walks into a room; he cuts the air. I think Jonny’s portrayal of him was very strong and as an actor, he just gets better and better. Douglas is a director who knows his mind which made for a great working relationship.

“The end result is a story of courage about a man who sacrificed himself towards an idea. Graeme’s life is an inspiration and this film is a vindication of his life; not that he needs it.”

Douglas Mackinnon

Director

In 2002 seasoned television director Douglas Mackinnon (*Jekyll, The Vice, Gentlemen's Relish, Bodies*) attached himself to ***The Flying Scotsman*** along with actor Jonny Lee Miller. Describing it as the professional experience of his life, he is delighted that ***The Flying Scotsman*** is his first feature film: "I was so taken with the screenplay and I'm glad that it's Graeme's story as it is such an extraordinary one and he's an extraordinary human being; it's also very cinematic."

He continues: "I just knew what everyone else knew about Graeme Obree. I am a sports fan but not a cycling fan. I was starting from scratch and it instantly leapt out as a piece of Scottish cinema. It had the elements of films that have often worked in Scotland in the past – it is set in a small town, it has a guy who is a local hero, and so on. The most attractive aspect of the story was that these extraordinary things were done by somebody who is actually very ordinary. The values in his story are very Scottish values. Simply put, the film says that even though you are a world record holder, you cannot get anywhere without people helping you."

The film was shot in summer 2005 in just 32 days in Ayrshire, Glasgow and Germany: "We shot four weeks in Scotland and two in Germany and it was just the way I like to work on television, gathering a cast and crew who are all passionate about the project. It was wonderfully strange to have Graeme around all the time. I found it fascinating that when we were rehearsing something Graeme had actually done in real life, he would say, 'yes I did that but wouldn't it be more cinematic if we did it this way', and I'm arguing against it."

Douglas recalls "a bizarre moment when we were filming the velodrome scene. Jonny Lee Miller was on the bike, with Graeme cycling behind him filming 'himself'. Jonny is an incredibly dedicated actor and was cycling two or three hours a day, to and from the set. As an actor he's a true leader; generous and intense."

Both Douglas and Jonny were aware of the immense responsibility of treating the subject of Obree's bi-polar disorder with honesty and respect. While Douglas didn't set out to make a biopic of Obree's life, the majority of the story is authentic.

"I think Jonny tackled it with great dignity and sensitivity," reflects Douglas. "We wanted Graeme to feel comfortable with the film, as he has to carry on with his life afterwards, but he encouraged me to make the film I wanted and to follow my vision."

“Despite his problems, Graeme is just the most life affirming man in the world, so full of exuberance and existence. The film is really about this individual who realizes that he can’t survive on his own and that breaking records doesn’t give you inner peace. I hope people will come away with a truthful understanding of what being a celebrity sportsman is all about and what heroism is. What Graeme did comes with a price. He’s a very Scottish hero.”

He adds: “On a personal level, completing filming last year was an extraordinary moment for me. It was like a lifetime’s ambitions achieved. It’s a feeling of unbounded joy to have opened the Edinburgh Film Festival. When I was making the film, all I wanted was to be able to walk down the red carpet with Graeme Obree, and now we have done that. It has been difficult to get to the big screen and the opening night premiere in Edinburgh, but not as difficult as Graeme’s life – and that puts it all in perspective.”

Co-writer Simon Rose

Simon Rose talks about the tortuous route to getting his story about a cycling champion made into a film:

“I can’t be the only writer who, after sitting through umpteen appalling movies, has thought, “Surely I can do better.” I am, however, one of the few foolish enough to act on it. On 14th August the Edinburgh Film Festival opened with ***The Flying Scotsman***, starring Jonny Lee Miller, Brian Cox, Billy Boyd and Laura Fraser. I was there, biting my nails, awaiting the reaction of the film’s first audience.

“Back in 1994, if I had had any inkling that it would take 12 nerve-wracking, strife-torn years to reach the screen I’m sure I would never have started the project. I had been itching to write a screenplay, but a subject eluded me.

“Then I heard about Graeme Obree. This down-at-heel Scot built a revolutionary bicycle from scrap metal and washing machine parts and became world champion, only to be banned by the cycling authorities. Instead of giving up, the amazingly determined Obree redesigned his bike and had another go.

“I reckoned that if I - no sports enthusiast - found his tale inspiring, others would too. Britain has so few sporting heroes that this eccentric, whose training fuel was marmalade sandwiches, should be lionised.

“Meeting the great man, I was surprised by his stylish sunglasses and CD Walkman. This wasn’t my notion of him at all. I needn’t have worried; at dinner Graeme first had ice-cream (“Gets your taste buds going”), then his meat and veg (“Removes the sugar so your teeth don’t rot”). With Obree, nothing was conventional.

“Screenwriting guru Bob McKee’s Story Structure course seemed inspiring, until I tried applying it. Structure may be important, but it isn’t everything, Bob. What about characters and dialogue? I had found my main character, but still had to invent the world around him, managers and mates. Without having met Graeme’s wife, I contrived a bantering marital relationship, which bizarrely proved remarkably true to life.

“Eventually I had a first draft. But who would make it? Director Vadim Jean, who I’d met while reporting on his film *Leon the Pig Farmer*, introduced me to Paul Brooks,

founder of UK film company Metrodome. When a much-promised contract hadn't turned up after six months, I assumed Brooks wasn't a serious player. This was the first of many miscalculations; Brooks was later responsible for *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, which grossed nearly £200 million. Almost three years had gone by now.

"I panted up countless dingy staircases to poky producers' offices, hoping they'd pay a pittance to option my script, and my footwork appeared to have paid off when a Scottish producer, keen on cycling, took it on. His job would now be to attach actors and a director and find the finance.

"Whenever he mentioned the name of some big name actor or director, I'd naively get excited. Robert Carlyle and Jan De Bont (director of *Speed*) were frequently mentioned then abruptly never referred to again. Without finance, the only work that could be done was on the script. So I found myself rewriting and rewriting. Eventually, I felt I was making the script worse not better. I hated the producer's idea of flashbacks to explain Graeme's motivation. So I bowed out, an act considered so treasonable that contact between us ceased.

"The producer found another writer, and then another. I had to rely on whispers and rumours about "my" film's progress - or lack of it. It was like having a child taken away and brought up by somebody else.

"To take my mind of it, I wrote other screenplays; one called *The Alchemist* even won the Orange Prize for Screenwriting. But I still cared desperately about ***The Flying Scotsman***.

"Four years ago, I was told that it was just a week away from filming with Jonny Lee Miller in the lead. The euphoria lasted two days, until an American investor dropped dead. When I heard that the producer had starting driving minicabs to make ends meet, I gave up all hope.

"Then, last year, miraculously, it all came together again, with TV director Douglas Mackinnon installed at the helm. I visited the set in dour, drizzly Galston in Ayrshire. It was a dream day with the talented Mackinnon introducing me to everyone as the 'creator', a title I should have requested for the movie's credits.

"But we weren't out of the woods yet. According to a Variety article, the film "seems to have been made out of thin air, with no visible financing in place... and no obvious producer".

“Although the writers and producers deferred a hefty proportion of their fees to help get it made, the film ran out of cash. In the middle of editing, the company went into administration, owing money to cast, crew and others.

“That could have been the end of it. But one of the creditors rode to the rescue. Sara Giles realised that the only way her company and other owed money could ever see their money again was if she paid to finish the movie. It is thanks to her that ***The Flying Scotsman*** was screened at Edinburgh, or indeed anywhere.

“I think that Mackinnon has done a splendid job and that this is one of Miller’s finest performances. I’m even impressed with what the other writers have done. But, at the risk of being drummed out of the Critics’ Circle, I realise I’m incapable of objectivity.

“Whether or not ***The Flying Scotsman*** is a success, I’ve sworn to work only with people I like in the future. So I’m currently working with a producer and director - both utterly delightful - on a true-life weepie and a tongue-in-cheek horror. They’ll be coming to a screen near you — some time in the next 12 years.”

Biography

Jonny Lee Miller - Graeme Obree

Jonny Lee Miller, who plays Graeme Obree in *THE FLYING SCOTSMAN*, first caught the attention of international cinema audiences when he starred opposite Angelina Jolie in *HACKERS*. But it was his star turn opposite Ewan McGregor and Robert Carlyle in the Scottish film *TRAINSPOTTING* for director Danny Boyle that paved the way to an impressive list of credits.

More recently, Jonny co-starred with Charlize Theron in *AEON FLUX* and with Will Ferrell and Chloe Sevigny in Woody Allen's *MELINDA AND MELINDA*. Other film credits include the role of Jeffrey Byron in Alan Rudolph's *AFTERGLOW*; Lord Byron himself in *BYRON* with Vanessa Redgrave; *LOVE, HONOUR AND OBEY* with Jude Law; Jane Austen's *MANSFIELD PARK* and *PLUNKETT & MACLEANE* which reunited him with Robert Carlyle.

He honed his talents on stage in such productions as *FESTEN* (Almeida and West End); *THE PLAY WHAT I WROTE* (West End); *DEMOCRACY* (Bush Theatre); *FOUR KNIGHTS IN KNARESBOROUGH* (Tricycle Theatre); *BEAUTIFUL THING* (Bush Theatre) and, more recently, in the revival of Frank McGuinness' *SOMEONE WHO'LL WATCH OVER ME* in London's West End.

Television credits include: *THE CANTERBURY TALES: PARDONER'S TALE*; *ROUGH JUSTICE*; *SPEAKING IN TONGUES*; *PRIME SUSPECT III*; *BAD COMPANY*; *BETWEEN THE LINES* and *GOODBYE CRUEL WORLD*.

He is currently collaborating with John Wells on the highly anticipated new drama series *SMITH* for CBS. The show also stars Ray Liotta and Academy Award nominees Virginia Madsen and Shohreh Aghdashloo, and is about a team of thieves who visit different cities to carry out high-level crimes.

Biography

Laura Fraser – Anne Obree

Born and raised in Glasgow, Laura Fraser's film credits include NINA'S HEAVENLY DELIGHTS, (also screened at this year's Edinburgh Film Festival); LAND OF THE BLIND; IRON JAWED ANGELS; 16 YEARS OF ALCOHOL; DEVIL'S GATE; DEN OF LIONS; CONEY ISLAND BABY; A KNIGHT'S TALE; KEVIN & PERRY; WHATEVER HAPPENED TO HAROLD SMITH; A CHRISTMAS CAROL; TITUS ANDRONICUS; THE MATCH; VIRTUAL SEXUALITY; DIVORCING JACK; MAN IN THE IRON MASK; PARIS BRIXTON; COUSIN BETTE; THE TRIBE and SMALL FACES.

Television includes: CASANOVA; CONVICTION; HE KNEW HE WAS RIGHT; STATION JIM; FORGIVE AND FORGET; THE INVESTIGATOR; NEVERWHERE and TAGGART.

Biography

Billy Boyd – Malky

Billy Boyd grew up in Glasgow's East End and trained at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. He became a household name when he played the Hobbit Peregrine 'Pippin' Took in the LORD OF THE RINGS trilogy.

Other film appearances include: MIDSUMMER DREAM; SAVE ANGEL HOPE; ON A CLEAR DAY; SEED OF CHUCKY; MASTER AND COMMANDER: FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD; AN URBAN GHOST STORY; SOLDIER'S LEAP and JULIE AND THE CADILLACS.

Television includes STILL GAME, COMING SOON and TAGGART.

Theatre appearances include: HOME – GLASGOW (National Theatre of Scotland); SAN DIEGO (Tron, Glasgow for Edinburgh Festival); THE BALLAD OF CRAZY PAOLA (Traverse, Edinburgh and Tour); THE SPECULATOR (Traverse for Edinburgh Royal Lyceum); AN EXPERIENCED WOMAN GIVES ADVICE (Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh); THERESE RAQUIN (Communicado at Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh); BRITANNIA RULES (Royal Lyceum); KILL THE OLD, TORTURE THEIR YOUNG (Traverse); THE CHIC NERDS (Traverse); HANSEL & GRETEL (Royal Lyceum); MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING (Royal Lyceum); CALEDONIA DREAMING (Traverse and Tour); WIDOWS (Traverse and National Tour); THE MERCHANT OF VENICE (Royal Lyceum); TRAINSPOTTING (UK tour); MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING (Cottier Theatre, Glasgow); MERLIN THE MAGNIFICENT (Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh); THE SLAB BOYS (Byre Theatre) and THE SECRET DIARY OF ADRIAN MOLE (Byre Theatre).

Biography

Brian Cox – Douglas Baxter

Brian Cox is an award-winning actor of stage, screen and television. Born in Scotland, he trained at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA) and is a veteran of more than fifty feature films. He recently co-starred in Woody Allen's critically-acclaimed MATCH POINT, Wes Craven's RED EYE and in the hit action thriller THE BOURNE SUPREMACY, reprising the role he first played in the 2002 blockbuster THE BOURNE IDENTITY. He recently completed production on Ryan Murphy's RUNNING WITH SCISSORS in which he joined an ensemble cast including Gwyneth Paltrow, Annette Bening, Joseph Fiennes, Vanessa Redgrave and Alec Baldwin and on the television series OUTSIDERS, ROCK N ROLL and the third season of HBO's hit original series DEADWOOD.

Cox earned AFI and Independent Spirit Award nominations for his work in the critically acclaimed independent film L.I.E. and also shared in a Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Award nomination received by the cast of Spike Jonze's ADAPTATION. His long list of film credits goes on to include: TROY; X2; 25TH HOUR; THE RING; THE ROOKIE; THE AFFAIR OF THE NECKLACE; FOR LOVE OF THE GAME; RUSHMORE; DESPERATE MEASURES; THE BOXER; KISS THE GIRLS; BRAVEHEART; ROB ROY; HIDDEN AGENDA and NICHOLAS AND ALEXANDRA. He was also the first to play Dr Hannibal Lecter on screen in Michael Mann's MANHUNTER.

On television, Cox delivered a chilling portrayal of Hermann Goering in the mini-series NUREMBERG, for which he won an Emmy Award and was nominated for Golden Globe and SAG Awards. He also earned an Emmy Award nomination for his guest appearance on the comedy series FRASIER. In addition, Cox has starred in a variety of notable television projects, both in the United States and Great Britain, including: BLUE/ORANGE; LONGITUDE; WITNESS AGAINST HITLER; GRUSHKO; SHARPE'S EAGLE; SHARPE'S RIFLES; SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR; THE CLONING OF JOANNA MAY; THE LOST LANGUAGE OF CRANES; MURDER BY MOONLIGHT; FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE and KING LEAR, to name only a few.

Cox has appeared in dozens of plays on the stages of London, New York and Scotland. Repeatedly honoured for his work in the theatre, Cox won Olivier Awards for his performances in RAT IN THE SKULL and TITUS ANDRONICUS, British Theatre Association Drama Awards for Best Actor for THE TAMING OF THE

SHREW and STRANGE INTERLUDE, and the Lucille Lortel Award as well as Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle nominations for ST NICHOLAS. In addition Cox has helmed stage productions of: I LOVE MY LIFE; MRS WARREN'S PROFESSION; THE PHILANDERER; THE MASTER BUILDER and RICHARD III. He made his television directorial debut on the critically acclaimed HBO prison drama OZ.

A prolific writer, Cox has penned two non-fiction books: THE LEAR DIARIES and SALEM TO MOSCOW: AN ACTOR'S ODYSSEY. He has contributed to the New York Times Arts & Leisure section, and has written articles for a number of other publications.

At the beginning of 2003, Cox's contributions to the arts were honoured by the Queen, who named him a Commander of the British Empire. In 2006 Empire Magazine (UK) honored his film achievements with the Empire Icon Award.

Biography

Douglas Mackinnon – Director

Douglas Mackinnon, makes his feature film directorial debut with **THE FLYING SCOTSMAN**. He caught attention with his student film *ASHES* in 1992 starring Peter Mullan and has become one of the country's most prolific and accomplished television directors, with a list of credits that includes *THE VICE* with Ken Stott, the darkly humorous and scarily unsettling medical drama *BODIES* with Max Beesley, and period romp *GENTLEMEN'S RELISH* with Billy Connolly. He is currently directing the highly anticipated drama series *JEKYLL* starring James Nesbitt for BBC One, describing it as "a cross between 24 and *THE FUGITIVE*."

Douglas's successful television career has seen him direct a large number of TV series, many of them familiar names such as *THE BILL*, *LONDON'S BURNING*, *SOLDIER SOLDIER*, *SILENT WITNESS* and *MURDER IN SUBURBIA*. Other television credits include *GIFTED*, *THE LAST DETECTIVE*, *THE GOOD THIEF*, *NICE GUY EDDIE*, *DIRTY WORK*, *OUT OF HOURS*, *THE GRAND*, *THIEFTAKERS* and *BACK UP*. He plans to continue his film career with a big-screen adaptation of the Alan Spence novel *WAY TO GO*, "a bleakly funny tale of mortality, spirituality and salvation set amongst a family of Glasgow undertakers."

The Flying Scotsman
At the 60th Edinburgh International Film Festival
What the papers said...

"Douglas Mackinnon's against-the-odds sporting drama has an engaging sincerity and admirable restraint. The triumph of the sporting underdog may be a tried and tested narrative convention, but *The Flying Scotsman* lends an extra human dimension to the formula; champion cyclist Graeme Obree was not just chasing records, he was also fighting personal demons... The film, which belies its fractured production history, begins with a dejected Obree heading into the woods, intent on taking his own life. Flashbacks deftly sketch a childhood scarred by bullying... Told with cinematic sweep and admirable restraint, *The Flying Scotsman* has a sincerity that becomes very engaging. Director Douglas Mackinnon reins in any possibility of excessive sentimentality or melodrama, and by playing it straight creates a genuinely stirring and ultimately very moving tale. The screenplay is economical and well paced... The restraint extends to the performances. Jonny Lee Miller is well cast, convincing on a physical level and portraying Obree as a modest and stubborn loner, suspicious of authority. He is seen to suffer as the camera fixes its stare on his sweating features and grim determination as he endlessly circles the velodrome in pursuit of a new record. He also effectively captures Obree's dry wit, reticence and unassuming personality. Brian Cox is a model of understatement, lending a gentle compassion to his character. Handsome photography captures Scottish locations in glowing sunshine and teeming rain.
Screen International, 18th August 2006

"Edinburgh had started as it clearly meant to go on, with an opening-night party that blew spots off previous years' events... A kilted Brian Cox munched on the burgers manned by ruddy, slightly flustered catering staff. Elsewhere a radiant Laura Fraser was mobbed by fans at every turn... The organisers have every right to be pleased with the reception for *The Flying Scotsman*, a solid crowd-pleaser about the Scottish cyclist and sometime world record holder Graeme Obree. The warm response to the film is a double triumph for the festival."
Times T2, 17th August 2006

"Hollywood heavyweight Brian Cox has hailed jinxed movie *The Flying Scotsman* a masterpiece. The *Troy* and *Braveheart* star reckons the film – the true story of cycling champ Graeme Obree – could go on to be a hit despite a run of terrible bad luck. Brian, 60, said last night: "It is even better than I had hoped. The opening scene is incredible – I was very impressed." And he saluted director Douglas Mackinnon for his work. He said: "Douglas is extremely talented – the man is a genius. This was his transition from TV to film and he has done so well... Brian's co-star Billy Boyd also reckons the film could be a success. Billy, who plays Graeme's manager Malky McGovern, said: "I hope this can be bigger than *Four Weddings And A Funeral*. There is no reason it cannot have international success." *Lord Of The Rings* star Billy, 37, added: "This is about a Scottish hero. I love the story."
Scottish Sun, 17th August 2006

"*Flying Scotsman* is a fantastic ride. On Monday night I cried twice and laughed out loud half a dozen times. I hadn't been smoking anything either – just watching brilliant new movie *The Flying Scotsman*, starring Jonny Lee Miller, Laura Fraser, Brian Cox and Billy Boyd. The true story of Scottish cycling hero Graeme Obree, which opened the 60th Edinburgh Film Festival, takes you on a real emotional rollercoaster. The casting was perfect, the humour understated and the message inspiring. So it's astonishing this masterpiece has still not been snapped up by a distributor. Let's hope its run of bad luck ends here."
Scottish Sun, 16th August 2006

“**** If ever a sporting story was tailor made for the big screen, it is surely the tale of Scottish cyclist Graeme Obree... *The Flying Scotsman* is both a stirring re-enactment of his success and a fascinating, at times upsetting, examination of his problems... Like Obree, who worked on the film as a consultant and part-time stuntman, the movie is at its most thrilling when it's in the velodrome. First-time director Douglas Mackinnon brings to life the tension and drama around the track, and the mental and physical anguish of the man on the bike. Jonny Lee Miller gives probably his best performance to date in showing Obree's almost unbearable battle against depression, his eyes showing the inner despair even after his greatest triumphs. It is this fight that is the heart of the movie. The film is an intriguing mix of dark drama, light comedy and the stirring triumph of Obree's success, with the cast, including Billy Boyd and Brian Cox, excellent throughout... Mackinnon does a superb job in bringing the complex strands of the story together, while never letting the pace of the movie dip.”
Edinburgh Evening News, 15th August 2006

“After the rousing reception [*The Flying Scotsman*] got from packed houses in three screens, it surely will not be long before someone agrees to bring the movie to a wider audience... Many of the people who worked on the film, including Mackinnon, did so because they felt the Scot, who defied the odds to shatter the world hour record on a home-made bike, hadn't been given the recognition in Scotland that he deserved... Film Festival Director Shane Danielson... said he was delighted with the success of the evening: “I was really pleased to get this film to open the festival as it turns 60, as it is everything the festival is about. It is a film people have not seen before. That it was Scottish was a bonus, that it was unsigned was a bonus, although hopefully after tonight it will find a distributor.”
The Evening News, 15th August 2006

“The triumph of the sporting underdog may be a tried and tested narrative convention, but *The Flying Scotsman* lends an extra human dimension to the formula; champion cyclist Graeme Obree wasn't just chasing records he was also fighting personal demons. Belying its fractured production history, Douglas Mackinnon's feature emerges as a solidly crafted, carefully balanced biographical heartwarmer that has a built-in appeal for cycling devotees and an older demographic who appreciate the virtues of a well-told personal story... [It] can expect positive word of mouth... Obree's global renown could help the film make some headway internationally and further festival exposure is guaranteed after a world premiere as Edinburgh's opening night attraction... Told with a cinematic sweep and an admirable restraint, *The Flying Scotsman* has a sincerity that becomes very engaging. Mackinnon is able to rein in any possibility of excessive sentimentality or melodrama that the material might encourage and by playing it straight he creates a genuinely stirring and ultimately very moving tale. The screenplay is economical and the film has pace... The sense of restraint also extends to the performances. Brian Cox is a model of understatement, lending a gentle compassion to his character. Jonny Lee Miller is well suited to his role. He is entirely convincing on a physical level and is seen to suffer as the camera fixes its stare on his sweating features and grim determination as he endlessly circles the velodrome in pursuit of a new record. He also effectively captures Obree's dry wit, reticence and unassuming personality in his most impressive performance for some time. The Scottish locations captured in glowing sunshine and teeming rain by Gavin Finney's handsome cinematography might also prove an attraction for international audiences.”
Screendaily.com, 15th August 2006

“**** The good news, given this film's troubled production, is *The Flying Scotsman* is a winner. Just as the protagonist of this sports biopic, Scottish cyclist Graeme Obree, had to overcome personal and professional obstacles in order to win the World Cycling Championships twice, so the film's debuting director Douglas Mackinnon had to wrangle with various financing problems in order to finish his film. It's to Mackinnon and his cast and crew's credit that they managed that, and moreover that the result is a solid piece of film-making and a genuine crowd-pleaser... Mackinnon's film dramatises this underdog story, but it also brings an involving personal dimension... there's a nicely realised scene in which Obree hallucinates that the bullies' full-grown ringleader pays him a deeply creepy home visit... *The Flying Scotsman* is rousing and often very funny. As Obree's eccentric associate Baxter, Brian Cox generates the lion's share of the laughs. Billy Boyd and Laura Fraser, playing Obree's pal/manager and his wife, provide sterling support, and Jonny Lee Miller brings grit (and a fine pair of legs) to the role, crossing the finishing line a winning leading man.”
The Herald, 14th August 2006

"The story of champion Scottish cyclist Graeme Obree is filled with human emotion and uplifting sentiment... [Douglas Mackinnon] has become one of the country's most prolific and accomplished television directors, with a list of credits that include *The Vice* with Ken Stott, riveting medical drama *Bodies* with Max Beesley, and period romp *Gentleman's Relish* with Billy Connolly... [*The Flying Scotsman*] is finely balanced with a great cinematic sweep and a sense of restraint that tries to rein in any sentimentality or melodrama inherent in the tale. It also features uniformly fine performances from Brian Cox, Billy Boyd, Laura Fraser and Jonny Lee Miller as Obree... Other festivals are starting to take notice, and it is the kind of well-made, handsomely told human interest story whose appeal will stretch far beyond Scotland... It may be tempting fate but having seen and admired the film, and shed a tear, it seems as if *The Flying Scotsman*, like Obree himself, could be on course for a happy ending."

Scotland on Sunday, 13th August 2006

"It wouldn't be right, wouldn't be fitting, for Graeme Obree's life story simply to hit the big screen without creating some extreme reactions... *The Flying Scotsman* [is] a story of cycling glories and suicide attempts all wrapped up into one dramatic celluloid package... If ever there was a production likely to suffer misfortune, it was one dealing with the incredible struggles of this talented, troubled individual. Even those with no knowledge of cycling should recall Obree, if not by name, then certainly by the story attached to it... The rags-to-riches tale of a man who was surviving on marmalade sandwiches when he made Chris Boardman, financial backers and £250,000 bike notwithstanding, sick to his stomach with a world title and a world record, to boot. And the slow realisation of a watching world, entranced by Obree's persistence even after the authorities outlawed his riding position, that there was something very wrong with this Scottish sporting hero... A decade in the completion, finished without a ghost writer [his autobiography] is a searingly honest account of one athlete's battle against depression. A tale of talent, dedication and solvent abuse, it must have taken some guts to give vent to some of the disturbed emotions at play... [The film] should provide inspiration and insight to many. For a man whose life veered from impossible highs to unimaginable depths of despair, it seems rather fitting that his life story should be born in a storm."

Scottish Daily Mail, 12th August 2006

"It is an incredible story of determination to succeed against the odds, to push forward all the way to the finish line no matter what obstacles were put in it way... If *The Flying Scotsman* goes on to pick up awards and recoup its costs, it would be a triumph against the odds fitting of the great man himself."

Edinburgh Evening News, 10th August 2006

"The word from those who have had a sneak preview is that the movie might, just might, deliver on the crowd-pleasing, heart-warming promise that led one participant to pitch it as "*Shine on a bike.*"

Variety, 24th July 2006