

Purely Belter

UK : 2000 : dir. Mark Herman : Film Four : 99 min
prod: : scr: Mark Herman : dir.ph.:

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Greg McLane; Chris Beattie; Alan Shearer

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω □ € Z ∞	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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Greg McLane and Chris Beattie

Source: *Evening Standard*

Evening Standard (02/11/2000) review:

"The title is Geordie for "couldn't be better". I guess writer-director Mark Herman's film could be, though it's not been helped by coming late in the day when the yob culture of football hooliganism has passed through the Nick Hornby-Guy Ritchie sieve and left its scum marks all over Tony Blair's godawful broken-down Britain.

This is the juvenile edition of the same filmmaker's **"BRASSED OFF"** and therefore is about crimes, not tunes. Instead of redundant dads blowing their trumpets and other defiant instruments at the Tories, it's about two kids from casualty-ward families who are thrown on the communal scrap-heap, self-excluding zones of any decent values or earnest thoughts. They are without self-respect, incorrigible truants, instinctive shoplifters, burglars, joyriders and

street vandals with parents who beat them or one another up and look to taxpayers and "the Social" to provide for their spongy existence at the karaoke pubs and bingo halls.

Played by Chris Beattie (a pint-size scam merchant whose unlined face looks as if he was born in a stocking mask) and Greg McLane (potato-sack size and apparently born in a bench-coat), their aim is to get two season tickets to see Newcastle United - which means raising £1,000 by fair means or, inevitably, foul.

Over the span of a whole year, they embark on a round of petty criminality under the forgiving shadow of Antony Gormley's Angel of the North sculpture, the film's most imaginative use of contemporary landmarks. They end up with a botched bank hold-up and a soft community service sentence being passed on them by a dumb middle-class liberal woman

magistrate instead of a well-deserved two years' detention at a ruthless boot camp: ironically it gets them their grandstand seats.

Herman passes no moral or social judgment on the log-jam of anti-social misconduct that this Film Four production represents. The British Board of Film Classification awards it a Certificate 15 instead of deterring film-makers with similar incitements to crime in mind with a Certificate 18 that would cut their target audiences of children down to unprofitable size.

The BBFC thus apparently thinks the Home Office will be happy for it to be seen as a non-blameworthy advertisement for what bored

children can do with their spare time. What I am hearing is that the Home Office is anything but pleased with the British film industry's current contribution to peace and quiet on the streets. As a film, it owes its engine power to its two non-professional stars and gains some celebrity status from a joky cameo by Alan Shearer. Could have been worse, of course: could have been Vinnie Jones."

[no listing in "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001"]

No further information currently available. I hate myself for not having seen it already.

See subject index under **CRIME / DELINQUENCY**.