

IT SOUNDS like a put-on but being the boss's son really is a tough rap to beat. You can't win for losing. Come up with a winning hand and there's always someone to claim the deck is loaded.

Looking at Richard Zanuck, the only son and youngest of three children of the renowned and redoubtable Darryl F. Zanuck, motion picture producer and executive of legendary stature, you'd have to say that he was born to succeed. And succeed he has.

Charged with top responsibility for movie and TV production at a major film studio before he was 28, Dick Zanuck helped make the fuzzless peach that was 20th Century-Fox of 1962 ripen. In his little more than four years at the top, he has been instrumental in turning out some of the movie industry's top pictures and in forging the studio into position as leading producer of filmed television series.

Sure he had lots of help and couldn't have done it if he wasn't King Darryl's son. But he wasn't a figurehead, either. Nor was he carried as a necessary burden, humored and pampered until he learned the facts of business life.

Business Revival ■ What Dick Zanuck has done, what 20th Century-Fox has become, is only properly appreciated in relation to what used to be.

Certainly the 20th Century-Fox of "Cleopatra" notoriety was characterized by wasteful expenditure. The company's net loss for 1962 was nearly \$40 million.

Then the Zanucks came in and the fort was saved. For the elder Zanuck it was the second time in a quick-Darryl-the-Flit role. In 1935, then a 33-year-old ex-script writer, Darryl Zanuck was called in to shore up a newly formed and tottering 20th Century-Fox Film Corp. During the next two decades he made Fox roar like a lion.

This time around Darryl Zanuck, movie mogul, had a boy helper. Dick Zanuck was no neophyte in never-never land. He was born in Los Angeles and began working in various departments at 20th Century-Fox while still in high school. His summer vacations were spent learning the filmmaker's trade, department by department. He was a silent observer at meetings and conferences in his father's executive suite, a sponge absorbing, absorbing until it was time to spill out.

In 1956, his father, out as production boss at 20th Century, formed Darryl F. Zanuck Productions, an independent company. Dick Zanuck, then not-yet-22, was brought in as vice president and began practicing what he had heard preached at his father's side.

He produced such feature films as "Compulsion," "Sanctuary" and "The Chapman Report." They didn't top "The Egyptian" at the box office; they

Dick Zanuck: trained to be his own boss

weren't better-made than "All About Eve" (both produced by the elder Zanuck). But they were thoroughly professional and essentially successful production efforts.

Thus, when Darryl Zanuck returned to 20th Century-Fox as president in 1962, he had reasonable justification for naming Dick his production representative at the studio. The Fox board of directors reaffirmed that decision later

WEEK'S PROFILE



Richard Darryl Zanuck—executive VP in charge of production, 20th Century-Fox Film Corp. and president, 20th Century-Fox Television; b. Los Angeles, Dec. 13, 1934; Harvard Military Academy and Stanford University, BA, 1952-56; 2nd lieutenant, U.S. Army pictorial service, 1956-57; story department, 20th Century-Fox, 1954-55; publicity department, 20th Century-Fox, 1955-56; assistant to producer, "Island in the Sun," "The Sun Also Rises," 1956-57; VP, Darryl F. Zanuck Productions, 1956-62; producer, "Compulsion," "Sanctuary," "The Chapman Report," assistant to producer, "The Longest Day," 1959-62; president's production representative at 20th Century-Fox studios, 1962; VP in charge of production, 20th Century-Fox Film Corp. and president, 20th Century-Fox Television, 1962-67; executive VP in charge of movie production and president of TV operations, same studio, 1967-present; m. actress Lili Gentle of Montgomery, Ala., Jan. 14, 1958 (now separated); children: Virginia Lorraine, 7, Janet Beverly, 6; memberships: chairman of Cystic Fibrosis Research Foundation; awards: three Cannes Film Festival awards to "Compulsion"; hobbies: tennis, golf.

in the year by elevating the younger Zanuck to vice president in charge of production and president of the company's television subsidiary.

Since that time (Dick Zanuck subsequently was elected a member of the board of directors and promoted to executive vice president in charge of movie production) 20th Century-Fox has retrieved its top place in the film business. The production lines are in full and effective swing once again.

TV Series ■ In television, under Dick Zanuck's helm, Fox has become the prime producer of primetime television series to the networks. In the upcoming 1967-68 season, the company will have eight series on the three networks, including *Peyton Place*, *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* and *Daniel Boone*, all going into a fourth season; *Lost in Space* and *Batman*, going into third seasons; *The Felony Squad*, going into its second season, and *Custer and Judd* making their seasonal debuts. Another series, the hour *Land of the Giants*, has been sold to ABC-TV for a second season start probably next January. In addition, 20th-Fox TV is co-producing the animated *Journey to the Center of the Earth* for ABC-TV's Saturday morning lineup.

Much of the television credit, of course, goes to William Self, executive vice president of Fox's TV arm, a quietly efficient man who is Dick Zanuck's senior by some 13 years. As president of the TV operation, Mr. Zanuck sets the major policy, reviews development ideas, listens to recommendations, passes on new productions. Bill Self, however, actually is in charge of day-to-day TV production.

Dick Zanuck, who says that television is almost as important to the company as movies ("We're in both businesses, depend on both. The sale of features to TV is an enormous source of revenue"), spends about 80% of his time in motion-picture production. He has mixed emotions about that two-headed monster of the business, movies on television. "We're feeding feature product in direct competition with our theater product," he points out.

"I believe that now that we have stabilized ourselves financially we should slow down and build up a backlog of movie product."

There's no question that financially 20th Century-Fox can now play a more deliberate game. From that \$40 million deficit when the Zanucks came in, the company rebounded to show net earnings of \$12.5 million last year. That's pretty good recommendation for sticking with the boss's son. Maybe he wouldn't have made it to the top so fast, but there's every likelihood that Richard Darryl Zanuck would have cut it in the film production business without any help from papa.