

what are you looking for?

Search



PLEASE SELECT A GENRE FROM THE LIST 

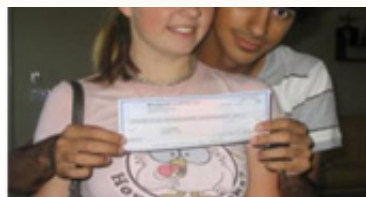


# PING PONG

**YOSUKE KUBOZUKA  
ARATA  
SAM LEE  
SHIDO NAKAMURA  
KOJI OKURA**

**DIRECTED BY SORI  
WRITTEN BY KANKURO KUDO  
BASED ON A COMIC BY TAIYO MATUMOTO  
DISTRIBUTED BY ASMIK ACE**

**Google Pays Me  
\$173 An Hour**



Google has blessed me with a \$5000 a month at home job

# Movie Details

Post Author: Matt Ho July 3, 2013 0

**OUR RATING** 

**DIRECTOR FUMIHIKO SORI**

**WRITER KANKURO KUDO**



**US BOX OFFICE NA**

**RUN TIME 1 HR. 54 MIN. RATED PG**

**YOUR RATING**

**GENRE COMEDY, INTERNATIONAL, SPORTS**

**WATCH THE TRAILER PING PONG TRAILER**

**STARS** [Arata](#) [Koji Okura](#) [Mari Natsuki](#) [Naoto Takenaka](#) [Sam Lee](#) [Shido Nakamura](#) [Yosuke Kubozuka](#)

## SYNOPSIS

*Ping Pong* is the live adaptation of Taiyo Matsumoto's manga that tells the story of high school table tennis players and best friends Peco (Yosuke Kabozuka) and Smile (Arata). When both lose at the inter-school competition, Smile is forced into intense training having lost a bet against his coach Butterfly Joe (Naoto Takenaka), who desperately wants to help him realize his full potential. Peco quits devastated by his defeat, but ultimately rediscovers why he played in the first place.

## REVIEW

Going from manga to film is extremely ambitious given the challenges of translating the medium's wildly imaginative imagery into reality. There's a damn good reason why Warner Bros. is having trouble handling the remake of Katsuhiro Otomo's cult-classic, *Akira*. Then there's the daunting task of condensing massive volumes of stories within the two hour timeframe, since some Japanese comics

# Trending Posts

REVIEWS

TRAILERS



### BEFORE SUNSET

unset 3.8/5 29 votes Synopsis Before Sunset takes place nine years after Before Sunrise whe [\[..\]](#)



### TAKE THIS WALTZ

s Waltz 3.8/5 21 votes SYNOPSIS Margot (Michelle Williams) is married to Lou (Seth Rogen). The [\[..\]](#)



### SUMMER MOVIE PREVIEW: PART ONE

ovie Preview: Part One 3.2/5 25 votes It's no secret that Hollywood is running out of id [\[..\]](#)



### HALF NELSON

son 3.1/5 353 votes SYNOPSIS Half Nelson is the featured version of Ryan Fleck's 19-minu [\[..\]](#)

# U.S Box Office

## Weekend Box Office for 6/28/2013

Monsters University	\$45,607,745
The Heat	\$39,115,043
World War Z	\$29,774,625
White House Down	\$24,852,258
Man of Steel	\$20,737,490

Source: *The Numbers* - Movie Box Office

# Advertising

retain continuity from a single storyline that can run for years (i.e. *One Piece*). I've never read Taiyo Matsumoto's *Ping Pong*, but based on what I know from research, it's one of the very, very few exceptions where an adaptation can work and is actually good.

For one, *Ping Pong* is set in the real world, so bringing the artwork to life plays into director Fumihiko Sori's favor. From the few images I've seen of the original illustrations, I can safely say that he's pretty faithful when it comes to bringing the black and white pages to the big screen. The direction of the ping pong sequences in particular are worth noting. This interpretation is debatable, but I found the combination of slow motion and close-ups on the actors during these scenes helped emulate the manga's highly expressive action panels.

It may not be a 100% accurate shot-by-shot depiction, however, it's pretty close and it's a nice nod to Matsumoto's work. Some might find it a little too dramatic, but I found it to be a welcoming touch as opposed to a hindrance. The transitions back to normal speed are smooth, and Sori does a good job providing various angles and points of view so that there's always a balance of perspectives.

Despite Matsumoto's reputation as an unconventional/surrealist artist, most of the actors do look like their respective manga counterparts without appearing ridiculously cartoonish in their transformation. Yosuke Kabozuka's bowl haircut may leave some saying otherwise, but let's face it: that look is always a hard sell and it's necessary for his portrayal of Peco.

Considering how *Ping Pong* is only five volumes long, it's a very manageable story to fit within the time constraints of film. Again, I've never read it, but it seems like writer Kankuro Kudo succeeded in amalgamating all the important components into one cohesive script. The film doesn't feel rushed, nor does it feel like its lacking something to tie it all together. All the characters are steadily introduced, their relationships are clearly established and everything plays out at an appropriate pace.

### “Enter the hero!”-Peco

If you look at the overall picture, *Ping Pong* does follow the formula of a typical sports flick. You have characters beaten by rivals, who are then thrown into a period of identity crisis, followed by an epiphany that marks their return through a training montage. However, there is a little more to the film considering it's a character-driven story largely centered on the relationship between Peco and Smile, two players who are such polar opposites.

#### Today's Travel Deals

7/3/13

**\$69\* & up** -- Nationwide Summer Fares, One Way



**\$129-\$199** -- Bahamas Atlantis in Summer incl. \$150 in Extras



**\$109 & up** -- Downtown Denver Hotel incl. Weekends, 50% Off



Listed by **TRAVELZOO**. \*Some taxes, fees additional

#### Today's Travel Deals

7/3/13

**\$69\* & up** -- Nationwide Summer Fares, One Way



**\$169** -- LA: Weekends at 4-Star Hotel incl. \$50 Daily Credit



**\$1249** -- China: 3-City, 8-Nt. Vacation w/Air, \$1400 Off\*



Listed by **TRAVELZOO**. \*Some taxes, fees additional

### Upcoming Releases



The former is talented, but is also an abrasive, trash-talking, over-confident player who's lazy. He's not always likable, but he does have redeeming qualities and does change for the better in his own subtle way. The latter is a quiet, introverted individual who plays ping pong to kill time and rationalizes letting others win for the sake of sparing them the embarrassment of loss.

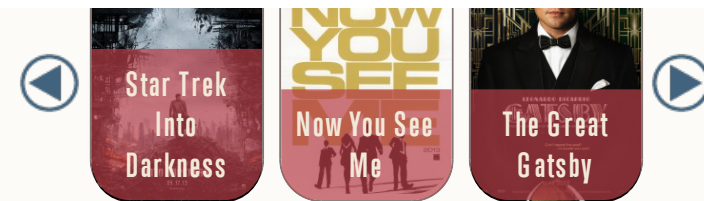
Usually with this sort of narrative, the brief dissolution of the friendship acts as the conflict so that the film concludes with a reunion. Instead, the plot quietly separates the two without the drama, and uses the idea of self-discovery to reignite Peco's passion and self-worth as a form of resolution. It's through his revelation that Smile's faith in him as a hero is restored, which is the film's ubiquitous theme. From there *Ping Pong* gets more predictable, as it becomes clear that the point is for both characters to meet in the finale. They inevitably overcome their worthy adversaries prior to facing one another, though I do question how Peco miraculously does so with a bad knee. The last match is never shown in full, but a winner is revealed in a fade-out scene. This is where the debate begins among fans: does the victor succeed through skill and perseverance? Or was the game thrown?

The supporting characters serve their purpose, even though they are variations of archetypes you expect from a manga within the sports genre. Kong (Sam Lee), Kazama (Shido Nakamura) and Sakuma (Koji Okura) are the formidable opponents for our heroes to rise against, but they're never treated as villains and they do contribute to the plot individually. Butterfly Joe (Naoto Takenaka) is written as the typical coach with a glorious past who threw it all away. There's nothing too original about his back story, but he brings comic relief and he's a somewhat of an important figure to Smile as both a substitute companion for Peco, as well as a mentor.

One of the best things about *Ping Pong* is the soundtrack. The now defunct Japanese band Supercar provides electro-pop music that perfectly suits the film's lighthearted tone. For those interested, the majority of the tracks are off their 2002 album *Highvision*.

## VERDICT

While *Ping Pong* does follow a structure that's predictable at times, it's still an enjoyable feel-good film that incorporates various themes to give it a level of depth. The cast deliver solid performances, the soundtrack is excellent, and it's a story that maintains your interest in not just the sport, but the characters as well. There are several mangas that should've never, ever been adapted, but thankfully, this is one that's been tackled with success.



## Related Posts



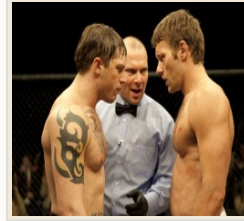
Battle Royale



Survive Style 5+



From Up On Poppy Hill



Warrior



Amour

## COMMENTS

### Leave a Reply

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked \*

Name \*

Email \*

Website

Comment

You may use these [HTML](#) tags and attributes: `<a href="" title=""> <abbr title=""> <acronym title=""> <b> <blockquote cite=""> <cite> <code> <del datetime=""> <em> <i> <q cite=""> <strike> <strong>`

Post Comment

[Home](#)

[Reviews](#)

[Award Shows](#)

[Articles & Columns](#)

[Trailers](#)

[About Us](#)

© 2013 Copyright.  POPCORNPANEL.COM