

Sylvester Stallone stars as John Rambo

# No romance, very little boredom in *First Blood*

By JULIAN KARCHMER

The manhunt of *First Blood* moves at a furious pace. Sylvester Stallone casts the proper pose as John Rambo, a former Green Beret and veritable killing machine. He is on the run from small town police for denting their pride—and faces.

Rambo's trouble begins when he drifts through a quiet, sleepy town where he is arrested for vagrancy and is challenged by the testy local sheriff. After a healthy dose of

police brutality, all hell breaks loose. Rambo escapes in spectacular fashion and we are swept into one long, heady chase through the mountains of British Columbia.

As handled by director Ted Kotcheff, the pursuit is mobile and violent. There is no romance, no sentiment and very little boredom. At first, the confident hunters have no idea of what they are getting into, for Rambo is a true superman. One character says, "It's like sending the pigeons after the cat." Very few survive the chase in one piece.

In one tightly edited sequence, the police are closing in on their quarry only to be caught in a variety of Rambo's bloody, ingenious traps. It becomes increasingly difficult to tell the hunters from the hunted.

One aspect of *First Blood* which sets it apart from other revenge films, a la Charles Bronson, is that Rambo is not a totally sympathetic character. Although the police draw first blood, Rambo is intent on getting more than even. He is not the clear hero we are used to seeing because of his violence, especially toward the end of the film, is unwarranted.

Sylvester Stallone portrays John Rambo almost as an animal, which lends a peculiar credence to the hunt. Stallone's forte is action. But his stumbling speech and large physique tend to overshadow his acting talent. Even though Stallone's lines in *First Blood* are limited, his screen presence is very strong.

Unfortunately, *First Blood's* success is not maintained throughout its duration. It suffers from an ending that lacks creativity, and

comes too quickly. Except for the last few minutes, the film successfully entertains through action. But the schmaltzy concluding attempt to explain Rambo's plight is out of place, and his return to destroy the small town seems merely an excuse to let the pyrotechnicians loose.

Still, *First Blood* is a deftly-made thriller that deserves more attention than might be indicated by its rather cheap ad campaign. The poster art showing Stallone with munitions and his bulging muscles expresses an exploitative element that fortunately is not apparent during the film.

A subdued, effective musical score by Jerry Goldsmith and beautiful scenery help to keep things popping along at a nice clip. The sum of *First Blood's* parts does tend to be more than the whole, but it is acceptable enough for fans of action.

Julian Karchmer is a staff writer for *The Daily Tar Heel*.

## Vereen is versatile

The Triangle Area will be graced by the presence of one of contemporary show business' most versatile and energetic performers when the Broadway at Duke concert series brings "Ben Vereen in Concert" to Duke's Page Auditorium on Friday, Nov. 5, at 8:15 p.m.

Vereen will present his musical side through a collection of song and dance numbers with accompaniment by members of the Greensboro Symphony and students from the North Carolina School of the Arts. This collaboration of area artists and a prominent Broadway figure is unprecedented.

Vereen initiated his long career as a stage performer. His impressive Broadway credits include "Sweet Charity," in which he made his Broadway debut, *Hair*, *Pippin*, for which he copped Tony and Drama Desk awards, and *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Although the theatre is where it all began for Vereen, most people remember him better for his film and television performances. Vereen has appeared on

the big screen with Barbara Streisand in *Funny Lady*, and with Roy Scheider in Bob Fosse's acclaimed musical autobiography *All That Jazz*.

Vereen's appearance on television in *Roots* remains the credit which has contributed most heavily to his popularity and fame. As the charming, industrious Chicken George, he provoked enormous amounts of both sympathy and shame from Americans. He followed up his acting triumph with his own television variety special, *Ben Vereen—His Roots* which won seven Emmy awards.

Vereen's amazing diversity of talents brought him the American Guild of Variety Artists' "Entertainer of the Year" award in 1976 and continues to bring him recognition from critics and fans alike.

It is this rare combination of talents that Vereen will bring to the Duke campus Friday evening. For ticket information, call the Page Auditorium box office at 684-4059.

—FRANK BRUNI



TRAVELING?  
Make Plans Early  
For Best Rates

Thanksgiving  
Christmas • Spring

Free consultation for complete and  
personalized travel arrangements.  
Individual or Group

**VKING TRAVEL**

968-4586

Kroger Plaza 103 S. Elliot Road  
next to Godfather's

## 湖南 HUNAM CHINESE RESTAURANT

132 W. Franklin St.  
Downtown across from  
University Square

Ample Parking  
All ABC Permits  
967-6133

OPEN 7 DAYS  
LUNCH: Mon.-Fri. 11 am - 2:30 pm  
Sat. & Sun. 12 noon - 2:30 pm  
DINNER: Mon.-Thurs. & Sun. 5-10 pm  
Fri. & Sat. 5-10:30 pm

Take-out orders



Regular Dinner Menu Entrees

Also Available At Lunch

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 1. Chicken Chow Mein                     | 2.64 |
| 2. Shrimp Chow Mein                      | 2.64 |
| 3. Cantonese Chicken                     | 2.64 |
| 4. Sweet and Sour Chicken                | 2.64 |
| 5. Beef with Green Peppers               | 2.64 |
| 6. Roast Pork with Fresh Chinese Cabbage | 2.64 |
| 7. Sweet and Sour Pork                   | 2.64 |
| 8. Roast Pork Egg Foo Young              | 2.64 |
| 9. Beef Curry                            | 2.64 |
| 10. Shrimp with Lobster Sauce            | 3.75 |
| 11. Chicken with Almonds                 | 2.64 |
| 12. Pork with Hot Garlic Sauce           | 2.64 |
| 13. Kung Pao Chicken                     | 2.64 |
| 14. Beef with Fresh Broccoli             | 2.64 |
| 15. Double-Cooked Pork                   | 2.64 |
| 16. Vegetarian's Delight                 | 2.64 |

# FREE PIZZA

FREE DELIVERY  
anywhere in our  
service zone.

AUTHORITY

Collect  
the cut slice  
in the PTA logo  
from the top of any  
12 PTA boxes and we'll deliver  
your favorite 12-inch one  
topping pizza, fast and free! Or,  
collect the 12 slices and save \$5  
on any pizza of your choice.  
Start collecting today!

This special offer will continue through December 31, 1982.



Pizza Transit Authority

**SAVE TWO DOLLARS**  
ON ANY LARGE PIZZA

OR

**SAVE ONE DOLLAR**  
ON ANY SMALL PIZZA

Lg

Sm

Offer good through 11-10-82 with this coupon. One discount per pizza.

**942-8581**

**FREE DELIVERY**  
ANYWHERE IN OUR SERVICE ZONE