



GO STREET RACER GO! FILMMAKER GREG FILIPKOWSKI DOCUMENTS L.I.'S FAST AND FURIOUS

A 1969 powder-blue Chevy Nova and '68 Camaro line up beside each other at a red stoplight in the center of Times Square. It's 7 a.m. and the cops have left the scene to change shifts. There's a 10-minute time gap, being monitored by men on walkie-talkies surrounding the perimeter. The driver of the Nova, a heavysset man known as Phat Ratt, revs his engine, and smoke billows out the exhaust, creating a cloud so thick it looks like a bomb went off. The light turns green, and the screeching of tires makes nails against a chalkboard seem like paintbrushes gliding across a canvas. The road behind them is left looking like vertical strips of asphalt were violently torn out, as the rubber burns and the charcoal smell saturates the morning sky.

([PRWEB](#)) January 28, 2004 --Fast and Furious, 2 Fast 2 Furious... Our name is 2Fast2Real, and the basic idea is because we're too fast for the street," says Greg Filipkowski, filmmaker and the man behind liextreme.com and the new DVD, 2Fast2Real For Hollywood, which documents the street-racing subculture on Long Island. "For Hollywood, no director or producer would be able to show the real drama and how it really goes down. Fast and Furious, it's all nice for wannabes."

The scene in Times Square is the dramatic opening for the film, which otherwise takes place primarily on the rural back streets of Suffolk County (and occasionally its highways). From birds-eye perspectives of Suzuki motorcycles traveling at 205 miles per hour to classic cars souped-up to tear across the turf in excess of 150 mph, it is a professionally shot, heart-stopping tour of the amateur, and often illegal, speedways thousands of Long Island gearheads have claimed as their second homes.

"We don't support or condone illegal street racing," assures Filipkowski. Like any other documentary maker, despite his own personal love for racing, his job is to "just document it."

While taking occasional stabs at his salad with Balsamic dressing, Filipkowski, a 27-year-old native of Poland who moved to Lindenhurst in 1988 and started liextreme.com in 2000, pauses, puts his intertwined hands over his mouth and kindly declines to say exactly where the races take place. It's an unspoken code of confidentiality in street racing that revealing such information is like putting an APB out over the cops' airwaves, inviting them to arrest you (though he says "only rural locations" will suffice). Square-jawed and clean-cut, sporting a gray sweatshirt with his website's logo, Filipkowski, who has a wife and child, doesn't seem like the prototypical sort to document this dangerous underworld.

"Since I was a little kid, I was into it, that whole adrenaline thing," he says. "I love two things: speed and film."

Given that he's spent thousands of his own dollars and months of his time making this, his third racing film, and trying to pitch them to Hollywood, it's hard to imagine he ever hung up his own driving gloves.

"I got in trouble," he says, referring to numerous tickets and some trips to court. "I can't do the speed no more,



so I stepped away to film. There are filmmakers out there that capture this stuff, but they're just filmmakers. I've been in that seat behind the steering wheel, and I know what a person like myself wants to see."

The problem, according to Filipkowski, is not the threat racers impose (he insists all races take place in very isolated spots, where danger to the racers or the space around them is virtually non-existent), but the towns' unwillingness to give up the tiniest portion of unused space to a group of tax-paying Island citizens who want to legally partake in their passion.

"There's a lot of abandoned land," he says. "Grumman Airstrip, Calverton, and it's not being used for anything. So now, they're complaining [about] illegal activities, street racing, people getting into accidents, but they don't want to give me a piece of land that's unused to control."

In fact, the Westhampton racing track, the only legal resource for LI racers, is being closed, something he feels will only make matters worse for town governments and police.

"When they close that down, the insanity is going to be 10 times more," he asserts.

Filipkowski adds that the majority of Island racers are friendly and in it for healthy competition, and that any damage to the roads, such as tire marks, is easily covered over with bleach.

Still, considering the failed Field Day concert festival and long-running efforts to create legal skate parks, it's hard to imagine Filipkowski's dream will be easy to accomplish.

For now though, as you watch footage of these guys ripping up asphalt, see the intensity swell up in their focused faces as they approach the start line, or in many cases, do insane tricks like high-speed 360s and pop-wheelies, it begins to beg the question: Aren't they, or Filipkowski, ever scared?

"Before we do it, I go, 'You sure you wanna do this?'" the director explains. "And they go, 'If you're filming, we're doing it, if you're not filming it, we're doing it. Do whatever you want.' So we just film it, 'cause they do it anyway."

Even so, their bravery doesn't always serve as a comfort. Filipkowski recalls one particular moment in the movie in which a motorcycle daredevil in highway traffic begins to swing his legs from side to side in a semi-circular motion, and then releases his hands from the handlebars to lay flat on his stomach as if he were flying.

"I said, 'Don't do anything crazy,'" he remembers telling the amateur stuntman. "I had chills. My hair was standing. I said, 'I wanna be done with this and I want to go home.'"

The majority of his trepidation is "mostly the police." The rest of the time, adrenaline and Filipkowski's drive to bring his films and subculture into the national spotlight supercedes the lump in his throat.

"Some of these guys do it for fun," Filipkowski explains. "Some of them do it for money. Some of the people making a living off it...I've got \$1,000 for promotions. That's my budget. But I don't believe the money is the success. It's the people you are surrounded with, and I think if you remember that, it's gonna help you sooner or later."



Contact Information

Greg Filipkowski

LIEXTREME INC

<http://www.liextreme.com/>

516 4457091

Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).