

A Day at the Races

109 mins, USA, b/w

Dir Sam Wood

The Marx Brothers, Margaret Dumont, Maureen O'Sullivan



The Marx Brothers' second film for MGM was their most commercially successful. Groucho plays Hugo Z Hackenbush, a horse doctor called upon to revive the fortunes of an ailing sanatorium. While he woos hypochondriac patient Mrs Upjohn (Dumont), Chico and Harpo set about making their fortunes on the neighbouring racecourse. The film drags during the extended musical numbers, but there are still some great lines, such as Groucho's 'Either this man is dead or my watch has stopped.' Some of the film's best rib-ticklers include Chico selling Groucho an expensive tip at the racetrack, Harpo riding the winning horse in the gripping racecourse finale, and the midnight rendezvous scene between Groucho and Esther Muir.