

## NEWS

### **BIG MOUNTAIN MANHATTEN: Steep premieres at Tribeca**

By Tom Bie  
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One of the goals of *Steep*, the much-anticipated big-mountain skiing documentary produced by The Documentary Group ([thedocumentarygroup.com](http://thedocumentarygroup.com), formerly Peter Jennings Productions), was for "even the most dedicated, hardcore skiers to learn something about their sport," according to co-producer Jordan Kronick.

And in that capacity, the film, which premiered Saturday night at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York, certainly succeeds—the old-school footage from Chamonix in the early 80s is alone worth the price of admission. Like any film of this nature, looking back at the pioneers is often the most compelling, and the interviews and story of Bill Briggs' first descent of the Grand Teton successfully sets the stage for the rest of the movie.

The premiere event included the entire production crew, several of the athletes, many members of the New York media, and representative from major studios all mixing at the Vail Resorts-sponsored after-party. And while opinions of the movie varied, all in attendance seemed to agree that a project like this could only benefit the sport of skiing as a whole.

Of course, Doug Coombs has a major role in the story line, and surely one of the biggest challenges facing director Mark Obenhaus and producers Gabrielle Tenenbaum and Kronick, was where Coombs' part of the story should begin and end. Consequently, there's not one simple, smooth narrative running through this film. Yet that seems appropriate, as it accurately reflects the unsmooth history of big mountain skiing itself and all the varied personalities that have made it what it is today.

How do you go from talking about the heli-loving Coombs to the self-propelled, expedition-loving Andrew McLean? You don't worry about the transition—you just show each of them in their element and the story tells itself. The brief inclusion of Ingrid Backstrom adds a lot to the film, and the multiple angles of Shane McConkey base jumping will surely draw in and intrigue even those viewers least interested in skiing. But that remains the big question: Will this film appeal to the broad audience that the producers are aiming for? We shall see this fall.

**CLICK HERE** to read an interview with Kayce Jennings, Peter's widow.