

“Yuma” Actor Gets in the Saddle

With the recent trend of Western films, actors learn tough riding lessons.

10-04-2007

Is the western genre riding tall in Hollywood again? Thanks to the mostly positive critical reviews and the box office success of “3:10 to Yuma,” we may yet get more “horse operas” into the cinema line-ups. That will require that more actors take riding lessons, however. Although stunt doubles can be used for rigorous riding scenes, close-ups must be done with the real actors to achieve any sort of realism. In the case of Ben Foster, who plays outlaw cowboy Charlie Prince in “3:10 to Yuma”, riding a horse is not the easiest skill for an actor to learn. He shared with the media that he’d never ridden a horse before filming began on the current blockbuster. Yet eager for the experience and a trooper at heart, he climbed in the saddle and filmed an entire day’s work. Somewhat later he realized the folly of his decision: He was black-and-blue pretty much everywhere. Ben Foster came to know firsthand the meaning of two words: saddle sore!