J2140 JACKNIFE (USA, 1989)

Credits: director, David Jones ; writer/play, Stephen Metcalfe.
Cast: Robert De Niro, Ed Harris, Kathy Baker.
Summary: Melodrama set in contemporary Connecticut. Dave (Harris), a Vietnam vet who lives with his sister Martha (Baker) in Connecticut, is haunted by the memory of a buddy’s death and has become a drunk and a recluse. Then another friend from Vietnam arrives to take Dave up on a long discussed offer of a trout fishing trip. The friend, Joseph ‘Megs’ Megessey (De Niro), got his nickname ‘Jacknife’ in Vietnam where he drove trucks and had a propensity for accidents. Martha is at first bewildered and frightened by Megs, but he charms her into coming along on the trip. A spark is struck between them. Megs decides to stay in town working as an auto mechanic. Dave likes the idea of Megs dating his sister even less than he likes Megs, for he blames Megs for his buddy’s death in Vietnam. Megs, however, has worked out his own conflicts about the war with a veterans’ support group and nudges Dave into doing the same.

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Clark, Mike. “‘Jacknife’ hasn’t much of an edge” USA today (Mar 10, 1989), p. 5D.
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Holzl, Gebhard and Peipp, Matthias. Fahr zur Holle, Charlie! [GB] (p. 212+, 280-81)
[Jacknife] Canadian Catholic review 7 (Jun 1989), p. 239.
[Jacknife] Time out n.994 (Sep 6, 1989), p. 44.


Lanning, Michael Lee. *Vietnam at the movies* [GB] (p. 253)

Leepson, Mark. “‘Jacknife’ Vietnam war feature filmography (1992 draft) [GB] (p. 203) and *Vietnam war films* [GB] (Entry 294)


Martenstein, Harald. “‘Jacknife’” *Tagesspiegel* (Oct 19, 1989), p. ?


McGrady, Mike. “Same story, different actors” *Newsday* (Mar 10, 1989), Weekend, p. 3.

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Muse, Eben J. *The land of Nam: the Vietnam war in American film* [GB] (p. 132-4, 176, 252)


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Seidl, Claudius. “‘Jacknife’” *Die Zeit* (Oct 27, 1989), p. ?


____________. “Movies: Coiled and steady: From Viet vets to comedy, De Niro still concentrates totally on his craft” *Chicago tribune* (Mar 5, 1989), Arts, p. 4.

____________. “Siskel’s flicks picks: De Niro’s fine ‘Jacknife’ recalls ‘The Deer hunter’” (Mar 24, 1989), Friday, p. A.

Steinborn, Bion. “‘Jacknife’” *Filmfaust* 74 (Oct/Nov 1989), p. 54-5.


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Strickler, Jeff. “Lackluster direction cuts into potential of ‘Jacknife’” *Star tribune* (Minneapolis) (Apr 8, 1989), p. 2E.

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