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 Review by [David Walker](#) | posted August 19, 2005 | [E-mail the Author](#) | [Start a Discussion](#)

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The Film:

Perry Henzell's 1972 film *The Harder They Come* will always be the quintessential reggae movie, forever tied to the music and culture of Jamaica. But if *The Harder They Come* introduced reggae on the big screen, giving it a cinematic identity, then Ted Bafaloukos' *Rockers* gave it heart and soul.

There's not much plot in *Rockers*, but then again, story is never that important in music driven films of this nature. Indeed, more often than not, the measure of quality for films like this is usually the soundtrack. And with tracks from the golden era of reggae that includes Burning Spear, Inner Circle, Gregory Isaacs and more, *Rockers* is an unparalleled classic. What little plot there is borrows from a wide variety of influences, including *The Bicycle Thief* and *Robin Hood*. In a role inspired by his real life as a popular drummer Leroy Wallace stars as Horsemouth, a session musician who scrapes together enough money to buy a motorcycle as part of his record distribution business. Horsemouth's bike gets stolen one night at a party, leading to confrontation between him and his gang of rockers (reggae musicians) and some local gangsters. Just when it seems like the gangsters have gotten the best of our heroes, the rockers pull a few surprises. And that's pretty much all there is to it.

Like Charlie Ahearn's seminal hip-hop film *Wild Style* that would come along a few years later, *Rockers* is a gritty slice-of-life glimpse into the world of Jamaican rockers and Rastafarians. Bafaloukos, who started as a still photographer and brings his keen eye to the film's direction, mixes raw authenticity with quirky charm, creating a documentary-like feel. Much of the time it doesn't even seem like anyone is acting, so much as Bafaloukos and his crew just happen to capture people on film during their day-to-day routines.

Video:

Rockers is presented in 1.33:1 widescreen. The picture has been remastered from 35 mm, and looks surprisingly clean.

Audio:



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Like the picture, the audio for *Rockers* has been remastered, and is presented in Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround Sound.

Extras:

Rockers is loaded with bonus material, including an interview with director Ted Bafaloukos as well as a nostalgia-laden audio commentary. Bafaloukos' commentary includes the occasional video pop-up, as he recalls the production of *Rockers*, and the challenges he and his crew faced. Both the interview and the commentary will please diehard fans of the films, and even those watching the film for the first time should enjoy what Bafaloukos has to say. Also look for the theatrical trailer, music videos, a booklet with tons of photos, and a Rasta Patois glossary that will help you understand exactly what is being said.

Final Thoughts:

Rockers is a really good movie, and if you're a fan of the film, you already know that. I haven't seen the earlier DVD versions, so I don't know how this one compares to those. If you are a fan of the film and you don't already own it, you should buy this version. If you've never seen the film, you should at least check it out.










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