



# STALLONE



## COBRA

**S**omewhere in Hollywood, a team of accountants are walking around with ear-to-ear grins. That, following the almost unheard-of news that **Cobra**, the new Sylvester Stallone film, had wrapped up filming six days early.

News indeed in a Hollywood film industry where being "fashionably late" even extends to people's business practices.

"No Commies in this one," says the Hollywood insider passing along the gossip, "It's scene after scene of Sly saying 'Make my day!' all over the place."

In other words, this is Sylvester Stallone, he of the rippling muscles, *not* as a lone wolf Vietnam veteran or a lone wolf boxer, but as a lone wolf cop — à la that other king of the action film genre, Clint Eastwood.

But action is action, and the fact that Stallone was able to pull **Cobra** off with time to spare probably indicates that he took to this latest slambang effort with the gusto of Arnold Schwarzenegger attacking a new weight room. Besides, he played a cool, quick-gun cop once before, in the long-forgotten *Nighthawks* with Billy Dee Williams and Rutger Hauer.

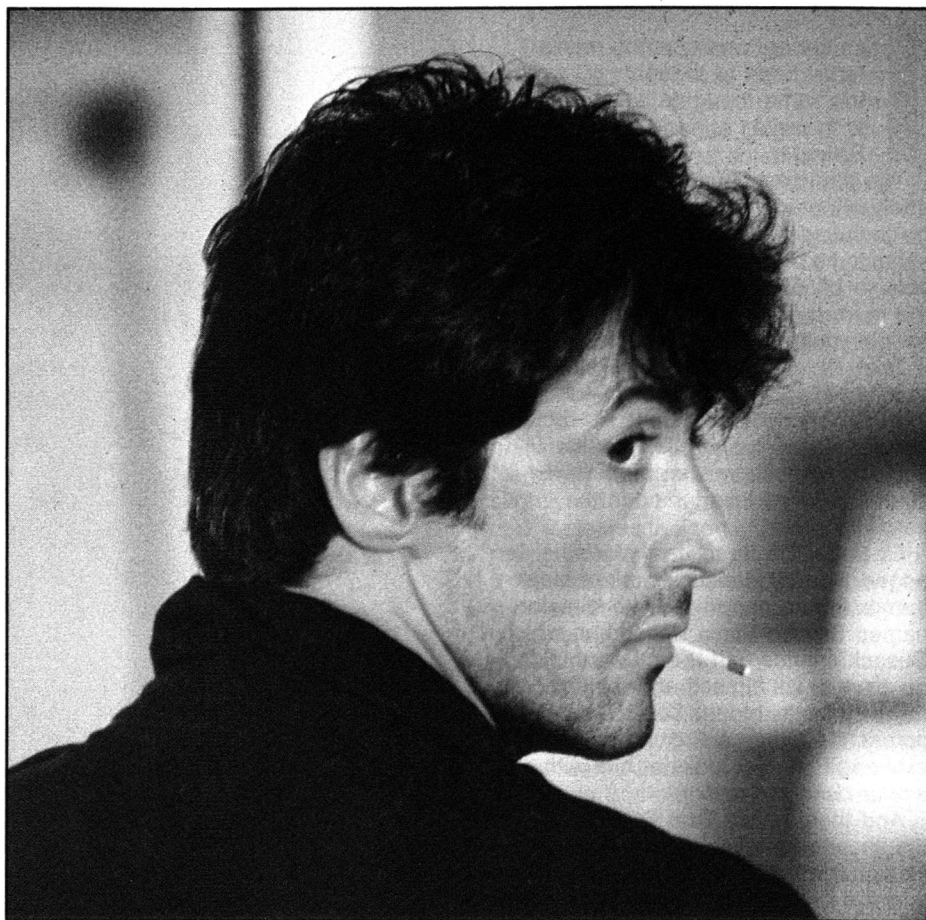
That things went so well on the set of **Cobra** is even less surprising considering the magic match-up that went into it — Stallone reunited with George P. Cosmatos, the director of *Rambo: First Blood Part II*, the man who turned the kid from Hell's Kitchen into the \$12 Million Man.

That's the per-film pricetag Stallone has acquired since *Rambo*, the movie which, with its 77 killings of Southeast Asians, put Stallone at the forefront in the new wave of action movie. Another movie with a nine-figure gross, *Rocky IV* — in which his almost-messianic pug boxer fights the Third World War in the ring — only augmented his hold on that segment of the audience that appreciates a hero who "takes charge."

And yet another upcoming Sly film, *Over The Top*, about the world of high-stakes arm wrestling, is likely to entrench him in the Macho Hall Of Fame.

All of this probably wouldn't go over with the public as well as it does if the 40-year-old Stallone weren't so person-

## A Character As Tough As Rocky And Rambo



ally dedicated to his work. He keeps his body beautiful with an exercise regimen that burns 12,000 calories a day. "Sometimes I'm so woozy (from the exercise) I can't remember my own phone number," he told *Time* magazine.

And he insists on doing his own stunts and fights — a policy through which he's incurred two broken hands, three broken noses, a concussion, a ruptured stomach, 160 stitches and had several capillaries pulled right out of his heart (that from a punch thrown by Dolph Lundgren in *Rocky IV*).

"It all comes from a desire to keep that edge of madness that allows for those creative leaps," he says. "It's like in *Rocky III* when they tell him, 'The problem with you is you got civilized.' I want to stay *uncivilized*."

Compare this to his earlier days, as the somewhat-puffy labor leader in films like *F.I.S.T.* and *Paradise Alley*. He was more civilized then, but nowhere near as rich.

Although, he maintains, \$12 million

isn't as much as you think it is. "Six million goes to the government," he recently told the *Toronto Sun*, "another million goes to commission, and the rest should be just enough to pay off Blue Cross and my ex-wife's credit cards."

Which reminds me, how could I get this far forgetting Brigitte Nielsen — the reason that Stallone has an ex-wife?

Nielsen, the statuesque 22-year-old Danish model who married Stallone once the divorce from his first wife Sasha came through, is one-half of the most striking couple in Hollywood, two bodies beautiful guaranteed to make camera flashbulbs pop wherever they go.

Naturally, she's along in **Cobra** as well, playing — surprise — a model who, in the midst of murder and mayhem, falls for the rough-and-tumble charms of Stallone's police detective hero.

Besides being his standing co-star, he allows she's the only person in the world who calls him Sylvester. "I told her if she wants to bother with all those syllables, go ahead."