

XC SKIING MOVIE SURVEY

We asked one-thousand people "what they wanted to see in a ski movie?" and this is what they said:

SURVEY RESULTS

(Summarized from 700 replies)

NOTE: We initiated a survey last fall on the rec.skiing.nordic news group on the Internet and it set our direction for on-snow production during winter 2000. The response that we have had for the latest question was overwhelming! :-)

The film-video "On Snow" was crafted based upon what people really want to see. The general objective when we started of "On Snow" was to capture what xc skiing means to aficionados, and not to repeat what is already available in terms of a typical nordic ski videos.

The season was too short to do everything that we had hoped. We plan to make one film per year on various themes (xc skiing, mountain running, biathlon, telemark, xc mountain biking...the xc power-endurance sport theme).

A SUMMARY OF ALL OF YOUR COLLECTIVE IDEAS

XCZONE: *Comments in italics.*

Lots of fast pace, daredevil, action similar to the "Warren Miller" or "James Bond" but with more emphasis placed on fitness and skill than raw risk.

XCZONE: *We all grew up with Warren Miller and his efforts to bring skiing to the screen - but waiting for some xc footage. Skiing is more than just going downhill. Ironically Lise (our principle skier) knew the Biathlete in the James Bond movie chase scene. We have been influenced by the style of Jackie Chan, John Woo and more recently by mountain bike film makers Christian Begen (Cranked) and Bill Snider (Tread). These are tall boots to fill. We believe that XC has just as much potential.*

Broad diversity of xc skiing shown that has appeal to the common person.

XCZONE: *We tried to get skating, classic, touring, racing, elite, sport, kids and recreational views in both East and West, French and English. The risk is that you spread the story too thin. For the first film we wanted to take a wide snap shot and for subsequent films focus on more esoteric themes.*

Nordic raw strength and highest skills to achieve his perceived goal. Clear message that x country skiing is an ultimate test of brawn & brain

XCZONE: *Yes...no lift lines. We drew many looks at top ski resorts racing up the mountain underneath the lift lines faster arriving at the top before the riders.*

Cool, fun, exciting with great upbeat music!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

XCZONE: *The musicians have been great in allowing us to use a wide variety amazing music specifically chosen for each scene and theme. From Instrumental guitar to Industrial Techno Rave. You can listen to all the music from links to the artists off the web site.*

Fun and excitement of x-c skiing with high performance racing equipment thrashing it out in closely matched packs on challenging high-speed twisting groomed trails.

XCZONE: *Yes... and something we are planning to get more of for next year.*

Exotic places beautiful rugged natural scenery and wildlife.

XCZONE: From the Pacific Coastal Mountains to the Laurentians. Spectacular scenery is a key backdrop. Next year we are going south the USA resorts. We have a squirrel and bird in the film... Pray for lots of snow next year.

Extremely fit and muscular skiers experiencing the thrill in a race and recreational context.

XCZONE: Last I counted there were 12 Olympians racing, touring and playing amongst a cast of thousands. The scenes alternate between action and not action. Of the action scenes half are choreographed primarily with our principle skier and the other half are diverse event coverage with lots of cameos including the present and former Canadian National Team, Arctic Explorer Richard Weber (one of only two men to reach the North pole unaided and return) and others.

New racing formats such as sprints, mass starts and criteriums, and relays with obstacles are just as exciting as downhill skiing or boarding in terms of speed and skill with the additional elements of pack tactics and variety of terrain.

XCZONE: The events covered include the Longest Ski Tour on Earth, The national sprint championships and the Keskinada World Loppet (Classic and Skating) pieces set to music. We want to do more with pack tactics in the future - put a mini camera and mike on some of the leaders in the pack.

Close pursuit dynamics.

XCZONE: Whenever we could with the camera... Never enough.

Fast-moving classical skiers.

XCZONE: Yes... half is classic with Canada's best classic skiers. Close-ups of the National Champion.

Show the colour, the clothing.

XCZONE: Clothing selection we very very important for film. We chose bright primary colours that would stand out against the snow. We tried two dozen suits before deciding. The colors also reflect the mood and the music.

Steep those hills are that are being climbed as well as the descents comparable to a downhill skier-- Speed!!!

XCZONE: Nothing was too steep either up or down. We filmed on double black diamond runs up and down. Try a boot cam on a 2000ft descent at 50mph. Shot in digital video. If only we filmed in IMAX.

High energy Biathlon.

XCZONE: One short teaser clip of biathlon. We are saving Biathlon for something special next year.

Mixed in with a bit of technical value and of course some great wipe-outs.

XCZONE: We tried to capture good technique and filter out poor technique unless it added something to the story. So there is excellent technical value but packaged as entertainment. Lots of bloopers and wipe outs in the final scene set to the music of Nancy Ruth and the song "If I fell For You."

Great 360's and good SLOW motion skating.

XCZONE: How about multiple 360's at 50 mph. We will slow more scenes down in the editing room.

Sport is whole body in motion.

XCZONE: You have captured our thoughts precisely.

Extreme crust skiing in the trees.

XCZONE: Yes. We are still picking bark out of our clothing. We planned a backcountry ski skate up a mountain on the crust trip this year and covered by helicopter but were snowed in for a week....next year we hope. We are scouting sites in North America.

Girls who can do almost anything on skis.

XCZONE: There was a deliberate effort to showcase female role models in the film who could hold their own with the boys. Our principle skier, Lise Meloche was born in 1960 (you do the math) and is a two-time Olympic (92, 94) biathlete and National team skier. Career highlights include a world cup gold medal, third place world overall ranking, and US, Canadian and Swiss National Titles. Lise started out as a downhill racer and you should see what this chick can do on xc sticks.

Bold statement representing the ski community.

XCZONE: I do not presume to speak for the community, but I feel I can show the film to my non-skiing friends.

Clever use of humor.

XCZONE: Spontaneous ... bonking, santa clause, bloopers. We are looking for real characters for the future.

Stimulate interest in cross country ski racing from the youth program, high school competitors on through collegiate and international, and masters.

XCZONE: We hope to capture all the interests and groups without being blatantly politically correct.

Jumps, quick turns around sharp corners.

XCZONE: Yes... some too sharp for the cameraman. Little jumps. I could not find any cross-country skiers to sacrifice their season by jumping off a cliff. Seriously, we want to do jumps in a different way than the plethora of extreme alpine and boarder films. Ideas welcome.

Novice skiers some of the time having fun and laughing a lot.

XCZONE: Some with whom we can all identify.

Extreme skiing with steel edged skis and like ability, skiing on ice surfaces, off cliffs, down steep inclines, up steep inclines, chased by wolves.

XCZONE: Lise said she wouldn't do this regardless of how much free coffee I offered. I could do it with special effects. Some elite mountain bikers offered but I need the person to last for more than a 3 second clip. The talent hunt is on. I would want to do this in a XC way.

Nordic ski jumping.

XCZONE: This is a cool idea that I need to follow up.

Telemarking in deep powder and across the face of a glacier.

XCZONE: We deliberately put this off a year or two until we can do it justice in a way that is different enough from Alpine ski movies.

Skiing in a down town park.

XCZONE: The National Sprint Championships were held on a course on a lake in downtown Ottawa during Winterlude festivities. Skiing down the main street like in the Berkie would be cool too. Hope for snow next year.

Narrow and steep trail negotiation.

XCZONE: We were hampered with poor snow and coverage this year, but it is something which we really want to do. Up hill and down rolling single track. Something you can't do on Alpine skis.

Close-ups of skiers before and after events, with their joy, fatigue.

XCZONE: We captured what we think is the real thing and will put it in for you.

Skiers accomplishing amazing feats contrasted with an up-close and personal view of them doing something normal.

XCZONE: The Canadian Ski Marathon is one such example that we will put in. The story of Richard Weber and his expedition to the arctic is a story someone should do.

Technique analysis.

XCZONE: We produced and released a CD-ROM on technique and training last year. It is called "Tao of Skiing - An Aide Memoire for Cross-Country Skiing Aficionados." All the details you can get off our web site www.xczone.com There is 300 pages of multimedia stuff including fun and instructional videos (small screen). We felt that this format was ideal for instruction, and focused the film more on motivational and entertainment. Since many of you asked for it, we will provide a short instructional section within the bonus materials on the video-DVD.

Summer training.

XCZONE: How about a montage of summer training for the video. Rollerskiing, Pole striding...

Waxing.

XCZONE: The waxing scene in the film was shot as a bit of a spoof. Although the methods are legitimate. The cost and complexity of waxing was something that we could not let pass without a satirical statement. I do not know whether we will pursue a wax instruction video because there are a few good books and videos out there already.

XC-skiers hanging out in a Pub after a long marathon ski.

XCZONE: Coffee shop and cabin and party. We substituted alcohol for java.

Jackrabbit program, teenage skiers (some racing and some just having fun skiing) and older people.

XCZONE: We skied with the kids in the mini-keskinada races and tried to capture the fun and carefree athleticism. Of course, kids and dogs are unpredictable.

Good story of a midpack group race group.

XCZONE: We have some coverage especially with the outcome of skiers within the 160km Canadian Ski Marathon which we will place into the film. Unfortunately, not enough to construct a story onto itself.

A brief history of the sport ending with a good overview of it's present state and how it will probably be evolving over the next century.

XCZONE: This has been done to death. So the way we approached it was in a 3 minute transformation from retro to techno. The film effects are mocked up to look 1930's. We wanted to bring peoples images of skiing up to date quickly . From black and white to colour.

And use the sounds of skiing.

XCZONE: The sound was recorded in 48khz 16bit stereo (exceeds CD quality). I really wanted to do this in dolby digital 5.1 surround... next year.

Race preparation.

XCZONE: We covered this within the story without it being instructional.

Bailout techniques.

XCZONE: Sorry, we just bailed. We broke two pairs of skis, one set of poles and dislocated a foot. We had one rule... save the camera at all costs.

Back-country.

XCZONE: I am still story boarding this one for future films. We are also scouting ideal locations. Something in the mountains.

Dressing for extreme cold and wind.

XCZONE: We will add a quick prep session for the Canadian Ski Marathon, which this year was -35 degrees. Bring lots of hot coffee.

Emergency situations and ski breakage, medical situations, shelter, basic emergency equipment.

XCZONE: I will take this down and see what we can do for perhaps the back country idea in the future.

Advocate the safety message.

XCZONE: Same as above.

Naked skiers.

XCZONE: Canadian Winters. This year we were wearing everything we had on and spring skiing was too short.

Hmmm How about the Nordic Nudes?