

Burn unit



Flame of Wrath: The 78th Fraser Highlanders
Lismor Video

By Iain MacDonald

Television has been the dominant medium of the last forty years, and the 78th Fraser Highlanders step on screen with *Flame of Wrath*. Always innovators, the 78th Frasers deliver a very enjoyable 90 minutes of music and dance.

The mass appeal of television and video is a sword that cuts both ways, however. While people are voracious consumers of video, there is also a demand for high production values in video, fed by a daily intake of expensively produced television programming. *Flame of Wrath* is of a quality not consistent with what we like to see on our sets.

The lighting is entirely unsuitable for video production. The performers are either dark and grainy, or when the lights come on, they “white out” facial features. The camera work is mostly adequate, but some of the shooting is clumsy and ill timed, and does not do justice to the performance. Fortunately, the audio is very good.

If you acknowledge that what you’re buying is a low-end production, you won’t be disappointed by the content. The 78ths display the enormous talents at their command, including two dance teams that would be the envy of any production. The 78ths’ performance of the opening jiset, the piobaireachd “A Flame of Wrath for Squinting Patrick,” and the suite “In Celtic Times” are worth any-

one’s time to see.

The 78th Frasers’ drum corps is excellent throughout, providing a wide and tasteful range of percussive effects. The performance includes a “drummers’ suite” that is well conceived and executed, and uses a troupe of Irish hard-shoe dancers as one of the percussion instruments.

Armed with a clipboard, one could find technical flaws. Sitting on the couch, however, one can only be impressed by the depth of talent and creativity displayed by the performers.

I look forward to the day when pipe band video production values match the quality of the performances they capture.

Iain MacDonald is Pipe Major of the City of Regina Pipe Band and played for many years with the Simon Fraser University Pipe Band.