

Killy personality versus Nature

by charlie peek



Frustration was the one emotion prevailing the entire section of Northwest North Carolina the week-end of Jan 28-30.

Frustration at having the "world's greatest skier" around for the week-end and no snow on which to let him do his thing.

Jean Claude Killy, the hero of America's ski buffs since he swept the 1968 Olympics winning the Giant Slalom, the Slalom and the treacherous Downhill, came to Appalachian Ski Mountain supposedly to speak, sell his book and movie and to demonstrate his skills.

Killy has been known as the "breakneck skier" with an unorthodox style that leaves onlookers gasping for breath after his runs.

Amidst thousands of week-end skiers anxiously glancing up at the sky and continuously asking "What's the temperature?", Killy swept into the lodge. One tremendous sigh went up from the girls in the crowd as he mounted the podium at Appalachian Friday night. Accompanied by an emissary from the French Embassy, who presented the French-Swiss Ski College with a French flag, Killy spoke a few words, hugged a few female necks and generally looked a little bored.

Later that evening, Killy appeared again at a spotlight and limousine premier of his movie "Snow Job" at the Flick Theater in Boone. He hugged a few more female necks, stepped into the cement, and then went home while everybody else watched the movie.

Saturday was supposed to be the big day. Killy was going to ski. Appalachian Lodge had one pitiful patch of snow running the length of the intermediate course, 20 yards across at its widest point. A "Giant Slalom" course was set up on this patch and busloads of spectators poured into the area to watch. Photographers lined the course nervously adjusting lenses.

Then He appeared, hugged a few female necks, and took off on the chair lift.

Killy made five runs, making a slushy, muddy slope appear to be in excellent condition. Each time he reached the bottom, edging to a stop just before reaching the mud, a cheer went up from the crowd.

Again Saturday night, during an all-night party (scheduled to run concurrently with all-night skiing) a crowd gathered around the thermometer. Again no snow.

Killy left to light the Olympic torch in Tokyo. The crowd just stood and shook its head, and the myth of a Southern snowy fairyland took a fatal blow.

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(This fable and key were submitted by a faculty member who, for obvious reasons, wishes to remain anonymous.)

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