

Herbie Goes Bananas

by Emily Soares | October 07, 2008

The final sequel to date in Walt Disney's *The Love Bug* (1968) series, **Herbie Goes Bananas** (1980) doesn't feature Dean Jones, the star of the original, or any actual racing, but it does sport some genuine laughs, thanks to the comic pairing of Harvey Korman and Cloris Leachman.

In this installment of the Herbie saga, Jim Douglas' nephew, Pete (Stephen W. Burns), has inherited the car, which he and his friend D.J. (Charles Martin Smith) have to retrieve from a mechanic in Mexico, in hopes of racing in the Brazilian Grand Prix. En route, they encounter cute pickpocket Paco (Joaquin Garay III), who nips Pete's wallet and some smugglers' film negatives, assuring that there will be mayhem in the future of all concerned, especially when the urchin stows away in Herbie. Pete and D.J., meanwhile, are in hawk to Captain Blythe (Korman) when Herbie wreaks havoc on the ship carrying them to Rio, and they try to talk Aunt Louise (Leachman) into becoming their sponsor for the race. Meanwhile, Pete wines and dines Aunt Louise's shy anthropologist niece (Elyssa Davalos). Add in a Herbie plank-walking scene, a send-up of *The Love Boat* (the 1976 series pilot featured Korman and Leachman), a bull fight and Inca gold, and you have a Herbie movie quite unlike any of the others.

John Vernon (*Animal House*, 1978) and Alex Rocco (*The Godfather*, 1972) show up as the persistent crooks, permanently foiled by Herbie.

Throughout **Herbie Goes Bananas**, number 53 is known only as "Ocho", a name given to him by Paco. Reportedly, 26 Volkswagen Beetles played the part of Herbie in the film, thanks to the many stunts. According to Lovebugfans.com, at least some of the cars had up to four shocks on each wheel and high-backed front seats with screens in the headrests for the hidden back-seat drivers to see through.

Following **Herbie Goes Bananas**, "Ocho" would be absent from the screen for 25 years, until *Herbie Fully Loaded* reanimated the little car with supernatural powers in 2005.

Producer: Ron Miller

Director: Vincent McEveety

Screenplay: Don Tait; Gordon Buford (characters)

Cinematography: Frank Phillips

Art Direction: John B. Mansbridge; Rodger Maus

Film Editing: Gordon D. Brenner

Cast: Cloris Leachman (Aunt Louise), Charles Martin Smith (D.J.), John Vernon (Prindle), Stephan W. Burns (Pete), Elyssa Davalos (Melissa), Joaquin Garay III (Paco), Harvey Korman (Captain Blythe), Richard Jaeckel (Sheppard), Alex Rocco (Quinn), Fritz Feld (Chief Steward), Vito Scotti (Armando Moccia).

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