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" ...golf is like life: a game that needs lots of practice, trial and error should you desire perfection or success.

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DVD review

FIRST PUBLISHED Aug 12, 2009

By [David Van Der Haeghen](#)

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I don't know how much you'll enjoy "Chasing the Green" unless you enjoy sports metaphors. Seriously. This independent, small market film relies on a good sports metaphor to work, and it does...sort of. That depends on how you define "work." The message from beginning to end is essentially that life is like golf, where you are always aiming for a target but often slicing to one side, missing your mark or not even making contact with that stupid ball sitting on a puny wooden tee. Now, as a casual golfer, I can identify with all these issues very well, and you'd think that, consequently, I could identify with this film. In the beginning I liked what I saw, in the middle I was perplexed, and in the end, well, I was mostly unsure who or what I should have been pulling for from the beginning.

In the early 1990s, brothers Ross and Adam Franklin (Ryan Hurst and Jeremy London) decide to try something new in life after they haven't been able to cut it in the traditional man's world. For some reason, it just isn't for them (just like it isn't for a lot of movie characters you run into both

now and in the past, but that's another story), and they want things bigger, better and faster. So Ross has a revelation and shares it with Adam: cell phones. The two begin a small business with a single employee and go out of their way to get customers, even if it means a questionable practice here or there. Eventually, the company expands in size and staff, but Ross remains hell bent on getting more prestige, money and power. Cue revelation number two: electronic terminals for credit card transactions. Soon, these two young gents are running on all cylinders and no end to their success is in sight.

It might sound like a story you've heard or seen in films a hundred times before, right? Well even though you have, you should know that "Chasing the Green" is inspired by a true story and actual events. I couldn't dig up a ton on the real story or the film's adaptation of it, except that the Ross and Adam's company is based on Certified Merchant Services, a group that was accused of some shady and dishonest practices the Federal Trade Commission, the majority being dismissed because the Commission didn't exactly perform their investigation in the most noble capacity. The film has some fun with this piece of the story, and we get to see the little fish in the big ocean swim for air as it navigates around a giant whale that takes up more space, has more power and more riding on its reputation. Ross and Adam struggle, and let this frustration drive them to alcohol and profanity. I suppose it could have driven them to worse places than those, but still.

Even though Ross has the competitive drive when it comes to business and money, Adam has it when it comes to life as a whole. He meets a really attractive lady named Lynn (Heather McComb) and jumps into a relationship he pretty much destroys, then salvages, then loses again before he gets Lynn to come back to him in the end. Adam narrates the film's events, and as is the case with most brothers (mine included), there are plenty of those competitive moments and frustrating, angry word exchanges. These guys may not always like each other as people, but they respect one another as brothers and businessmen, a quality that contributes to their rise, peak, downfall and leveling off. Plus, they spend their free time on the golf course, constantly working on their skills and trying to beat each other. For them, and me as well, golf is like life: a game that needs lots of practice, trial and error should you desire perfection or success.

I didn't completely like the characters "Chasing the Green" wanted me to like, and I didn't completely dislike the characters the film wanted me to dislike. Ross, Adam, Victor Gatling (played by William Devane, Gatling is the Commission rep who will go to almost any length to get Ross and Adam what he thinks they deserve) and Dave Foxx (played by Robert Picardo, Foxx grills Adam during the film's climactic question and answer deposition) are all portrayed through good performances and are convincing in their own ways. London and Hurst simply don't look like your typical big business guys, which makes their roles that much more convincing. Devane and Picardo both carry themselves with arrogance and status, making their roles as representatives of "Big Brother" or "The Man" very believable. I knew from beginning to end who I was supposed to root for and against, but I simply couldn't do it as the film tried to persuade me to.



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