

'River' just won't float, despite quality cast

The Hollywood harvest of farm movies has finally drawn to a close with the arrival of Mark Rydell's *The River*, the director's first project since *On Golden Pond*.

The River really should not be lumped with *Places in the Heart* and *Country*, despite a similar plot about small farmers battling natural disasters and big business while being sustained by a woman's strength and the family's love of the land.

Actually, *The River* is a near-washout, because it comes across as a sudsy melodrama, instead of a political statement as is *Country* or nostalgic as is *Places*.

Screenwriter Robert Dillon went out to research a screenplay about the plight of farmers several years ago and was inspired to write *The River* by a story he heard about a doe that wandered into a steel mill where many ex-farmers were working. The workers cornered the deer, intending to kill it, but at the last minute felt enough empathy with this trapped animal to set it free. This almost surreal scene reoccurs in the film with a heavy-handed symbolism that floods the rest of *The River*.

Sissy Spacek and Mel Gibson star as Mae and Tom Garvey, the couple beset by floods, financial troubles and Mae's ex-boyfriend Joe Wade, a greedy land developer. To keep the farm going, Tom goes into

Ivy Hilliard

Review

the city and becomes a scab in a foundry, before eventually returning home for a muddy showdown with Wade.

The similarities between *The River* and its earthy predecessors is not the film's weakness. Rather, the film's effectiveness is marred by leaks in its own originality.

The fact that the Garveys remain attached to their homestead despite the yearly floods that wipe them out is one thing, but what's truly odd is that the villain's schemes make a lot of sense. His plan to flood eight farmers living in the valley in order to build a dam providing plentiful water, electric power and jobs to the rest of the county seems logical, and he even offers the valley farmers a profitable deal to sell out.

The River also falters in dividing itself into two parts, each of which in itself could be the focus of the film. The film seems oddly powerful when the Garveys are separated, and the questions of job security, unions, employer exploitation, and strike-breaking raised during Gibson's scab stint have an

authenticity unmatched by the farm storyline until its climax.

The performances in *The River* are of the sink-or-swim variety.

Gibson, despite his normal Australian accent, picks up Tennessee-talk perfectly, but this is not enough to give him that down-on-the-farm aura, because his sublime good looks are not an asset. This man simply does not look like a farmer. Ever. His performance is also uncharacteristically flat, with no real emotional wallop until he confronts Wade at the film's end.

Spacek, on the other hand, looks and sounds as if she really was born on the farm as Mae, and she turns in an expressive and touching performance that is the direct opposite of Gibson's.

But the real scene stealer is Scott Glenn, who makes the villain, Wade, as charming as he is hissable with equal parts oil-slick sneakiness and graceful good humor. He delivers an Oscar-caliber performance.

The other things *The River* has going for it is breathtaking cinematography by Vilmos (*The Deer Hunter*) Zsigmond, and a lush score by composer extraordinaire John Williams. The film also contains some technically superb man-made flood scenes.

The River is a near-casebook study, however, of good intentions and great stars that are not enough to plug the holes and to keep this film afloat.

SPORTS

Mat life is a family affair for UNC wrestler Koll

By MIKE WATERS
Staff Writer

For a squad that entered this season counting on strong performances from several veterans, North Carolina's wrestling team has seen an influx of outstanding freshmen. After a December trip into wrestling's heartland — the Midwest — it is obvious that for the Tar Heels to remain in the Top Ten, the freshman class will have to continue to do well.

Rob Koll, a 158-pounder from State College, Pa., fought his way to a second-place finish at the Midwest Championships held in Ames, Iowa, Dec. 28-29. Koll has led the fresher-faced Tar Heels



Rob Koll

during the first months of the season, compiling a 20-4 record. Other UNC freshmen include the talented Lenny Bernstein at the 142-lb. weight class and David Upshaw, who has filled in at 150 with sophomore Jon Cardi gone.

Koll grew up in a wrestling atmosphere near Penn State University, and was a member of a wrestling family. Koll's father, Bill Koll, is the former head coach at Penn State, where he directed the Nitany Lions for 13 seasons. The elder Koll also wrestled in college at Northern Iowa and was a three-time NCAA all-American.

Koll, in a classic example of the power of genetics, has followed in his father's footsteps. He was a Pennsylvania state champion and was an *Amateur Wrestling News* All-American in high school. But being around Penn State's program also gave him perspective.

"I didn't expect to do this well," Koll said last week before leaving for this past weekend's Virginia Duals in Hampton, Va. "I had been around freshmen who floundered for a year. I expected to get beat, but once I got my confidence up with some wins I kept winning. Believing is half the battle."

Koll wasn't with the team due to a sickness which doctors at first believed to be mononucleosis. But he has been working out with the team this week and will wrestle this weekend against Navy and Bucknell.

At the Midwest Championships Koll went a long way to making believers out of a lot of people. He advanced to the finals, proving the legitimacy of his No. 6 national ranking. Koll lost to Oklahoma State's top-ranked Bill Dykman, 2-0, for second place.

"I did well in the tournament," Koll said. "(I) thought I could win it; I was able to wrestle some good people."

The latter part of the trip proved that, while talented, Koll is still just a freshman. He lost his last two matches in dual meets with Northern Iowa and Wisconsin.

"It was the end of the trip and he was tired," said UNC coach Bill Lam. "He needs more experience and he needs to work on his intensity, but he's already doing a tremendous job. He's looking good in practice and feeling a lot better. We are definitely glad to have him back in the lineup."

"It was an accumulation of things," Koll said. "I was a little tired and wanted to get back. But that's no excuse. I think I lost some intensity."

This weekend and the next few matches will be an experiment of sorts, with Koll moving from the 158 division down to 150. Lam and Koll both think ~~however will help the team and Koll~~. Lam thinks Koll could be ranked as high as third in the lighter class.

"I don't think it will hurt him," Lam said. "On a national level he is a small 158. He'll be a good sized 150-pounder. He's got tremendous balance and strong hips (where a wrestler gets most of his strength). He's not real flashy or fancy; he just keeps coming out on top."

"He's worked out with college wrestlers (at Penn State) so he is already ahead of the game," Lam said. "He still gets out of position, which hurts him against top competition."

Koll said he knew now that he could go out on the mat with the nation's top wrestlers without fear. He thinks he can beat anyone he goes up against.

"If you get down on yourself, everything goes downhill," Koll said. "You need that confidence. My dad considered a good wrestler one who wins nationals, and a fair wrestler was satisfied with just placing."

With that kind of confidence, these could be a productive four years for Koll as he emerges from his father's long shadow.

Pornography

atrocities at Auschwitz and other concentration camps that happened to Jewish women are presented as a sexual turn-on."

According to Pornography Awareness literature, a positive correlation between violent pornography and sexual violence has been shown. Eight out of 10 serial killers, such as Ted Bundy, Son of Sam and Richard Speck, viewed or had possession of pornography before or during their crimes. One out of 20 films in 1982 and one out of eight films in 1983 depicted violent acts against women. Reported crimes in 1983 showed that a woman was forcibly raped every seven minutes and was beaten up every 18 seconds.

"They (men) want to do what they see," Dworkin said, citing the increase in oral rape since the movie *Deep Throat*.

Psychologist Edward Donnerstein of the University of Wisconsin at Madison said his research showed that normal college men had less sympathy for rape victims after watching several violent "slasher" movies that eroticized the rape, mutilation and murder of women. When compared with control groups, these men also showed a proclivity to rape in a situation where they knew they would not be caught, Donnerstein said.

"They really have a belief that the little girl wanted it," Stock said. Dworkin, Lanning, Donnerstein and

other speakers repeated this idea.

"This trade is supposed to be a depiction of our (women's) real nature," Dworkin said. "If you film an act against women, it is because she wants to do it. Do you know there are laws in this country that say people cannot consent to violence against themselves?"

Dworkin explained that pornography was sexual abuse because the abuse portrayed actually happens to the women shown. They are poor, raped by pimps, raped continually on film, and 70 to 75 percent are incest victims and runaways.

Those against pornography are trying to change obscenity laws, especially in North Carolina, where, according to

Pornography Awareness literature, the number of pornography outlets is the highest in the nation. Anti-pornography groups encourage individuals to boycott establishments selling pornographic materials (including cable and video outlets), write letters, picket, civilly disobey to get the issue into the courts, and educate against the myths.

Donnerstein, who debriefed the subjects in his study, said, "If you can debrief, you can prebief, and that says a lot for the role of sex education."

For more information about pornography, write Pornography Awareness Inc., Box 2728, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2728.

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Briefs

Football Cardinals may move
The St. Louis Cardinals have not ruled out moving their team to another city, according to a letter they sent to the National Football League Tuesday.

The Cardinals letter to the league did not say the team definitely would move from St. Louis and was not accompanied by a statement outlining reasons for such a move, required in procedures set by commissioner Pete Rozelle.

A group in Phoenix, Ariz., reportedly was in contact with the Cardinals recently.

"This letter says they have the right to move out. We'll address the problem if and when it arises," said Joe Browne, an NFL spokesman.

Frey rewarded
The Chicago Cubs rewarded manager Jim Frey for winning the National League East pennant in his first season by giving him a two-year contract extension and a pay raise. Frey led the Cubs to their first pennant in 39 years before they lost three games to two, in the N.L. Championship Series to the San Diego Padres.

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