

## The Cheer Ambassadors

### Salaya Doc 2012 review: The Cheer Ambassadors



Assistant cheerleading coach and production manager Tae Phithakrattanayothin and director Luke Cassady-Dorian at the Salaya Doc post-screening Q&A with Thai Film Archive programmer Sanchai Chotirosseranee.

- Directed by Luke Cassady-Dorian
- Screened at 2nd Salaya International Documentary Festival, March 25, 2012; unrated
- Wise Kwai's rating: 4/5

It's the type of uplifting, inspirational story I usually run screaming from. But **The Cheer Ambassadors**, about plucky Thai cheerleaders who beat the odds to be ranked among the best squads in the world, won me over with boundless enthusiasm and a side trip into the darker aspects of human nature.

At the center of the film is Sarawut "Toey" Samniangdee, coach of the Bangkok University cheerleading squad. A dancer by vocation, he was inspired to get into cheerleading by two things – late-night ESPN showings of the World Cheerleading Championships and YouTube clips of cheerleading stunts and the renowned limitless energy of Thai singer "Bird" Thongchai McIntyre.

The slickly produced doc traces the origins of cheerleading and the rise of the sport (yeah, that's right, sport) in Thailand, which became popular thanks to annual sanctioned cheerleading



