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Trek Stars Go West

Score: **78%**
Rating: **Not Rated**
Publisher: **MVD Entertainment Group**
Region: **1**
Media: **DVD/2**
Running Time: **6 Hrs.**
Genre: **Classic/Western**
Audio: **English Mono**

Features:

- Disc 1:
 - Tate: "Comanche Scalps"
 - Bonanza: "The Ape"
 - Outlaws: "Starfall I & II"
- Disc 2:
 - The Lone Ranger: "The Legion of Old-Timers"
 - Hawkeye and the Last of the Mohicans
 - Outlaws: "Shorty"
 - White Comanche

I often enjoy watching older films and TV shows and having that sense of surprise when I realize that a young, current, big-named actor is playing some minor character in whatever I am





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watching. Well, that's basically what **Trek Stars Go West** is for four of the *Star Trek: The Original Series'* main actors: William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley and James Doohan.

Before *Star Trek's* 1966 premiere, TV was mostly filled with westerns, or at least that's what it seems like looking back at that era. Because of that, each of these actors were seen in several classic western series and movies. The most prominent actors being, of course, Nimoy and Shatner, at least in this collection.

In an episode of the 1960 season of **Outlaws**, Nimoy plays a hired gun used to help break a man, the main outlaw of this episode, from jail. When Shorty, a new ranch owner, decides to fence off the road and force people to travel the 40 miles around his property to get to the other side, the law has to intervene and ends up arresting the land-owner. Shorty's son is then asked by his father to go into town and get the help of "Lonely Logan" to make sure Shorty is in prison as little as possible. While Nimoy's role in this episode doesn't offer a lot of screen time, it is still pivotal to the plot.

Two episodes later, Shatner appears in the two-parter, "Starfall." Here, an amnesty agreement is laid out to give any outlaw who signs it a full pardon, provided they choose to abandon their ill-be-gotten ways and join the right side of the law again. Shatner plays an outlaw who is trying to decide if the agreement is real, and considers whether or not he could turn over a new leaf. This particular episode features some other stars like Cloris Leachman and Edgar Buchanan.

Outlaws wasn't Nimoy's TV debut though, he played another role earlier that year in a series featuring a one-armed gun-slinger. The show, **Tate**, was ground-breaking since it was one of the first to have a crippled character as the main star, and in the episode "Comanche Scalps," Nimoy plays the leader of a group of Comanche braves that end up getting into a tussle with one of **Tate's** friends who seems to be a hardliner when it comes to his personal honor.

Nimoy is also featured in a Season Two episode of **Bonanza** called "The Ape." Here, he plays a card hustler who is good friends with a tavern girl. When a big and mentally slow brute walks into the bar, the tavern girl sees him as a source of amusement, something Hoss Cartwright doesn't find too funny. Hoss befriends the giant, but the larger man's lack of control causes an uproar in town, and the leader of the mob is none other than Nimoy's character.



Of course, **Trek Stars** isn't all about Spock and Kirk. Kelley plays a big role in an early *Lone Ranger* episode. When I say early, I mean, the first episode after the series' three-part premiere. Kelley plays a man who left his father's ranch to go back East but, upon the older man's death, is returning to take over the property. When he is tricked into handing the top helper-position over to a con-man, Kelley's character's life is in danger unless he sells the property to the people the new ranchhand wants. Enter the Lone Ranger (Clayton Moore), who knows of the scam and poses as a wealthy land owner in order to get in close to the prisoner and free him. He can't do it alone though. He and Tonto (Jay Silverheels) wrangle together a band of old timers who know how things should be run, and together they work to drive the enemy out of the town for good.

Doohan actually plays two parts in the series **Hawkeye and the Last of the Mohicans**. In one episode, he plays a minor role as an angry townspeople. The short scene featuring Doohan is in this collection. The following week, he had a much more prominent role as the episode's antagonist, Tonkawa. In this episode, Hawkeye (John Hart) and Chingachgook (Lon Chaney Jr.) find themselves in the middle of an Indian dispute over the marriage of the local Chief's daughter. Everyone wants a particular character to be the winner in the negotiations, but Doohan's character seems to be bent on taking her for his wife instead.

Trek Stars Go West wraps up with a movie Shatner made during *Star Trek's* last season. **White Comanche** is probably one of the worst movies I've ever seen. The DVD's packaging claims that it rivals the fabled *Plan 9 From Outer Space*, but **White Comanche** doesn't even have that "so bad, it's good" quality that *Plan 9* has. I guess that makes it worse, right? Anyway, Shatner actually plays two parts in this film; one is a cowboy known as Johnny Moon, and the other is a white man raised by Comanche Indians, Moon's twin brother. When an Indian attack happens, witnesses notice this strange White Comanche among the attack force, and when the townspeople find Moon, they naturally assume it's him. Quite frankly, it's not a very good plot, the video quality is bad (worse than many of the older films in this set), the acting is bad, the dialogue is worse and honestly, it's not even worth seeing to make fun of Shatner's wooden acting. While the rest of the DVD is classic-goodness, the last 95 minute portion of the collection is better left un-watched.

Seriously though, most *Original Series* fans should want to at least watch this collection of classic western shows, if nothing else, then for the ability to say "I saw them when...". While it might not be worth a purchase, it is a lot of westerns to try and watch within a single rental period.

-J.R. Nip, GameVortex Communications AKA Chris Meyer

Related Links:

Trek Stars Go West Purchase Info
Tate on IMDb.com
Bonanza on IMDb.com

Outlaws on IMDb.com

Hawkeye and the Last of the Mohicans on IMDb.com

White Comanche on IMDb.com

Game Vortex's *Star Trek* Coverage

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William Shatner on IMDb.com

Leonard Nimoy on IMDb.com

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