

## **“Everything is Going to Change”**

### ***Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire***

**Info Box:** As the Death Eaters, the followers of Lord Voldemort, become resurgent, Harry Potter (Radcliffe), now in his fourth year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, finds himself an unexpected participant in the Triwizard Tournament.

Directed by Mike Newell; Written by Steve Kloves and J. K. Rowling; Starring Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson, Rupert Grint, Maggie Smith, Alan Rickman, Brendan Gleeson, Miranda Richardson, Ralph Fiennes, Michael Gambon | 3.5 Stars | Rating: PG 13 | Running Time: Two hours and thirty seven minutes.

### **Reviewed by David Lavery**

At 734 pages, almost twice the length of its predecessors, J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, the fourth in the most popular book series of all time, presented a new challenge to its readers. The novel likewise tested Steve Kloves, the screenwriter of all four Potter films to date, who has described the book as “fiendishly intricate” and “far and away the hardest one yet to crack.”

Veteran British director Mike Newell (*Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Donnie Brasco*), the original choice to do the first Potter adaptation back in 2001, has given us a *Goblet* likely to produce more complaints from fans than any before. Even at over two and a half hours, many events, characters, monsters, and nuances had to go. What happened to that giant squid? Why is Hermione not fighting for house-elf rights?

*Goblet* is nevertheless overflowing with virtuoso special effects and set pieces: the absolutely astonishing Quidditch World Cup stadium; the frightening attack of Lord Voldemort's followers, the Death Eaters; Harry's thrilling airborne battle with a dragon; a face made of fire; an amazing maze, the final duel. The film's narrative pace is just as breathtaking. The novel requires almost 150 pages to get our hero to Hogwarts; the film accomplishes the task in less than fifteen minutes, allowing Newell and Kloves to concentrate on the core of the story: Harry's unexpected and perilous participation in the Triwizard Tournament.

Now faced with the ultimate challenge of the opposite sex (in *Goblet* Harry must conquer ballroom dancing as well as dragons), Radcliffe (Harry), Watson (Hermione), and Grint (Ron) continue to improve as actors (Radcliffe's performance deserves particular praise), and the supporting cast, especially Brendon Gleeson (as the grotesque new defense-against-the-dark-arts teacher Mad-Eye Moody), Miranda Richardson (as the obnoxious *Daily Prophet* reporter Rita Skeeter), Michael Gambon (as Dumbledore now a more than acceptable replacement for the late Richard Harris), and Ralph Fiennes (as You-Know-Who), are always engrossing.

Make no mistake, *The Goblet* is a disturbing film full of real terror and honest emotion, very much deserving of its PG-13 rating. As Hermione announces at the film's close, “Everything is going to change.” From here on, the saga of Harry Potter gets darker and darker. From here on Harry Potter movies could even rate an “R.”

