

As part of the overview of climbing the West Buttress, Flynn includes an excellent interview with Bradford Washburn, pioneer of the route. Washburn relates his early explorations via aircraft and the first ascent, and tells of other interesting Denali facts. Washburn, now in his 80s, is lively and inspiring, and the interview alone makes the film well worth watching. Also, the excellent black-and-white aerial photographs taken by Washburn are referenced frequently to show the route.

Like *Storm Over Denali*, *Mount McKinley* shows the 1992 team pinned down in a storm at high altitude. Overdue and running out of food, the group descends. After a brief interview with Flynn telling how he felt about the expedition, the video continues with a return expedition in 1993, with Flynn as a member of a private (non-guided) four person team. The movie briefly traces the team's progress up to 17,200 feet, Flynn's high point the previous year. After one failed summit attempt by Flynn (he brought down a sick partner), we are treated to superb panoramas from the mountain's summit. Although not an overt theme of *Mount McKinley*, Flynn's perseverance and resourcefulness in his goal to reach the summit is obvious in this film, and I like that.

I enjoyed both videos. Day-to-day rigors and mundane chores were captured in good detail in each production. Also, there is sequence in each that will bring memories of this peak into the fore of any climber's mind who has ventured into this range. Both illustrate as well as possible to prospective climbers what this mountain can be like. Aside from training and careful planning and packing, I would recommend to any prospective Denali climber to read the informative books on this peak by Jonathan Waterman and Glenn Randall, and to watch *Storm Over Denali* and *Mount McKinley: Climbing the West Buttress of Denali*. After that, it can't get any more real except by actually going there.

ED DARACK

On Ice. Directed by Scott and Eden Ayer. Cliffhanger Productions, 1995. Video, 62 minutes. \$29.95.

With all the renewed interest in waterfall climbing and mixed rock and ice climbing, it only comes as a surprise that instructional and entertaining videos about each sport didn't come out sooner. Legions of ice climbers and aspiring alpinists can now front-point to the nearest climbing store and ask to purchase the most recent and absorbing video on the shelf, *On Ice*. This video, produced by Scott and Eden Ayers, is both entertaining and instructional as it introduces you to ice climbing and mixed climbing through the

inspirational efforts of climbers such as Duncan Ferguson, Charlie Fowler, Conrad Anker, Jay Smith, Kitty Calhoun, Annie Smith, Mimi Bourquin, Greg Child, Barry Blanchard, Lyle Dean, and Alex Lowe. This video does not disappoint.

The music is well-paced and upbeat, the climbing at times very motivational, and the insights offered by these ice *aficionados* are very interesting, as are the differences in their ice climbing styles. The high quality video takes the viewer to Canada, Wyoming, and Colorado, using as a backdrop such areas as Cody, the Ghost River, Rifle, Vail, and Torre Egger in Patagonia. Showing each climber in their element on difficult mixed rock and ice climbs, the video initially allows the viewer to watch the action with dubbed-in commentary over music. Each of these segments is followed by a brief, instructional "*On Ice Tips*," where the featured climber offers insights into how best to swing an axe or better dry-tool on rock. Jay Smith's philosophy on placing protection while leading is particularly interesting and should be useful for those people picking this sport up for the first time, especially if their experience has been limited to sport climbing or climbing in the indoor rock gym.

Just as the featured climbing is enjoyable and varied, so are the personalities presented in the film. Each highlighted climber (mostly from The North Face "Dream Team") discusses some of their own philosophy and drive in the sport, and this continually gives the video interest with an upbeat tempo. Duncan Ferguson shows an obvious enthusiasm and respect for the absurdity of this activity when he smiles and says, "You know, it is just a bunch of physical and mental puzzles. If climbing ice or rock climbing was like climbing ladders, we would all have quit a long time ago." If Duncan's style is too smooth and effortless to be true, then Alex Lowe's efforts and obvious skill on a new route in Cody and on *Octopussy* provide an enjoyable contrast as he alternately swings from rock to ice and back to rock again.

Despite the general upbeat quality of *On Ice* there are a few minor distractions that I feel compelled to mention. The lack of any obvious storyline is slightly bothersome, as are the times when various cameramen interrupt the action by accidentally swinging into view. The insertion of a film documenting the first ascent of the route *Badlands* on Torre Egger, by Jay Smith, Steve Gerberding, and Conrad Anker, seems misplaced and detracts from the rest of the video. The inclusion of an alpine climb just does not have its place here. Was it simply included as a way of displaying the talent aboard the good ship North Face? Overt sponsorship aside, this is an excellent video that will not be outdated and provides interesting and motivating viewing for beginners and experts alike.

JACK ROBERTS