

X-MEN ORIGINS: WOLVERINE

X-MEN ORIGINS: WOLVERINE TAKES A STEP BACK IN TIME TO THE MID 1800S, AND REVEALS THE VIOLENT PAST AND EVOLUTION OF THE MUTANT, WOLVERINE – BUT REST ASSURED, THIS ACTION-PACKED BLOCKBUSTER IS AS FAR FROM BEING A PERIOD PIECE AS POSSIBLE!

The film is the fourth instalment of the X-Men film franchise, and serves as something of a prequel to the previous movies.

And while the first three films were wholly and solely Hollywood affairs, you can't help but feel a tiny bit of pride and ownership when watching *Wolverine*, as there are so many Aussie connections.

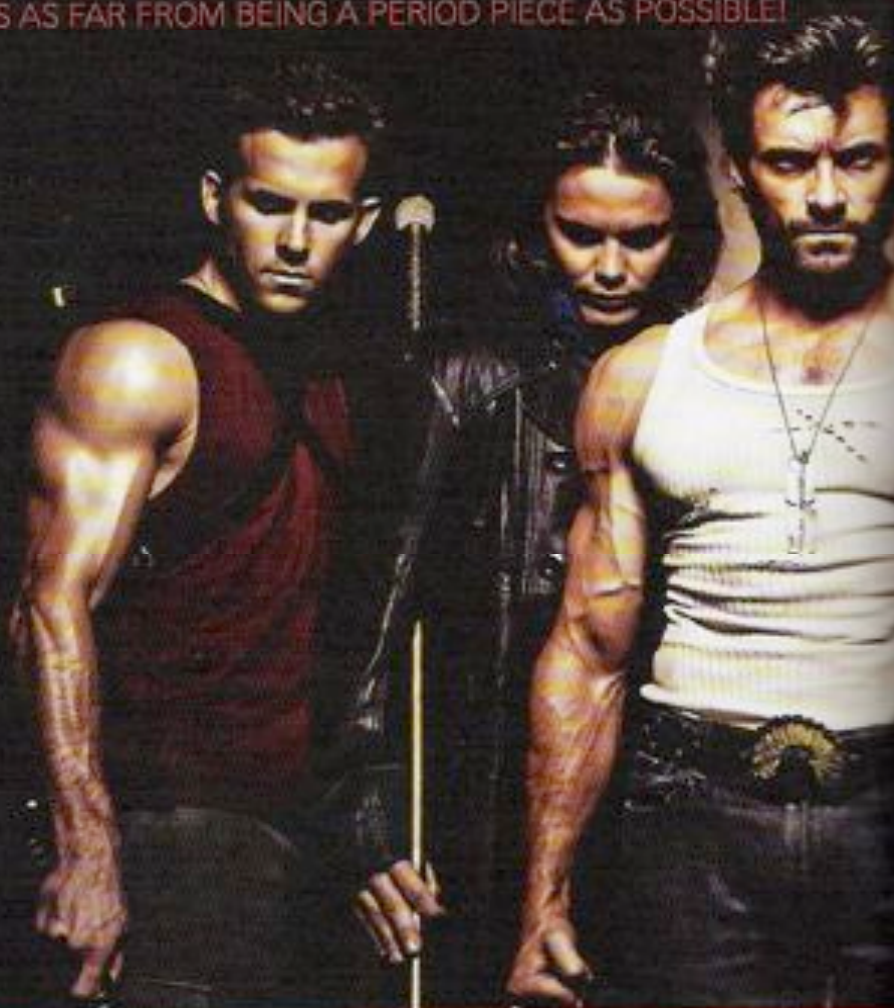
To begin with, it was primarily shot in Australia and New Zealand and as a consequence, the production employed loads of local actors. Plenty of well-known and vaguely familiar faces make an appearance throughout the film as a result, in the same way that local soap stars popped up in the *Star Wars* and *Matrix* trilogies.

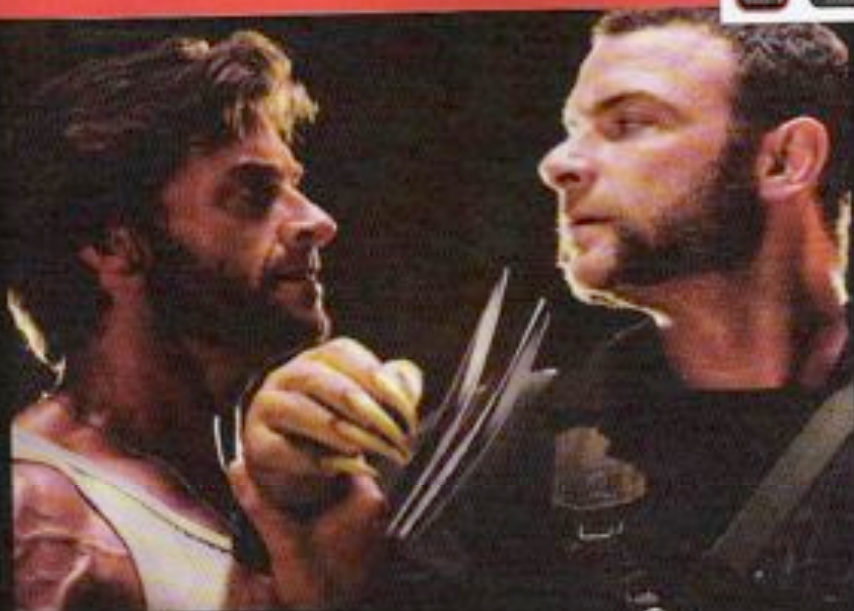
Continuing the 'down under' theme, Liev Schreiber – who is married to our own Naomi Watts – stars as Victor 'Sabertooth' Creed, and the title character in the film is thoroughly home-grown. Hugh Jackman famously buffed up his already fit physical form to portray Logan/Wolverine in the flick, an outcome that took quite some effort to achieve.

"I worked out for probably for a year prior to the shooting. I started [training] January 1, and we started filming February next year. It involved a very intense diet and heavy, pretty intense training," he says.

Despite it being the fourth time Jackman has played this role – he appeared as Wolverine in three X-Men films – he says he wanted to look "animalistic, powerful and dangerous" in this film, with his CGI trickery on his physique.

"My intention with the physicality of it was that when I saw Robert De Niro in *Cape Fear*, and he's in that scene in the prison and he takes his shirt off... I was frightened and uncom-





SPIN-OFF CENTRAL

X-Men Origins: Wolverine is a spin-off of the original trilogy of *X-Men* films: *X-Men*, *X2* and *X-Men: The Last Stand*.

Following the phenomenal box office success of all four films, Fox has green-lit a spin-off for Ryan Reynolds' Wolverine character Deadpool into his own film.

After *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* raked in more than US\$360 million at the box office, a sequel to Jackman's action outing is also on the cards.

"Japan is where we're heading," Jackman told MTV news. "We're starting to work on it now. We're in the... first steps of developing that story."



FAST FACT

The enormous buildings on Sydney's Cockatoo Island proved to be a perfect shell for Schreiber's intimidating facility in the film, which saved producers the effort of creating a new set elsewhere. It's estimated that the production injected AU\$80 million into our local economy.

portable," Jackman explains.

"There's something about him that's so raw and dangerous. And on my last movie *Australia*, when you've finished galloping on a horse you can see the veins and muscles, it's powerful and a little dangerous. That's sort of what I wanted, the animalistic quality I didn't necessarily want to look pretty."

For Schreiber, who plays Wolverine's half-brother in the epic comic adaptation, getting in shape for the film was almost as challenging as his intense fight scenes with Jackman.

"It was a tremendous amount of training, and I'm not exactly 'Joe Trainer', if you know what I mean," he laughs.

"Working out six days a week, having a strict diet and trying to keep up with Hugh on the beaches of *Australia* was difficult, but also something I really enjoyed."

The accomplished actors tussle in some serious fight scenes throughout the flick, which Schreiber admits created a little competition on set.

"What we were doing was so brutal, and so physical, and so intense – and here's a couple of guys who are coming this far away from booting the crap out of each other to do these stunt scenes," he explains.

"And we'd go through a take, or five takes, or six takes, and afterward we'd look at each other and go: 'Are you okay?' The truth is, both of us wanted to go and sit under a pile of ice packs. [But] there was this level of competition where we would be like 'He's okay, I'm okay, let's go' – but both of us are thinking, 'I'm not old! Hell no!'"

Although physically demanding, the film – which virtually recovered its entire budget during its opening weekend at the box office – was a highlight for Shakespeare-trained Schreiber.

"I don't know that anybody – whether or not they're a fan of Wolverine, the comic – wouldn't want to do what I do. It's just so much fun," he says.

"It was probably the most physically grueling movie that I ever worked on, but at the same time, it was definitely also the most fun."

VITAL STATS

Stars: Hugh Jackman, Liv Ullmann, Danny Huston, Will Iam, Lynn Collins, Taylor Kitsch, Ryan Reynolds, Daniel Henning

Director: Gavin Hood

Budget: US \$150 million

Gross Worldwide Revenue: US \$363,392,130

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DVD, Quadriplex Boxset and Blu-ray from October 14

