Rings of Power season 2 is even better than its first

DIGITAL SPY– *Rings of Power* season two had a lot to live up to – and that's before we even touch on the expectation set by JRR Tolkien's impressive world-building source material.



Prime Video

Lifting from the page to the screen was one thing (and something that the big-screen movie trilogy did oh so well) but now, as the Prime Video show returns for its second run, the shadow of its record-breaking premiere season lingers, too.

The big-budget epic is one of the streamer's hottest properties (not to mention, it became its most successful new launch to date at the time of its initial release). But does *Rings of Power* season two live up to its own hype?

In short, yes.



Prime Video

The first episode – titled ‘Elven Kings Under the Sky’ – wastes no time getting stuck right into the action. We begin by taking a journey back to the origins of Sauron – who we already knew, from a string of pre-release marketing, would be the main returning force of villainy for the decidedly darker second season.

It sets the tone – complete with a sense of real foreboding – perfectly, and it brings the storytelling back full circle to the moment his path crossed with our complicated (and now guilt-ridden) heroine Galadriel (Morfydd Clark) on that watery shipwreck.

For those who hold a special place in their heart for the *Lord of the Rings* franchise, *Rings of Power*‘s second season feels welcomingly familiar. From the score, to the language, to the visual cues, all the hallmarks of Tolkien’s meticulously crafted realm continue to sing in this adaptation.



Courtesy: Prime Video

In fact, where *Rings of Power*'s debut season did a lot of the heavy lifting when it came to exposition, there's more of a lived-in self-assuredness radiating from season two, which invites the audience to relax into the world that's been built from the get-go.

Where some may have questioned the pacing of the first batch of episodes, season two gets stuck into the action and is showing little sign of slowing down on that front.

The rings and the potentially corruptible power that they can yield are, naturally, an underlying and threatening current. But there's also the typical sign-posting of good versus evil – whether through the contrast of sun-drenched scenes with suddenly darker mood lighting, or the use of visual identity and even facial scarring. But that's more a note about the genre as a whole, and an ongoing discussion in TV and filmmaking, rather than one from the show itself.



Amazon Prime

We also know that *Rings of Power* season two will be pulling in more beloved characters and lore from the written materials, including fan-favourite Tom Bombadil (Rory Kinnear).

There's also another wizard for fans to speculate about (remember, The Stranger has not been confirmed to be Gandalf yet), with the introduction of a Dark Wizard (played by Ciarán Hinds) who looks suspiciously like Saruman (although some previously connected The Stranger to him, too).

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Either way, the discourse around these details makes it clear that the theorising isn't going anywhere for *Rings of Power*'s season two, which speaks to the passion of the fandom.

If you loved the first season, there's even more of that to be found here. Taking steps forward, the second season has also strengthened itself for clearer character development and generally more concise storytelling – particularly when it comes to the show's central themes and thread.

***The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power* is streaming on Prime Video.**