

Fatty Finn

Australia : 1980 : dir. Maurice Murphy : Children's Film Corporation : 91 min
prod: Brian Rosen : scr: Bob Ellis & Chris McGill : dir.ph.:

Ben Oxenbould; Greg Kelly; Hugo Grieve
Rebecca Rigg; Jeremy Larsson; Martin Lewis; Sandra Leask; Melita Simec; Christian Robinson; Murray Shultz;
Miguel Lopez; Christopher Norton; Mary MacLeod; Lawson Pratt; Hugo Cattier; Peter Rowley; Julith Steer;
Stephen Wright; Paul Hogan; Wade Randell; Mary Anne Davidson; Brian Wiseman; Damien Gillespie;
Julian Gillespie; Stephen Jones; Skander Malcolm; Bert Newton; Noni Hazlehurst; Gerard Kennedy; Lorraine Bayly;
Henri Szeps; Frank Wilson; Peter Carroll; Ross Higgins; John Smythe; Richard Young; Tony Llewellyn

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	8	≠	M	☼	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
2499c	4.5	6	13	898	3	3	3	-	-	No	Unseen



The face seems familiar – can't quite seem to place it...

Fatty Finn (Oxenbould) is the target of some antipodean ritual shrouded in mystery. This kind of bawdy boyish horseplay would be frowned upon now of course, and filming it would be legally problematic – not least in Australia – but perhaps the boys in these scenes didn't consider themselves greatly debauched, and the children who laughed watching them were perhaps wiser then than they are now they've become "responsible" parents. It's food for thought anyway.

Source: Movieboys website





Face-painting down under is a topsy-turvy affair, Fatty Finn discovers.

Source: Moveiboy website

Speelfilm Encyclopedie review:

"Fatty Finn, based on Syd Nicholls' comic strip character, wants a radio detector *[sic]* at all costs. For this he needs money. He tries to get it in all sorts of ways. A colourful and amusing film about an Australian Pietje Bell. ****1/2** "

The Australian Film Book 1930 – Today review:

"Thae adventures of Fatty Finn, a boy growing up in a typical Australian suburb.¹"

Video Movie Guide 1993 review:

"This film seems to borrow from the "LITTLE RASCALS" comedy series. In it, young Fatty Finn is desperately trying to earn money to buy a radio. But everytime he tries, the neighbourhood bully and his gang sabotage Fatty's efforts. The happy ending makes up for all the hardships 10-year old Fatty has endured along the way. ******* "

CVMC video retail/rental website review:

"Ten year old Fatty Finn (Ben Oxenbould), who, as the theme song tells us, "is really quite thin," wants nothing more in life than a radio so that he can listen to sporting events before bed. Times are hard at home, though, so the lad is forced to raise the cash on his own, at first [he] enlists his pals to give him a hand doing so but soon finds himself going solo once the local bully (Greg Kelly), roughly fourteen, decides to give Fatty and all those offering him assistance a tough time. Can our little hero get enough dough before the desired object is snatched away by someone else? Very "Our Gangish" but unique enough to stand on its own and downright enjoyable. Based on Syd Nicholls' comic-strip.

Rated NR: brief nudity; slapstick violence
Categories: Boy Films, Little to Preteen, Adolescent, Bullies & Teasing, Comedy, Girl Films, Little to Preteen."

¹ Marvellous write-up. Tells us precisely nothing.



Source: CVMC website

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "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" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

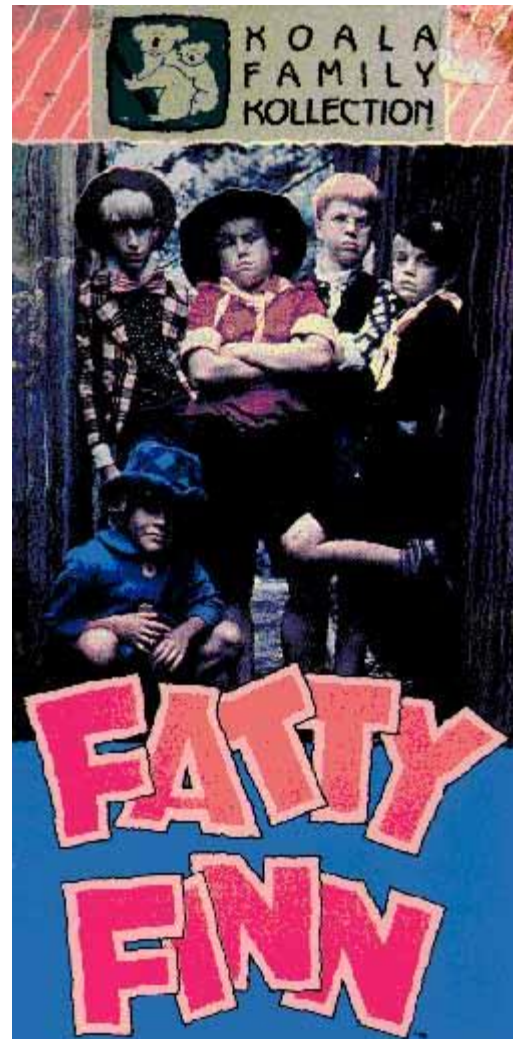
TV Quick notes:

"Kids' comedy. What do you do when you're bullied? Fight back, of course, but you have to be clever... Sadly topical."

"Children's comedy. What do you do when you're bullied? Fight back, but be clever... "

What's On TV note:

"Children's comedy about a group of kids giving the local bullies their comeuppance."



Source: CVMC website



Hugo Grieve

Cherub on the warpath – Hugo Grieve gets his kit off
Source: Boy Actors of the World website



Fatty's nemesis gets his come-uppance in classic bum-toasting fashion, but weren't mortar boards and swisheroc canes a bit antiquated for 1980s Australia? Not in comicland, evidently. Source: The Movie & TV Spanking Page

No further information currently available. Vaguely a remake of the first bona fide Australian children's film, a silent called "**THE KID STAKES**" in 1927, which starred Robin Ordell as Fatty Finn – an Australian comic book character somewhere between *Just William* and *Billy Bunter*. The Syd Phillips creation was popular from 1923-77. In his entry on Ordell, Holmstrom writes "An unsuccessful remake appeared in 1980, with Ben Oxenbould as Fatty". The original film concerned a donkey race, but on the face of it this tale has much in common with "**SMILEY GETS A GUN**" (58 – Keith Calvert pulls out all the stops to get his first shooter) and other films where a boy is single-mindedly pursuing some new essential acquisition – a Red Ryder rifle in "**A CHRISTMAS STORY**" for example.

Nothing else is known of Oxenbould, nor Greg Kelly, who plays the bane of his life, satisfyingly beaten in the end.

"What do you do when you're bullied? Fight back, of course, but you have to be clever..."

Why do adults keep **doing** that to kids? Telling them the answer to a thug is simply to "stand up for yourself"? Would these same patronising adults "stand up for themselves" to a mugger on the street? And if they did, do they seriously believe the mugger would back down (drop the knife or gun he's waving) and turn tail? The answer is never that simple, and any kid who's been bullied knows that well enough already. A brutish moron is **not** automatically a coward in disguise. Rather, they are mean-spirited types who capitalise on superior physical size and strength. This is just one of the Great Lies adults continue feeding to children.

See "**THE KID STAKES**", and subject index under [AUSTRALASIA](#), [BULLYING](#), [COMEDY](#), [COMIC BOOKS / SUPERHEROES](#), [CORPORAL PUNISHMENT](#) and [SCHOOL](#).