

Sled dog race not for sport but for survival

Disney adventure based on a true story sure to rank among the classic movies

"Iron Will"



By Joel Strauch
Senior Reporter

The newest Disney feel-good, action-adventure, boy-with-dog-in-winter-environment film, "Iron Will," manages to set itself apart from other Disney classics because of its reality.

Based on a true story, "Iron Will" still has the cotton-candy feel of a Disney film, but it manages to include brutal realism. This is exemplified by its PG rating, which is rare for the Disney crowd.

Set in 1917, the plot begins with the tragic drowning of Jack Stoneman (John Terry), whose icy death is witnessed by his son Will (Mackenzie Astin). Will is suddenly charged with the responsibility of taking care of his family and his father's business, which is suffering financially.

Will's only hope is a grueling 522-mile sled dog race with a \$10,000 first prize. Will, along with his faithful dog team led by the temperamental Gus, enters the race, which runs from

Winnipeg, Canada to St. Paul, Minn. Facing near impossible odds against much more experienced racers, Will's only weapon is to constantly keep moving. Sometimes sleeping only one or two hours a night, Will finds the tenacity to survive — both the race and his opponents.

Astin, of "Facts of Life" fame, gives a strong performance as the determined Will Stoneman. He is able to capture the fiery emotions of the adolescent who roller-coasters his way through trauma, rage and joy.

David Ogden Stiers makes an appearance as J.P. Harper, the rich sponsor of the race who rediscovers his own childhood through Will.

Kevin Spacey plays journalist Harry Kingsley, who covers the race and gives America a new hero in "Iron Will." Spacey does an excellent job of portraying the reporter who is first blinded by his ambition to make the front page and later scrounges up enough humanity to be respectable.

In the tradition of Disney animal films, the dog Gus plays a major role with his stubborn personality.

The cinematography of the race and the winter scenery are well done. And as usual, the Disney original score adds character to the film.

"Iron Will" is another success for Walt's boys and still manages to be something special.



Courtesy of The Walt Disney Company

Mackenzie Astin stars as Will Stoneman with sled dog Gus in the Walt Disney film "Iron Will."

Film examines cinematographers' role in unique fashion

Mary Riepma Ross
Film Theater

By Malcom Miles
Staff Reporter

When deciding what movie to see, one often considers favorite actors or directors.

But memorable images are what really make a quality motion picture.

These images are made by the people behind the camera, the cinematographers. Recognition and admiration of everyone from Marlene Dietrich to Denzel Washington depends upon a cinematographer's work.

Much of what is often attributed to a director's style stems directly from his collaboration with a cinematographer. This is the case with the Spike Lee/Ernest Dickerson and David Lynch/Frederick Elmes films.

These artists, who are often overlooked, receive 15 minutes of fame in "Visions of Light: The Art of Cinematography."

This film mixes images from 125 important movies with interviews of the cinematographers who captured the images that made the movies famous.

From black-and-white silent mov-



Courtesy of Kino International Corporation

A scene shot from "Lawrence of Arabia," directed by Freddie Young, is one of the scenes discussed in "Visions of Light: The Art of Cinematography."

ies to "Blue Velvet," from Orson Welles to Robert Altman, the history of film is covered from a unique perspective.

The interviews include discussions about the relationship between cine-

matographer and director, the use and importance of proper lighting, how technological changes have influenced cinematography, and some behind-the-scenes stories about well-known actors and directors.

"Visions of Light" is an extremely informative and visually entertaining trip through the world of motion pictures.

This is a must-see film for movie buffs, film studies students and any-

one interested in the process of film-making.

"Visions of Light: The Art of Cinematography" will be shown at the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater Jan. 27-29.

New releases include film not shown in Lincoln theaters



Buck up little campers: The video pickins will get better soon, but for now it's mostly the same old drivin'.

"Coneheads" Recycling old television hits seems to be a Hollywood trend right now, but

this one seems to be a bit of a stretch.

Turning a five-minute "Saturday Night Live" sketch into a movie worked for "Wayne's World." It did not work for the Coneheads, despite momentary hilarity from both Dan Aykroyd and Jane Curtin. Not even a Subway tie-in could save this one.

"Hard Target" Jean-Claude Van Damme with Billy Ray Cyrus hair. Ugh—that's enough to give nightmares. Still, the action sequences are well-choreographed and Lance Henriksen ("Aliens" loveable android) co-stars.

"Last Action Hero" Arnie pulls a Bruce Willis and makes a multimillion-dollar bomb.

The story is almost too complicated — in a trite, self-satisfied, silly way — to bother explaining. Suffice it to say that this flick has Schwarzenegger spoofing himself, while director John McTiernan ("Die Hard") pokes fun at explosions and car chases.

The trouble is they never let the audience in on the joke, and what's a spoof without humor?

"Menace II Society" The brainchild of 21-year-old twins Allen and Albert Hughes makes it to video in Lincoln — a special treat considering it never played in a theater here.

A story about life in south central Los Angeles, the movie lasted only a day or two in Omaha

before skittish theater owners pulled it for fear it would incite violence.

"Rookie of the Year" Daniel Stern, best known for his bumbling burglaries in the "Home Alone" flicks, gets behind the camera to direct this coming-of-age baseball picture.

Henry Rowengartner is a 12-year-old with an amazing 100 mph fastball. It seems his broken arm wasn't set quite right, and now he has an amazing aptitude for pitching. He also has a place pitching for the Chicago Cubs.

Stern and Gary Busey both co-star.

— Anne Steyer