

# "Duh": Rocky tries to go over the top in sly new Rambo flick

**Rambo III**  
Center Theatre  
Oaks East Six



For the first time in a while, Stallone delivers the goods, albeit in generic packaging. That should guarantee him a wide and profitable audience since even outright flops like *Cobra* and *Over The Top* attracted large numbers during their first few weekends of release. People are more than willing to accept Stallone in an action role and *Rambo III* fits the bill.

He should be relieved to hear that since its oft-repeated budget of \$63 million means that *Rambo III* will have to gross \$150 million to see any profits. At least Stallone had the decency to trade his \$16 million salary in return for greater profit participation.

Actually, Stallone gains our respects in other ways as well. The film opens in Thailand with John Rambo ritualistically preparing for a stick fight against a monster of an opponent. The camera glides

over his muscled back and arms as he prepares to do battle. Then Rambo turns suddenly around, his craggy features staring intently into the camera, daring us to laugh.

It's a bold move, because if anyone *does* laugh the picture is lost from the start. Like his alter-ego, Stallone is willing to gamble but he will never compromise. If the movie fails, it will be on his terms.

After that aggressive opening makes it clear what type of flick you're going to see, there are few surprises. John Rambo is the reluctant warrior drawn into battle when his best and only friend is captured by a sadistic Soviet colonel in Afghanistan.

What follows are a few tightly wound action scenes, a daring prison break, some impressive battles and a final clash between Soviet troops and Afghan freedom fighters. If you wonder how it all works out, I've got some land you might be interested in.

By Michael Giltz

John Rambo (Mr. Brigitte Nielsen) meets someone he can relate to intellectually for once (Doudi Shoua).

