Maynard Ferguson in concert at the Berklee Performance Center, concert produced by Peter Daou and Gary Mofatte. Maynard Ferguson is one of today’s successful jazz performers, having recently given his second sell-out concert in Boston within the last six months. Best known for his top-40 hit “Rocky,” he is also one of today’s most commercially appealing stars. Many professional musicians and music educators look on him as a great, but his influence on modern music is undeniable. He has almost single-handedly extended the range of the trumpet by a full octave, producing the “screetch” trumpet that pervades modern big band music and has spilled over into rock as well.

Throughout the many years of his career, Maynard has shown his extreme versatility and technical ability, from lead trumpet for Stan Kenton in the early fifties, where he first demonstrated his high note capacity and incredible endurance, he spent several years recording various studio jobs and film work. He formed his first band in 1936 when he was chosen leader of the all-star Birdland Dream Band (which included Al Cohn, Clark Terry, Clifford Brown, and others). The next year he led Birdland with his own “jazz farm,” taking with him Don Ellis, Slide Hampton, Bill Chase, Joe Zawinul, Chick Corea, and Chuck Mangione—artists who have since become important to the jazz world.

After a short period in the sixties when Maynard dissolved his band due to the lack of interest in jazz, he reformed a Big Band in England. The arrangements for this new band became focused on rock/pop instead of the swing/rap/soothe styles. Today, Maynard’s ensemble is the leader in big band.

His concert at Berkleee opened with a Nick Lane arrangement of Weather Report’s “Redhead,” an arrangement that typifies the way jazz fusion and rock meet with Maynard’s high notes and extended solos by the outstanding members of his orchestra (Dan Jordan on Tenor sax and Matt Bissonett on electric bass). He followed with the title song from his newest album, Holloway, composed for the band by bassist Stanley Clarke. This new piece is another funk tune, indicative of the direction jazz is taking, especially Maynard’ band. Another Clarke composition, “Dayride,” followed, which featured Maynard on trombone along with trumpones, Chris Beyrman and Steve Weisť, on a chart which moved between funk and saxing.

Although the assessment of Maynard’s “selling out” to pop music is partly true, he is still a phenomenal musician (he played trumpet, flugelhorn, slide/valve trombone, baritone horn, soprano sax, and sang) and the perfect entertainer—there is never a dull minute at his concerts. The music was exciting, and the solist outstanding. Before the second half he allowed an extended solo for his percussionist Dave Mancini, and for his tenor organist Dennis Dildaslio. Although this turned out to be one of the most exciting parts of his concert, not many other band leaders would allow such freedom to soloists. Despite his winces (“Do I look like Herb Shellin?”), Maynard will always remain a serious influence on jazz students, and will remain in high regard among open-minded young musicians.

David Bondelevitch

Muscle, Sweat...and Skin

But the underlying tone of the narrative is even more disturbing. The theme in competition in question are tattooed lovers. In male-oriented films, the subject of competing buddies is treated in a sensible manner, but women athletes are not capable of simple, supportive friendship. In this film the two heroines allow their sexual preoccupation to jeopardize their other goals. I guess you have to expect that from women. Even when they’re tough in the body they’re still soft in the head. Women can have normal friendships that are threatened by success but they have to be in womenly areas like dancing (The Turning Point) or writing (Rich and Famous). The insinuation throughout is that these women could accomplish so much more if they weren’t so darned emotional. Their coach uses a sort of Masters and Johnson approach to training, he manipulates their sex lives in order to improve their performance.

All of this exploitative nonsense could have been eliminated because the story is essentially quite good and the performances even better. Track star/writer Kashmir Moore makes an exceptional debut but the real standout is Mariel Hemingway. She still stumbles her lines like all hasn’t conscious teenager but there’s not much happening on the verbal level anyway. This is a physical movie and Hemingway excels in the physical presence as a tough, determined competitor. She spent months getting in shape for this film.

It all goes for naught, however, because we are encouraged to marvel at the sexual highlights and dismiss the rest. After the only prize is a place on an Olympic team that will never compete and as lesbians they probably would have received gold medals with asterisks.

Peter Thompson

**Jazz Great in Top Shape**

**Muscle, Sweat...and Skin**

But Robert Towne didn’t invent this condescension toward women’s athleticism. Witness the LPGA pinup calendar or the national crisis precipitated by Billie Jean King’s bizarreness. If the media can’t turn them into helpless Barbie Dolls, it denigrates their femininity. The film For Cus- ter is a classic example in which a cute little world classic figure skater goes blind (by falling down) and becomes utterly dependent on, all of people, Robby Benson.

Peter Thomson