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Men in War

Familiar but good Korean-lo-caled war action; saleable to young male audiences.

Hollywood, Jan. 17.

..United Artists release of Sidney Harmon (Security Pictures) production. Stars Robert Ryan, Aldo Ray, Robert Keith; features Philip Pine, Vic Morrow, Nehemiah Persoff, James Edwards. Directed by Anthony Mann. Screenplay, Philip Yordan; based on Van Van Praag's "Combat"; camera, Ernest Haller; editor, Richard C. Meyer; music, Elmer Bernstein. Previewed Jan. 16, '57. Running time, 102 MINUTES.

Lieutenant Benson	Robert Ryan
Montana	Aldo Ray
Colonel	Robert Keith
RJordan	Philip Pine
Zwickley	Vic Morrow
Lewis	Nehemiah Persoff
Killian	James Edwards
Sam Davis	L. Q. Jones
Maslow	Adam Kennedy
Meredith	Scott Marlowe
Ackerman	Walter Kelley
Haines	Race Gentry
Christensen	Robert Normand
Penelli	Anthony Ray
Lynch	Michael Miller
Korean Sniper	Victor Sen Yung

A two-fisted account of what happens to an infantry platoon in the late Korean battling is told in "Men In War" with a general air of excitement, tension and action. Warfare and the all-male cast would seem to slant it mostly toward male audiences.

Production handling by Sidney Harmon is excellent, holding values to a realistic level for better overall effect. Battle sequences, well-staged under Anthony Mann's direction, are all small-scale, but none the less deadly, as befits the plot and its few characters. The general topnotch treatment mentioned above and the Philip Yordan scripting from Van Van Praag's novel, "Combat," do considerable to overcome the fact that there is much that is similar in warpic and the characters that inhabit them. "Men In War" is no exception, although there are fewer stereotypes.

Robert Ryan, battle-weary lieutenant trying to get the remnants of his platoon back to battalion headquarters, and Aldo Ray, hostile, disrespectful sergeant from another company trying to get his combat-shocked colonel to safety, star in the Security Pictures presentation through United Artists. Each scores strongly in reacting with masculine vigor to Mann's direction. Robert Keith, the colonel, costars and successfully carries off a role that requires only one word of dialog but much mute projection of a man shocked into dumbness but still able to sense and feel.

When the platoon's weapons carrier is wrecked, Ryan commandeers a passing jeep occupied by Ray and Keith to carry ammo and equipment. Footage graphically depicts the horror that is war as the men fight their way back, only to find the battalion is wiped out and Red Koreans occupy the hill. For the climax, Ryan and Ray join forces to retake the hill and there, with only one other survivor, honor their fallen comrades in a touching fadeout.

Prominent among the platoon members, and each doing excellently, are Philip Pine, Vic Morrow, Nehemiah Persoff and James Edwards. All are real as frightened or fighting foot soldiers, as are the other cast members.

Where the film does stand out over the usual warpic is in its intelligent use of music. Elmer Bernstein composed and conducted the score, never trying to compete with the sounds of battle and thereby heightening the effect of many scenes. Ernest Haller's lensing is a major partner in the film's vigor, and there are other good technical assists.

Brog.