

Quotes from Reviews of *Australian Rules*

Many of these quotes are from reviews and articles that can be obtained through the ACTF Resource Centre Library

LOCAL



"... a marvellously constructed film that, like many great films gently pries away at the veneer of life as it also pries away at our consciousness."

- **Paul LePetit, Sunday Telegraph**

"...9 out of 10 ... a beautifully written and acted drama which must be one of the hot contenders for this year's AFI awardsIt uses amusing football action, sinister domestic drama and harsh violence to deliver an enormously satisfying story
'The three young lead actors are just terrific, every one a star.'"

"All the key characters are warm-blooded and real. There's a chilling edge that you won't get with any film made overseas, because this is about Australia and, ultimately, Australia's personal loss."

- **Rob Lowing, The Sun-Herald**



"...humour sensitivity, romance and winning performances... Worth the admission price alone is Kevin Harrington... Nathan Phillips... stamping himself as a rising star."

- **Olivia Stewart, Critical Eye, Sunday Mail**



"...a quality thought provoking drama boasting some terrific performances... heartfelt and sincere... provocative and intriguing.... Goldman's courageous film deserves a wide audience... Australian Rules is a premiership effort by all concerned."

- **Des Partridge, Courier Mail**

"...true grit can be found in Goldman's bold characterisation...it's a welcome, if accelerated, reflection of lives lived by teenage Australians. Sure it's depressing, but this is regional Australia, not some sugar-coated Hollywood back-lot."

"Stand out turns from Luke Carroll, Tom Budge and Celia Ireland... are riveting. Mandy Walker's elegant cinematography is another significant contribution..."

Another notable work commissioned by the Adelaide Festival, Australian Rules rules."

- **SX (Australian Sci Fi Film Festival)**

"The performances are superb throughout... Nathan Phillips deserves particular praise for his ability to carry almost all the action of the film and to convey the subtleties of his role so well. A great new talent! This has been an especially strong year so far for local films, and Australian Rules is definitely keeping the tradition going. Don't miss it."

- **Belinda Hazelton, LOTL**



"... a funny and bruising rite of passage... characters are genuine and convincing... the story's emotional climax packs a real punch."

- **Vicky Roach, Daily Telegraph**

"a worthy successor to *The Year My Voice Broke*"

- **Vicky Roach, Daily Telegraph**



"Comedy leavens and enriches *Australian Rules*, an accomplished locally made film."

- **Mark Naglazas, The West Australian**



"Make no mistake, *Australian Rules* is quite a film...this brutal beautiful movie..."

- **Leigh Paatsch, Herald Sun**



"Director Paul Goldman has drawn solid performances from Phillips and Carroll, as well as from Lisa Flanagan. There's a warmth in the scenes between the younger characters... *Australian Rules* wears its good intentions on its sleeve..." - **Phillippa Hawker, The Age**

"...the film itself is so good... it's a classic tale...some very beguiling story telling... the charm in all this lies in the easygoing affection between the boys... Luke Carroll... gives Dumby the vitality of the natural athlete, together with a grace which spills over into everything he does. And Nathan Phillips...has a quiet way of finding the underlying humour in a scene... Lisa Flanagan, another screen newcomer of startling sophistication... Tom Budge is mesmerically unwholesome..." - **Sandra Hall, Sydney Morning Herald**

"... a story... told from the heart... once the plot kicks in, the film impresses, and a funeral sequence towards the end is tremendously moving. In the end, this is a strong plea for tolerance and reconciliation."

- **David Stratton, Movie Show**

"...exceptionally intelligent and engaging story with wide appeal... leavened by a warm, down-to-earth sense of humour and a deeply felt romantic dimension. I recommend it to you." - **Peter Thompson, 'Sunday' 9 Network**

"... a brilliant piece of indigenous (as in homegrown) filmmaking... in just over 90 minutes the film builds to an absorbing mosaic portrait... a work of art in its own right..." - **Julian Wood, Filmink**



"Footy-flavoured it may be, but this tale of love and loss transcends the field. Engaging and rewarding... you won't be going anywhere until the final whistle." - **Ed Gibbs, Empire**

"Comedy and tragedy, sweet and sour, *Australian Rules* is impressive for its economy and power in handling a complex handful of issues and themes.... Faultless performances from all and unsentimental direction give the film a raw edge that makes this a Bloody Mary cocktail of sweet comedy and fiery drama..." - **Andrew L. Urban, www.urbancinefile.com**

"*Australian Rules* is a moving story about small town life, a football final and racial prejudice... Performances are all strong - from Simon

Westaway's abusive father, Celia Ireland's tragic mother and Kevin Harrington's well-meaning footie coach Arks. Newcomers Nathan Phillips And Luke Carroll are outstanding as Blacky and Dumby... through Mandy Walker's beautiful cinematography and Mick Harvey's edgy score, Paul Goldman's film concentrates on the characters, the setting and the mood. Australian Rules is a powerful film that leaves you thinking."

- Louise Keller, www.urbancinefile.com

*"A coming-of-age film about football, friendship and first-love in a mixed-race town..." - Mary Colbert, **The Age***

*"By turns funny and poignant... A searing portrayal of racism in a country town... the performances by a mostly young, indigenous and non indigenous cast are brilliant... a courageous film that warns of the perils of bigotry." - Rosemary Neill, **The Australian***

"A story of loyalty and friendship amid the racism of a seaside town. It is a film destined for the kind of success that has greeted Phillip Noyce's Rabbit Proof Fence. With its footy theme, strong cinematography from Mandy Walker and fine performances from Nathan Phillips, Luke Carroll and Lisa Flanagan, it has it all – youth, a well-constructed story and a genuinely tragic seam, offset with humour and romance... a timely entry point to the reconciliation debate, especially for younger audiences.

- Murray Bramwell, *The Australian*

INTERNATIONAL

*"a biting reminder of the distance that still exists between white and indigenous communities in modern Australia. Yet it still possesses enough genuine humour and sporting excitement to attract bigger than average audiences...." - Frank Hatherley, **Screen International***

"A moving, insightful coming-of-age drama about an adolescent boy struggling with family conflicts and interracial ferment..."

- David Rooney, *Variety*

"an enormously moving, immensely satisfying drama, Australian Rules presents the themes of West Side Story in a new key. A sensitive and unflinching foray into racism and family loyalty in an Australian fishing village, the film surprises and delights with its complex, unexpected characters and richly layered storyline"

- Caroline Libresco, *Sundance Film Festival programme*