

the producer

SPRING 2009
SONY PRODUCTION REVIEW

DRAMATIC IMAGES

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HOT SHOT

SONY'S TOP-END F35 PUT THROUGH ITS PACES

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High-end results

HDCAM/SR + F23/F35

Capture stand out images using Sony's HDCAM HDW-790P through to the top of the range F35 recording to HDCAM SR



COMEDY CLASSIC

When filming remake of a sitcom *Perrin*, footage from the HDW-790P matched up with Sony's studio cameras

DoP Martin Hawkins opted to use the HDCAM format when filming Objective Productions' *Reggie Perrin* for BBC1. The primetime comedy series starring Martin Clunes, Faye Ripley and Wendy Craig is a re-make of the 70s sitcom *The Fall And Rise Of Reginald Perrin*.

Although predominantly studio based, the series includes scenes shot on location using the HDW-790P. Hawkins was impressed by the matching between the studio and location shots: "We used five HDC-1500 studio cameras for the scenes filmed at Teddington Studios and the shots matched those from the HDW-790 perfectly. You would have thought they had been shot using the same camera," he says.

For two days the crew filmed on a train for some scenes, and keeping to a tight schedule was paramount to avoid rush hour. This meant there wasn't enough time to pre-light the train, so Hawkins opted instead for a

mixed colour balance between the cool daylight from the windows and warm tungsten overhead interior lights of the train. "We were lucky as the days were overcast so there wasn't a huge contrast difference. But when the sun came out the camera handled the difference in exposure well," says Hawkins.

Having used the HDW-790P a couple of times before, Hawkins has the confidence to know what it can handle and that it copes with high contrast and low light levels well. "The exposure latitude on it is excellent. I'm really pleased with those scenes," he adds.

The HDW-790P was hired from AFL Television, which offers a prep day prior to a shoot. "We always have a tester prep day with AFL, which is free of charge. It's when I put all my set ups into the menu. As I get more work on the 790 I can also hone my set up to give each show a different look," says Hawkins.

Where quality is central to a production the HDCAM format has much to offer. This selection of case studies alone demonstrates how such cameras are being adopted not only for prime time shows but gritty docs. The range of latitude in the HDW-790P camera means it lends itself to situations that cannot be lit, as DoP Martin Hawkins discovered filming *Reggie Perrin*. The robustness and ability to cope with dust and heat makes another HDCAM model, the HDW-F900R, a reliable workhorse for shows such as Tiger Aspect's *Ross Kemp: Return to Afghanistan*. The top of the range F35, which sits beside the F23 in Sony's high-end CineAlta range, is also being used increasingly for projects such as Red Bee Media's ident for BBC Four's *Hidden Japan* season due, in this case, to the crisp vibrant images it produces. In March the camera also shot its first UK feature film *Harry Brown*, starring Michael Caine.