

## Eiger Sanction evokes comfy rigor mortis

By JOHN TIMMINS

The most interesting thing about Clint Eastwood's new movie is the title. Once "Eiger Sanction" is deciphered, then a comfortable kind of rigor mortis sets in, unrelieved except for humdrum copulations and scenery, in that order. The recipe - "plot" seems too complex a word - concerns an assassin sent to assassinate other assassins, and has been done to death. Doing an overdone idea is no crime; doing it more poorly than most is, and Eastwood, director as well as actor, must take all the limps. From the genuine value and control of his directorial premiere in "Play Misty For Me" he slid to the interesting but very shallow "High Plains Drifter", now tumbling to this mediocrity. The script is burdened with enough one

liner groaners to set Noel Coward spinning in his grave, while the numberless females, who can't quite manage to keep erect when Eastwood walks into a room, make even the rare serious moment seem tongue-in-cheek.

"Eiger Sanction", when it stops competing with "Death Wish" on the one hand, and "Abbot and Costello Meet Miss Pickrel" on the other, rises to a certain level of competence. In the film's last quarter the unromantic, clear-eyed photography of the mountain climb and the tight, uncluttered tension show Eastwood's virtues as director yet even here the mountain storm that could potentially kill the climbers is shown with such awesome splendour that the intense danger is undercut. In any case the late positive scenes do not absolve the virtually criminal

## movie reviews

## Rollerball is a mixed blessing

laziness of all that came before (And the script has Eastwood say "I hate being predictable")

Norman Jewison's "Rollerball", a futuristic fantasy about violence in sports and its use by "government" is no masterpiece, but it is masterful. His action editing is brutally efficient, as it was in "In the Heat of the Night" (which was a masterpiece) yet actually keeps real grue and gore to a minimum. The evocation of a mechanistic, impersonal future where sport, like everything else,

is for, of, and by the "One World Corporation" is for the most part effective. Jewison is subtle enough that all this has no small relevance to the Here and Now, but occasionally slips into Stanley Kubrickitis: surrealisms that cloud the narrative and call

attention to their "cute" cleverness. The Martian-like party greeting the unexplained pills everyone keeps taking, the fun party game of incinerating trees, stand out without the strength to stand up.

James Caan as Jonathan E., the athlete whose spectacular career is irritating the corporation which prefers anonymity for its tension relievers, performs his usual role toterably well, but does not succeed in solving the film's

central puzzle. What in Jonathan makes him worth our caring? Sure, he is dissatisfied with the life he has been handed, including a bi-monthly change of bedmate, yet he is as blood thirsty on the rollerball court as any. The fact that he is the underdog merely fogs the focus instead of clarifying it.

Similarly, the beating and eventual death of his unredeemably brutal crony are shown in heart rending slow motion for a sympathy pitch. The device was noticeably lacking on the countless times he did the dishing. Such fuzziness of perspective cripples the film's vitals, particularly the fashionably hazy denouement.

"The centre cannot hold" all right, but there are still some fascinating externals John Houseman is still giving his "Paper Chase" performance, and it's still as enchantingly nasty as it was then.

Ralph Richardson as a dotty computer operator who has misplaced the 13th century hasn't been this unmannered or eccentrically charming for years. They are a definite asset in the mixed blessing of "Rollerball".

### THE FAT WINTER

*From the fat winter belly  
babe snow in child humour falling  
or in scurried innocence scattered  
by fat winter winds,  
leaning toward summer*

*From the fat winter falling  
mornings in cold caution cry  
to windless quiets in wonder  
of fat winter fists,  
gathering last breaths*

*From the fat winter calling  
voices in hardened understanding  
or in planted ignorance joyful  
of fat winter days,  
under the wintry spell*

*In planted ignorance  
fat winter's only harvest  
thriving, thriving, thriving  
picking at memories frozen cold  
in hard ignorance  
of winters yet to fall*

John Dempsey

### Winter Came Late

*It snowed tonight and all I saw  
Were waiting for the springtime thaw,  
But I knew better and worried not;  
I knew the snow, without a thought,  
Would make it here before the spring  
And ere the summer heat could bring  
Life out into the open again.*

*I like the snow and tramp about  
The angels, drifts, and tell tale tracks  
That disappear on windy nights.  
The bees were right, the old men shout,  
The snow was late in coming back,  
But snow it was and snow it might -  
You can't avoid old nature's rite.*

Derwin Gowan, November 14, 1975

### Women's Liberationists

*See how they spurn God's loving intent  
and burden the pain with their fears;  
then hear them rage, despised and alone,  
in the dust of a million years.*

Maurice Spiro

*Walking upon the sand of an endless sea  
I paused, contemplating upon the mysteries ahead  
For before me was the ages, the wonders of man.*

*Here the tides of contentment swayed me, yet,  
Onward my voyage continued, following a variable route  
Where the uncertainties of living were a fact of life.*

*An image appeared, void and abstract, I passed it by  
Continuing onward, I faced a vision, upon which I turned.  
For here was portrayed, a secret, which had long been lost.*

*Then, a flame, it flared ahead of me, a brilliance which shone upon the pathway  
Although my journey now was lit, the shadows were cast so far  
And, in one of these great shadows, I continued in fear.*

*Yet within my darkness, all was not completely lost  
For brighter than all the light which flared ahead  
Was caught a glimmer of hope, which had more power than all.*

*While several ages had passed, I paused, and looked around me  
I glanced back, seeing now as never before  
Only now can I realize and partically understand; the meaning of life.*

Roger Winsor

### SOME DAY

*Some day, I shall smile  
That sunny smile  
You could not see,  
For, only the rain  
Dared touch you, then.  
Some day, I shall laugh  
The laughter you strangled  
With cold insensitivity.  
Some day, I shall weep  
In security, for  
Someone will console me, so  
I can not have the time to  
Recall your mockery.  
Some day, I shall speak  
Without having every word  
Return, broken-up against  
Your listless eyes.  
Some day, I shall be loved  
As deeply as I  
Have loved you,  
Difficult as it may be  
For you to imagine.  
And, some day,  
Should I cease to wonder why,  
Having loved you as  
Dearly as I have,  
No tears  
Can I shed  
Now faced  
With this meaningless parting,  
And your careless smile,  
No longer shall I keep  
Telling myself  
These lies.*

Idil Ozerdem  
1975