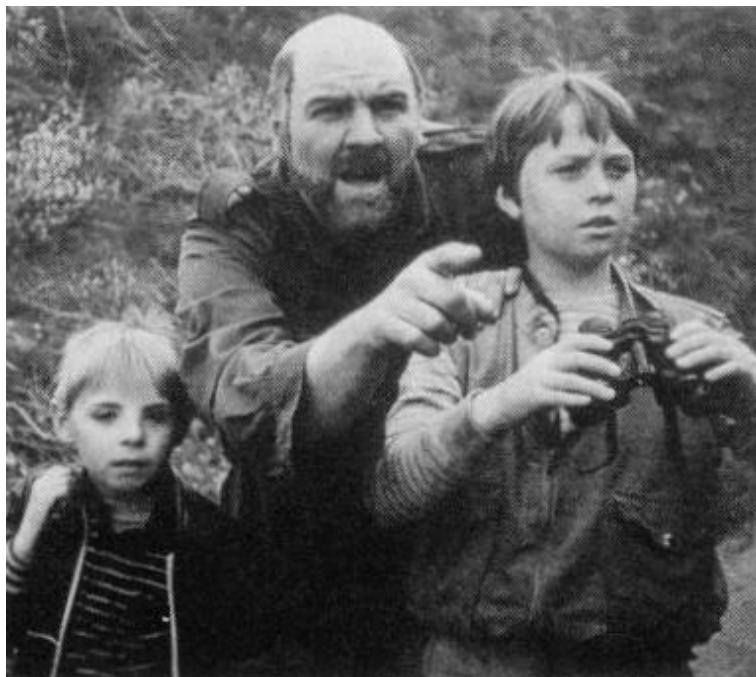


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Breakout

UK : 1984 : dir. Frank Godwin : Children's Film Foundation : 62 min
prod: : scr: Ranald Graham : dir.ph.:
Simon Nash; John Hasler
David Jackson; Ian Bartholomew; John Bowler

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω □ ∅ Z ∞	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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John Hasler left, Simon Nash right

Source: 26th LFF programme

26th London Film Festival – 1984 –
programme review:

“What would you do if you discovered the getaway car of a couple of escaped convicts in the woods, and then they discovered you, carrying you off as hostages?¹ In **"BREAKOUT"**, David and Stephen do their best to thwart the crooks but begin to grow quite fond of Donny the Bull, the giant nutter whose rages are a nightmare to behold but who's a gentle soul at heart. With a screenplay by Ranald Graham, of **"Sweeney"** and

¹ *I'm glad you asked me that question. I would say "Nice car, mister! Can you help me and my brother break out from this stupefyingly predictable kiddie-film, before we run into a comic policeman?"*

"Professionals" fame, Frank Godwin's film for the Children's Film and Television Foundation has an edge to it that renders it quite different from some of the cautious, rather conservative CFF productions of yore². It also has splendid performances from David Jackson as Donny the Bull and Simon Nash and John Hasler as the boys.”

- Derek Malcolm

Radio Times notes:

“Children's Film Foundation adventure. ** ”

“Children's adventure. ** ”

² *Which criticism you never levelled at their productions at the time.*

Daily Mirror notes:

“Children’s story.”

“Two youngsters are taken hostage by escaped convicts in exciting children’s adventure. ** ”

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. Not to be confused with films of the same title made in 1959 (aka "**DANGER WITHIN**", with Richard Todd, Richard Attenborough), 1970 (with James Drury, Kathryn Hays) and 1975 (with Charles Bronson, Robert Duvall). Derek Malcolm writes in glowing terms, implying that this title is far more firmly grounded in reality than the average kids 'n' crooks potboiler rolled off the C.F.F. production line. But when one reads back through the National Film Theatre bulletins on all the C.F.F.'s previous films there is never a note of criticism for their hackneyed storylines or patronising air toward kids. My question for the NFT critics is - why should a made-for-children production not be judged by the same yardsticks of creativity and authenticity as any other film?

The only scant sociological interest in such a clapped out theme is that it marks the last gasp of adult innocence before the onset of the "stranger danger" hysteria, which has gripped the English-speaking world to the brink of the new millennium and beyond. Would a children's film be made today in which small boys are abducted by crooks on the run and strike up a buddy-buddy relationship with one of them? Kevin Costner did so quite recently with "**A PERFECT WORLD**" (93), but that film was certainly not meant for young audiences, and was not without the obligatory nod toward the child abuse lobby (Costner's fellow escapee attempts at one point to molest the boy, and is murdered in the process by Costner).

Simon Nash, who had played the young boy in "**XTRO**" the previous year, was also glimpsed very briefly in Terry Gilliam's "**BRAZIL**" (85), as the son of a man interrogated to death in a case of mistaken identity. He later played son Garth in the TV sitcom "*Birds of a Feather*". He's 12 here. Nothing else is known of John Hasler.

See subject index under **CHILDREN'S FILM & TV FOUNDATION, DESPERADOES / ESCAPED CONVICTS, KIDNAPPING, SPECIAL FRIENDSHIPS** and, yes, you guessed it, **KIDS OUTWIT THE CROOKS**.