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SCENE AND OVERHEARD

MID-ANGLIA'S ROCK MAGAZINE

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BIG CLOTHES FOR LUCY: PROHIBITION
THE HONEYTRAP: BETTY BLUE
SHADES OF INDIFFERENCE
ROCK COMP. REVIEWS & PICTURES
and lots more.....



"Big clothes for Lucy? Try page 4, vicar."



EDITORIAL

They say that all good things eventually come to an end: I'm not sure if the Rock Comp. is a 'good thing', but surely it must have reached the end of its life - in its current form, at least. With attendances dramatically down on previous years and with an even more dramatic decline in the number of Cambridge city-based bands, the competition is in dire need of a radical shake-up. There are several options which ought to be considered: I can think of a few - the use of The Junction for preliminary heats; a limit on numbers and a quality control on entrants; a change in the scoring system - and no doubt you have a few of your own, so why not pass your ideas on to Mick Gray at the Corn Exchange? Let's face it, if we lose the Comp. next year, it'll be difficult to get it back again.

In this issue, we've interviewed four promising bands who played in this year's competition, together with a couple of bands many of you will not be familiar with - top Peterborough pop/soul band The Honeytrap, and student wah wah specialists, Big Clothes For Lucy. Due to lack of space in this issue, we've had to keep some news and reviews over to our next issue (out in July), which will include interviews with the Rock Comp. winners and (possibly) Bleach; reviews of the Sundance and War Dance LP's; reviews of demo's from The Black Sky (with brill. promo video), Shades Of Indifference, Prohibition, The Color Factory and Cruise Ducks; a review and photos of the Rock Comp. Final and Strawberry Fair; a preview of this year's Folk Festival; the gossip on the latest round of band splits / line-up changes (Charlottes, The Black Sky, Jacob's Mouse, Arcana, War Dance); and, as they say, lots more. Ta ta for now.

CONTENTS

- 3 Editorial
- 4 Big Clothes For Lucy
- 6 The First Five Minutes Of Betty Blue
- 7 Saffron's Daughter
- 8 Shades Of Indifference
- 10 Avalon Recording Studio
- 11 Prohibition
- 12 The Honeytrap
- 14 Reviews
- 24 Listings

LAST ISSUE'S COMPETITIONS
The winner of the Tanita Tikaram tickets was Ruth Newman, who named two of Tanita's LP's (Ancient Heart, Everybody's Angel and The Sweet Keeper); and Amanda O'Reilly picked up the Throwing Muses tickets for remembering that Tanya Donnelly was interviewed in S&H a couple of years ago.

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Messrs. Gottlieb, Jesudason and Disbrey - purveyors of fine independent dance music. Established 1989. By appointment to Cambridge University. Photo:Jon Lane

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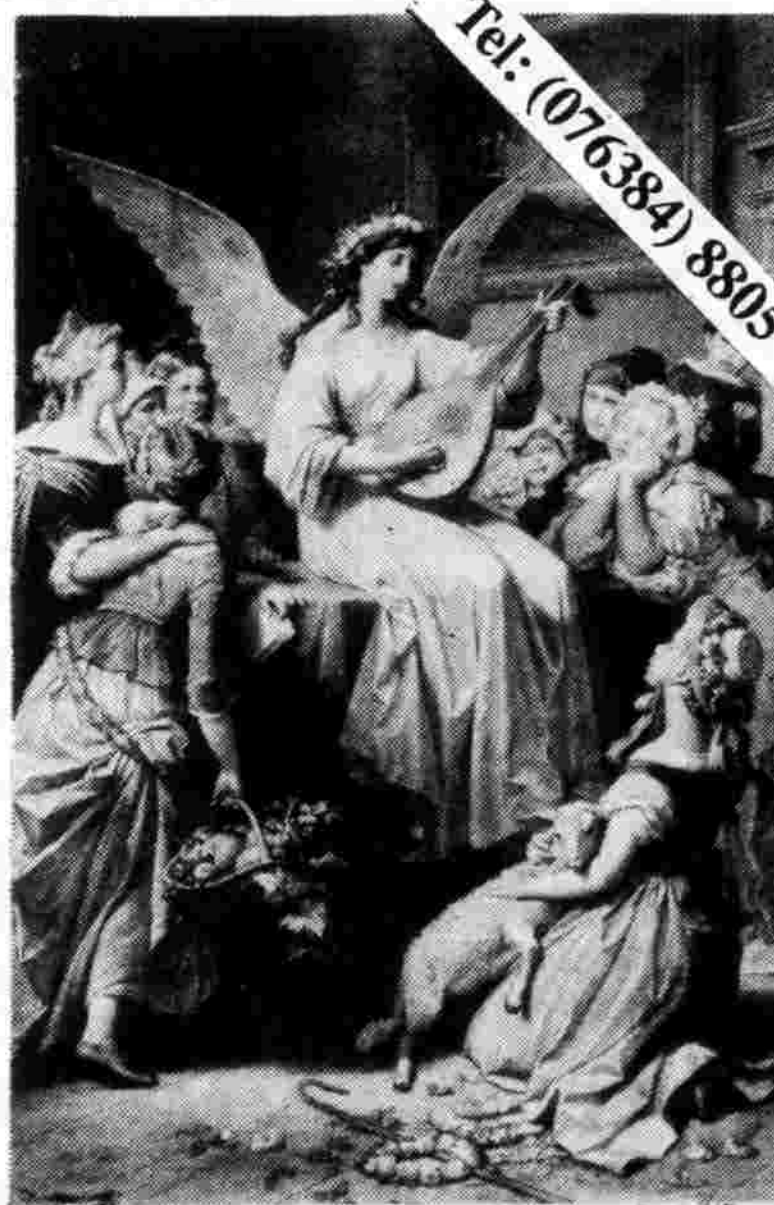
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FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Very briefly, there's another Hinchbrook Hospital all-dayer on 4th May, featuring (among others) Shades Of Indifference, Incipient, Rebus Dream, Jactus, Angstrom; at The Junction, watch out for Bleach (6 April) and Tad (19 April), plus Status Promotions' Seven Hour Happening with Osruc Tentacles, Shades Of Indifference and Dead Flowers (27 April).

BIG CLOTHES FOR LUCY



Big Clothes For Lucy are a Cambridge undergraduate indie dance band on the verge of a possible break-through into the big league. But not many people outside the cloistered confines of the Cambridge colleges will have heard of them. The core of BCFL is Vim Jesudason (gtr.), Eli Gottlieb (bass) and Stu Disbrey (vox): the rest of the team comprises Dr. Sardonicus (drum machine), Jon Lane (manager) and Os (sound engineer). Vim and Stu first met when they came up to Emmanuel College in October 1988:

Vim: "I'm from Congleton, in Cheshire. I had a standard classical music education, played violin and piano; I played with the National Youth Orchestra on violin. I started playing guitar when I came here: I was very interested in The Smiths era, early Railway Children."

Stu: "I'm from a little place near Dover. I learnt guitar at school, but hated it cos the teacher was a hippy. I got into a garage band with a couple of friends, one of whom is now writing for Raw magazine, and the other is getting a band together in Sheffield. The Smiths didn't make much impact down south - at least not where I lived, and you can't get much more south than that - so basically it was what was happening in London, which at the time was the goth scene. When I came up here, I started getting into My Bloody Valentine, House Of Love. Me and Vim jammed about and did a one-off gig in the summer of 1989 which went down really well."

Vim: "A friend of ours said that Eli played bass and was coming up (to St. John's College) next year."

Eli: "I come from London. I got a guitar when I was 13 or 14 and was in a band which played Jewish Weddings and Barmitzvahs! We did a couple of gigs in pubs in London, and then I played stuff on my own. I've always liked The Beatles; I was into Elvis Costello at one point, The Smiths, The Housemartins; now, it's the stuff we're doing."

Stu: "So in September 1989 the three of us got together, and that's when it began."

Eli: "The main direction was not to sound like the song before; we wanted to do something different each time. With the drum machine, we'd got a basic dance beat, but we're trying to move to different musical styles."

Vim: "There was no conscious decision on musical direction, just the influences at the time - Wonderstuff, Jesus Jones. When we started off, it was very much me and Stu writing, Stu doing the words and me the music. Now, the stuff we're doing is all three of us."

Eli: "We decided to spend more time getting together to rehearse, so that the three of us can get things done, and it's working really well."

Vim: "Stu doesn't have much input on the music side. Me and Eli are working a lot more on the music together, and we work the lyrics together as well."

Stu: "We fit lyrics into the music better now. Before, I brought two A4 sides of 'fabulous' lyrics to which Vim would fit tunes - sometimes it just simply didn't work. We find that nearly all our best songs come from some 'catch' idea that someone's got, and then maybe within half an hour we can get a song out of it, which, with some refinement, will come out really well. We've got two new songs that way which are really brill."

Stu: "We've done around 20 gigs to date, which may not seem many, but it is for a college band. It's not like there's a whole lot buzzing around here: there's only a certain number of places you can play for a certain number of times."

Eli: "Also, you must remember that we are away from each other for six months of the year. The only time we've seen each other during the holidays was when we played a gig at Leeds University, and when we did our demo tape at Amazon Studios in Liverpool last Christmas."

Vim: "I did a sound recording course in my year off. A friend of mine, Simon Duffy, who was on that course with me, got loads of jobs recording up-and-coming bands in Manchester and Liverpool - he used to record The Boo Radleys - and he said that he could get us a good deal. He obviously knew his way around Amazon, and got us in dirt cheap. I'd made some really nice recordings on a four track which I'd been constantly playing to Simon, so he had a good idea what we wanted to sound like."

Stu: "It was my first time in a studio. The fact that it was a friend of Vim's took a lot of the tension out of it, and we had a real laugh; it made quite a good working environment."

Vim: "We played the instruments in one take, but a lot of work was done on the drums and the actual mixing."

Eli: "We've got a considerably better drum sound on the tape than what we have when playing live, and there's also extra guitar lines on the tape, but apart from that, it's almost identical to our live sound."

Vim: "One revelation from the session is Stu's voice - when we first listened to it through the headphones, it sounded about ten million times better!"

Jon: "We've got about 100 copies of the tape done. Stu gave a copy to CNFM's Mick and Sarah Jane at one of their indie disco's at The Junction; they absolutely loved the tape. They've played it on their Jive Alive show, and they've also played it around record companies: we've sent them a load of tapes to give to people. A guy from London Records came to see us rehearse, and we think he loved it: he gave a good response - he offered us some money - but you've got to go on their actions, rather than what they say. When we played The Junction recently (supporting The Stranglers), we had two record companies supposed to come and see us, but they didn't manage to make it. One of them has now expressed an interest in coming to see us rehearse, and that's being sorted out at the moment."

Stu: "Eli still has a year to go (at John's): when Vim leaves here, he has clinical medicine to do if he wants

to be a doc. I'm in the easiest position of all, in the sense that once I graduate, I haven't got any pressure on me - short of parental and bank pressure - to go out and get a job. We're really hoping that we're going to have something definite to pin ourselves to, band-wise, either a signing or a definite offer from a record company by summer - which will then give us something concrete to base our plans for the next twelve months. It may all sound pie in the sky, but that's not unfeasible at all; the response we've had to the tape is so good, and it's come so fast."

Stu: "Where did the name come from? In the summer of 1988, the year I left school after my A levels, I worked as a dustbinman, just to get some readies together. I happened to be throwing shit into the back of a truck early one morning, and I picked up this box which obviously had been used in a house move - it was labelled 'big clothes for Lucy', obviously a daughter of this family that had moved. I thought it was a good name for a band, kept it in my mind for the rest of the day, and wrote it down when I got home. When I came up here and we got a band together, we were thinking about names: nothing else came close to being that good!"

PHIL JOHNSON

PS. Anyone interested in buying the tape, or booking the band, should get in touch with Jon Lane on 0223-350285 (term-time) or 0761-221558 (holidays).

PPS. BCFL are playing a showcase gig in London on 15th April, at The Powerhaus in Islington. Fingers crossed...



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THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF BETTY BLUE

Betty Blue (in case you're wondering) is a cult French film, starring Beatrice Dalle. The first five minutes? Well I'm told the opening sequence involves some vigorous waving of Beatrice's legs in the air... Let's just say the band are into Sex and Dance and Indie and Manchester. Least ways it's not quite sex, drugs and rock and roll (thank goodness!!). But why pick on such an awful name?

Mike 'Concept' Cimelli (gtr/keys/vox): "I'm not going to say anything but I totally agree."

Craig 'Huck Huckstable' Wilson (guitar): "We've had loads of names and it's the only one we semi-agreed on. They may not remember the name but they'll know it's a long one. The bloke at the Junction, when we sent him a tape, said he liked the tape and LOVED the name."

The band started with two Dutch girls as singers and spent their time rehearsing 'Why Can't I Be You' in their garage, much to the annoyance of their neighbours who called in the environmental health people. When that failed they took to using the garage for target practise with their air guns! Apart from Concept all the band have lived at one time or another in the same house. Just after the Dutch girls left, Tom moved in and was invited to join, having been heard singing by Craig.

Craig: "That's how it all started. I was playing my guitar and Rob was playing his bass. Badger didn't have any drums but he used to have some and he saw the chance of being in the band and thought YYYYYEEEEESSSSSS. He went out and bought some drums. After Tom moved to London, Tim moved in and saw this musicianship, well, making a noise, so he joined the band."

Tim (tambourine / dancing): "It means that I can't complain about guitar practises..."

Rob: "But you do..."

Concept: "Tim's only in the band so he can get laid..."

Tim: "... and that's not working either. I'm not one of these pretentious gits who thinks he's musical talented because I'm not."

Concept: "We don't think we're musically talented."

Rob: "We don't really know who likes us yet."

Craig: "We don't know anybody who likes us."

Rob: "We get the odd person who comes up to us and asks if we've got a tape, can they buy our music."

Craig: "Somebody asked us when we were next playing a gig and I nearly fell over, and I wasn't related to them either. The reality is that we've got a lot of friends that support us. When we played the Junction the first time about 80 of them came, but we had to offer them free drinks!"

How do you upset the Betties? Ask them if they're ripping off the Happy Mondays!

Craig: "We do a cover version of one of their songs. That's about it."

Rob: "We're influenced by them..."

Concept: "I really hate them. All the songs I've written are nothing to do with anything like that."

Tim: "When I joined you said you were sort of like The Happy Mondays, I just couldn't see a connection at all."

Rob: "We didn't jump on the dance bandwagon, we started on it."



Rob: "We've been trying to record a decent demo on six track recently, to send round to get gigs. The tapes we've got at the moment are from our live gigs where you might hear the odd bum note."

Craig: "Or the odd correct note."

Tom: "I think we want a following rather than a single. We want to play lots and lots of gigs."

Concept: "Standing in front of a load of people is and playing live is what it is all about."

Rob: "All the other side of it is just marketing."

Craig: "I enjoy every gig we do, it's just great fun. It'd be good to make records but if people in Cambridge knew our name I'd be well happy."

Rob: "Every single gig has been better than the previous one, apart from the Corn Exchange."

Craig: "I was considering taking my guitar off and becoming another dancer because I could not hear my playing at all."

Concept: "What made it worse was that there was this fat guy (Tim) dancing behind us who wouldn't get off stage."

Rob: "People buy the t-shirt because it's this trendy picture."

Concept: "If you're going to have something on a T-shirt what better to have than Beatrice Dalle?"

Rob: "We want to get Beatrice Dalle down here, to actually appear live on stage, but we've found a lookalike for her, so she's going to appear on stage with us."

Craig: "We got a good response to the review of the tape in S&H - we didn't sell any."

Craig: "It's not what you know, but who you know; like that CD (reviewed issue 23), I knew somebody that worked for that company and they wanted some non-copyright music. I went into my bedroom and dug out some dodgy tapes and he didn't laugh when I played him it, so they put it out. He doesn't work for them anymore! We could have had a whole album out because there was loads of space, all the other stuff was just sound effects."

A final warning:

Tim: "We're going to sell tapes of Tom's singing lessons when we become famous!"

STEVE HARTWELL

SAFFRON'S DAUGHTER

Wisely distancing themselves from the bitchiness of the Cambridge 'scene' is a lesson that's done Saffron's Daughter, a four piece guitar noise band from the St. Ives area, no harm at all. Low key gigs, regular rehearsals, a nifty line in tunes and thoughtful songwriting have prepared them slowly but surely for more than a bright yellow future.

Nic (Davies - rhythm gtr.): "We all met unknowingly for the first time at Fletch's, after a Charlottes gig at The Shamrock in Peterborough."

Paddy (Hulson - bass): "We all sat looking at each other, not knowing what to say."

Greg (Ward - vox/gtr.): "I didn't want to be in anyone else's band, so I formed my own. Within two weeks, we had our first gig at the Ramsey Leisure Centre."

Juliette (Jones - drums): "We needed a bass player so desperately, we asked Paddy."

Paddy: "I was in the cubs but the cornet playing didn't do much for me."

Greg: "We managed five songs at that gig. Me and Juliette write most of the songs, although we wrote 'Thoughtwalk' all together as a band."

Nic: "We mainly write about boy-girl stuff; you know, feelings and attitudes. We should really do some more aggressive songs. Our experience is pretty limited at the moment so we probably won't start writing any good songs until we're old!"

Paddy: "Like Status Quo."

Juliette: "I wrote 'Ice Blue' cos I was watching this film about a woman who fucks up her husband, and I think he kills her."

Juliette: "We're all too polite to disagree with each other: in fact, I'm the politest person I've met in my life. When Nic comes up with a song that we all hate, we say 'yes Nic, but we won't do it just yet'..."

Nic: "I didn't know that... No one person makes any decision about this band, though - it's really casual."

Nic: "We met the manager of Nuclear Assault at our heat of the Rock Comp. He said 'you were the best band tonight'. He said Ju was the best drummer he'd seen for a long time."

Greg: "Cos she kicked the fuckin' shit out of them!"

Juliette: "Sometimes people are a bit funny about a female drummer; you know, sneers and things. One bloke said 'bloody women' when I wanted my drums set up in a particular way: having my kit sliding across the stage while I'm playing is really embarrassing. I tie up my drums with nylon stuff from West End superstore, fact fans!"

Paddy: "There's nowhere to play, so there are fewer bands, just the same ones in the same pubs. It's alright if you're old, but I just want to have a good time. We've got no expectations, we'll play in any toilet. The Rock Comp. was shit - we've played much better."

Juliette: "It was rigged, but it was good to play in front of a lot of new faces."

Nic: "They put one band through on the grounds that they were going to play better later on! I also want to make a public complaint about our heat - they didn't have a bloody

footswitch for those amps. I think if the Corn Exchange supply the amps and say you've got to use them, then they should give you the stuff to use them to their full extent."

Paddy: "I didn't even know how to switch the amp on!"

Greg: "We should be recording in March..."

Juliette: "We're doing a demo mainly to get places to play, and also to sell to old people passing in the street. It really depends on when we get enough money."

And now, the Smash Hits interview:

Nic: "The first record I bought was an Axe Attack album."

Paddy: "Motorhead."

Juliette: "'Tide Is High' by Blondie."

Greg: "'Sound Affects' by The Jam."

Nic: "The Boney M one was a present from my mum. 'Hawkwind' LP is my fave, and that was one of my dad's."

Paddy: "My dad is into groovy things like Loop..."

Nic: "For breakfast, I like Ricles, Frosties - anything with sugar already added, so my mum can't complain. I don't have milk on my cereals, I think it's horrible. I eat them dry."

Juliette: "Hair shampoo? Err, Body Shop's Coconut."

Greg: "Ice Blue - but it's nothing to do with the song."

Paddy: "Boots Speciality, cos it's the only one I can afford at the moment! For cereal, Coco Pops, cos they make the milk brown."

Nic: "I'd like to buy a really large house, get a boat and trip around the Outer Hebrides."

Juliette: "I'm going to be a real capitalist pig."

Paddy: "I'm going to move to Canada: I want to meet the boy actor out of 'Gentle Ben' - he's my hero."

Greg: "I want to buy a processed pea factory."

Juliette: "I'd like to be an ageing rocker. It'd be funny to be on TOTP, but I want to go on 'Going Live'."

Paddy: "I want to be on 'Birthday Club', stand behind BC and wave."

Greg: "We played a gig once and I had no clothes on."

Follow that!

PETE GARNER



SHADES OF INDIFFERENCE



Does the name ring a bell? It should do - whether you saw them storming to success in Heat Four of the Anglian Rock Competition or remember them from 18 months ago.

For those of you unfamiliar with them, Shades Of Indifference are a six-piece band from St. Neots. A couple of years ago they were a major sound on the local scene and were attracting the attention of national record companies. They recorded three demo tapes and gigged heavily - then nothing. Now they are back, and how!

I recently spoke to the band to find out their thoughts on, amongst other things, the Rock Competition, the past, the future, and just about anything else you might need to know:

What did you think of the Rock Competition?

Warren (Buckland - vox): "It was alright. I was surprised at how few people were there. Last time we played it was packed."

Anthony (Grieves - drums): "The bass player with Gab Meringue was a nice bloke."

You're going to start to say nice things about people, aren't you?

Warren: "the other groups were alright."

What do you think of Rock Competitions in general?

Mark (Ridley - gtr.): I don't like it. You can't judge the bands fairly. There is such a diverse range of music being played that you can't really compare one with another."

Warren: "Basically, from our point of view, the Rock Competition is just another gig, the same with the semi-final. The fact that it's at the Corn Exchange is a good ego trip, but that's it, really. From a fan's point of view, I like the competition because it is cheap and you get to see a lot of bands. I would always go to the final because you get a good picture of what really, in the end, is the best of the local scene. However, regarding the heats, there should be a vetting process..."

Anthony: "... bands should send in a tape."

What do you think of The Junction's idea of having a 'No Contest' night for local bands?

Warren: "Yes... that's a much better idea."

How easy is it to get gigs in the area?

Warren: "The St. Neots area is a joke; some places even charge bands for the privilege of playing! They don't even supply a P.A."

Matt (Hinton - keyboards): "There's just nowhere to play, not enough facilities."

What about Cambridge?

Warren: "It's great if you can get a gig, but there aren't that many decent venues, and it is really difficult to get a gig in them. We're willing to play anywhere we can; whoever will have us, we'll be there. Personally, I would love to play this year's Strawberry Fair."

Let's change the subject and talk about the band. How do you think you compare to two years ago?

Matt: "The music is a lot more mature, much better songs."

Warren: "We take time to write the songs as opposed to just whacking anything down. Now we feel that if an idea is a good one, it is worth taking time to work on it."

Anthony: "As Warren said, we pay more attention to the stuff we are doing now. We've got a collection of really good songs which are worth the time."

Warren: "Before we split up, I would hear a record I liked and would want to write a song in that style. I realised that wasn't a good idea and started to write in my own style. Now, whatever we play is what we are. It usually starts with Mark and Chris (Thorpe - bass) writing the music, then I'll fit words and bit and bobs to it. We don't say 'what can we make this sound like?', it's just there."

You mention about the band splitting, how did that come about?

(Prolonged silence)

Anthony: "We chucked Mark out of the band."

Warren: "The reason he was ousted was because he was in another band and hadn't said anything. It was a bit childish on our part."

Chris: "We were all looking for something different at the time, we just sort of fell apart."

Warren: "It was change for change's sake, which is a very immature thing to do."

How did you get back together?

Anthony: "Nothing was happening and I wanted to get back into playing in a band. We all felt that way, and Mark said he would have us back."

Warren: "Plus the fact we all realised that we had a good formula for a band. We all stayed mates after the split and we realised that there are a lot of bands not as good as us. It would have been stupid to ignore it."

Moving on slightly, why did you decide to add keyboards to your sound? Are you trying to be more commercial?

Matt: "No, people only think that because they associate keyboards with bands like the Pet Shop Boys."

Warren: "We don't want to commercialise the sound; we want to fill it out. With a keyboard, you get a very smooth, full sound."

Mark: "When we played before, I used a distorted guitar which we could get away with then. However, our new material requires a cleaner guitar sound, which tends to leave the overall effect rather empty, so we decided to use the keyboard to fill it out."

You also have a backing singer now. Was that a commercial move?

Warren: "No - if you watch most bands, you'll see they use the guitarist or whoever as backing singer, which doesn't always work - especially as none of the others can sing!"

Suki (Carter - backing vox): "They leave me to do my own stuff: they give me a tape, I go away, listen to it, la along in the shower and see how it sounds."

What is the next step for the band?

Warren: "Venues - gigging, that's what I want to do for the next few months."

Matt: "Yeah... we're going to send a tape away to record companies and hopefully get a support slot with Kylie Minogue (laughter)."

Warren: "Apart from the Rock Competition, we are playing the Kings Head in St. Neots, and we've been asked to play at The Junction in a four band event sponsored by CNFM on 27th April. There are a few more gigs in the pipeline, but nothing's confirmed yet."

A lot of bands go into the studio to make their own record. Has that crossed your minds?

Matt: "It costs too much."

Warren: "For a band at our level, to go and make a record is just an ego trip: we don't need to do that because we will be making records eventually."

How far would you be willing to compromise, to get a record deal?

Mark: "Not at all."

Warren: "I wouldn't want to sign the copyright to some fat git sitting behind a desk, leaving me with nothing for ten years."

Supposing a 'fat git' did come along and offer you a record deal. Wouldn't you take it?

Warren: "Yes... (laughter)... but I wouldn't want to. Obviously we wouldn't allow ourselves to become Bros or whatever; I would have two years ago, but not now. We don't need to."

If you are a fan of good music, go and see Shades Of Indifference. Music which is this fresh and new is so rare.

ANDREW MACDOUGALL

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AVALON RECORDING STUDIO



A shock to the system, for years it has always been the case that local bands record at two studios, Flightpath and Qualisound, and them's that don't are just plain strange...

Avalon should by right prove unequivocally that there IS a third studio in the area. Barley may at first seem like miles away (near Royston), but taking B roads from Cambridge and not the mind-numbing A10 I was getting there well under 15 minutes listening to Vision Thing... The first thing that strikes you is that the studio is built into an old barn in an incredibly well kept farm and grounds... I'm starting to sound like a Judith Chalmers story, sorry... Sort of place you can go for your hols, the Hertfordshire countryside is green and pleasant, after all you are all artists and as such should appreciate a few aesthetics to whet your creative appetite.

The studio itself is spacious, well-equipped and offers DAT mastering, a drum room, the effects desk is well stocked with plenty of gates, reverb things, usual bollocks etc etc and spectacular extras such as a rather nifty pitch shifter... all the equipment, as is everything else, is clean, well kept and such a modern enterprise in such an old building makes a pleasing environment... there's even a DX7 and a couple of Korgs (bit cheesy) for that all important keyboard intro... orlinorl a well equipped 16 track studio.

Both engineers, Mark and Gren, know what they're doing and how to make decent coffee; so the time I spent down there watching / interfering was quite pleasant... Even the customer who requires teeth grinding perfection is met with a patient air of co-operation. It's probably not the place for noisy pub bands who won't ever really benefit from this sort of set-up. For those who've recorded before or, for instance, have something specific they want to do... the studio errs more in the way of facilitation rather than turd polishing... don't get me wrong, you'll find no Muso Village sneering here.

So then, in my opinion, the best studio I've been to in a long time. The end product is of an exceptionally high quality... the absolute dogs for any band who put a bit of thought into what they're doing... give 'em a ring and have

a look... don't get lost. PS. the pub down the road has tons of guest beers, but you came here to play music, didn't you?

JUDITH'S WRINKLE REMOVER

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Wharfdale Glendales SMPTE XR300 (XRI)
 Soundtracs MR 32:16 (Mixing Console)
 Foster E16
 Casio DA-1
 DAT Denon DRM 44 HX (Cassettes Mastering)
 Yamaha P 2075
 Yamaha NS10M (Monitoring)
 Lexicon PCM 70
 TC Electronic 2290
 Korg DRV 3000
 Alesis XT:C
 JHS S1024 (Digital Effects Processors)
 2 x Yamaha GQ1031B (Graphic Equalisers)
 BBE Sonic Maximiser
 Aphex 'C' Aural Exciter (Psychoacoustic Enhancers)
 BSS DPR 402
 Drawmer LX20
 2 x Drawmer DS201
 MTR Dual Gate (Dynamic Processing)
 Axxeman (Guitar Processor)
 Yamaha RX5 (Rhythm Programmer)
 Yamaha QX5 (Digital Sequencer)
 Roland MKS20 (Digital Piano)
 Yamaha DX7 (Synthesiser)
 Akai MEP-30 (Midi Patch Bay)
 Fender F3 Acoustic Guitar
 Korg MS 10/MS 20 Synthesisers
 Matrix 1000 (Oberheim)
 Yamaha Acoustic Guitar

The PROHIBITION Era



In January 1989 guitarist Simon Webster and vocalist Rob Skinner got together with bassist Mike Noble to form the basis for a band. Gordon Howes joined soon after as rhythm guitarist: Prohibition was formed.

Rob had previously sung with one or two local bands and Simon had played with Peterborough band Time Machine. Gordon had played drums with the last remaining members of Graham and the Mushrooms / Stinkhorn whilst Biggles had spent two years with Cornwall band One Helluva Buzz. So with this experience behind them Prohibition set about gigging: In the next eighteen months they successfully played around Cambridgeshire, including the Cambridge Rock Competition, as well as Lincolnshire and Brighton. During this time they also produced three tapes, 'A Modern Day Rarity', 'Liquid', recorded for Brighton gigs, and 'Power Without Aggression'.

Things started to change for Prohibition last September when Rob left. Simon took over as singer and lyricist whilst also sharing lead and rhythm guitar with Biggles. With this line-up they played at The Junction Showcase gig in November. Then in December Mike's brother, Austin joined, adding keyboards to Prohibition's sound and completing the line-up.

Prohibition's sound now is a lot smoother than the first slightly punk-ish songs they wrote. The keyboard sound and Austin's backing vocals have added to the overall depth of the music. At the time this is being written the band are planning their first demo tape with this new line-up.

Prohibition's main aims for 1991 are clear.

Simon: "We want more gigs locally so more people get to know our music and more gigs in general, anywhere!"

Austin: "Bigger gigs would be better than tiny pubs with no room to move."

Gordon: "But not in London. I spit on London!"

The ultimate aim for the band is to release a single or an EP by this Christmas. They are certainly ready for that sort of project, although the EP seems more likely as the length of their songs are approaching epic proportions!

Being labelled as 'goth' hasn't bothered Prohibition but Biggles is quick to argue with anyone who thinks they're named after a low-alcohol lager:

"The name is taken from the 1920's American ban on liquor."

We don't make a habit of drinking low-alcohol lager."

A final description of the band for anyone who has yet to see them or hear their tapes.

"We are unprintably good!"

EMMA JOHNSTON

(For details of tapes for sale and forthcoming gigs, ring Emma on 0480-66986)

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Back in 1986 the sudden interest by many groups in the word 'candy' prompted Pop Will Eat Itself to write Candydiosis and ask the all important question: "What's so fucking good, what's so fucking good about Candy?" Fast forward a few years and the obsession with things sticky sweet has changed - but only slightly. So far there's been The Honey Smugglers, Honeychile, The Honeydrippers, The Honey Thieves and Mudhoney. And now from Peterborough, The Honeytrap.

Formed nearly two years ago, the group burst on to the scene early last year when they supported acclaimed Irish band The Fat Lady Sings at the Posh Club. This was soon followed by another major coup when they secured the prestigious support slot to The Soup Dragons at The Cresset in the summer. Suddenly, it seemed, The Honeytrap had arrived. The Jive Alive team of Mick and Sarah Jane began touting the group as 'the local band most likely to' and played the band's demo on their show, making it just the fourth demo to receive an airing. (Incidentally, one of the other three groups to have demos played on the show was Ride back in 1988). The Honeytrap were also invited to take part in the No Contest series at The Junction where they appeared before former Smiths producer Stephen Street and his Foundation Records partner Jerry Smith. And they finished the year where they began it - at the Posh Club in Peterborough where they headlined a New Years Eve extravaganza with fellow Peterborough band Pure Mania.

Although the name is new The Honeytrap have been around in various guises for a few years. Lead guitarist Will Rodgers was a founder member of both Watt The Fox and As It Is while the three Shamma brothers - Dave (vocals/guitar), Adam (bass) and Ian (drums) all played together in A Sure Thing. All live in the small village of Frognall, near Deeping St James, where the band is based and, despite having virtually lived on one another's doorsteps for years, this is their first musical collaboration.

So what's so fucking good about honey?

Dave: "What I don't want people to think is that this group is just an amalgam of A Sure Thing and As It Is because it isn't. This is a completely different project with a new line-up, new songs, a different sound and fresh ideas."

Will: "The biggest surprise so far for me has been that this band has worked and seems to be progressing so much better than any of our other groups and it just feels better too."

"When we began we were just messing around together - As It Is had fallen apart and the Shams weren't doing anything so we got together for a laugh etc. And it was hard at first - nothing seemed to gell but slowly and surely it has come together really well."

Why has it seemed to take off quickly?

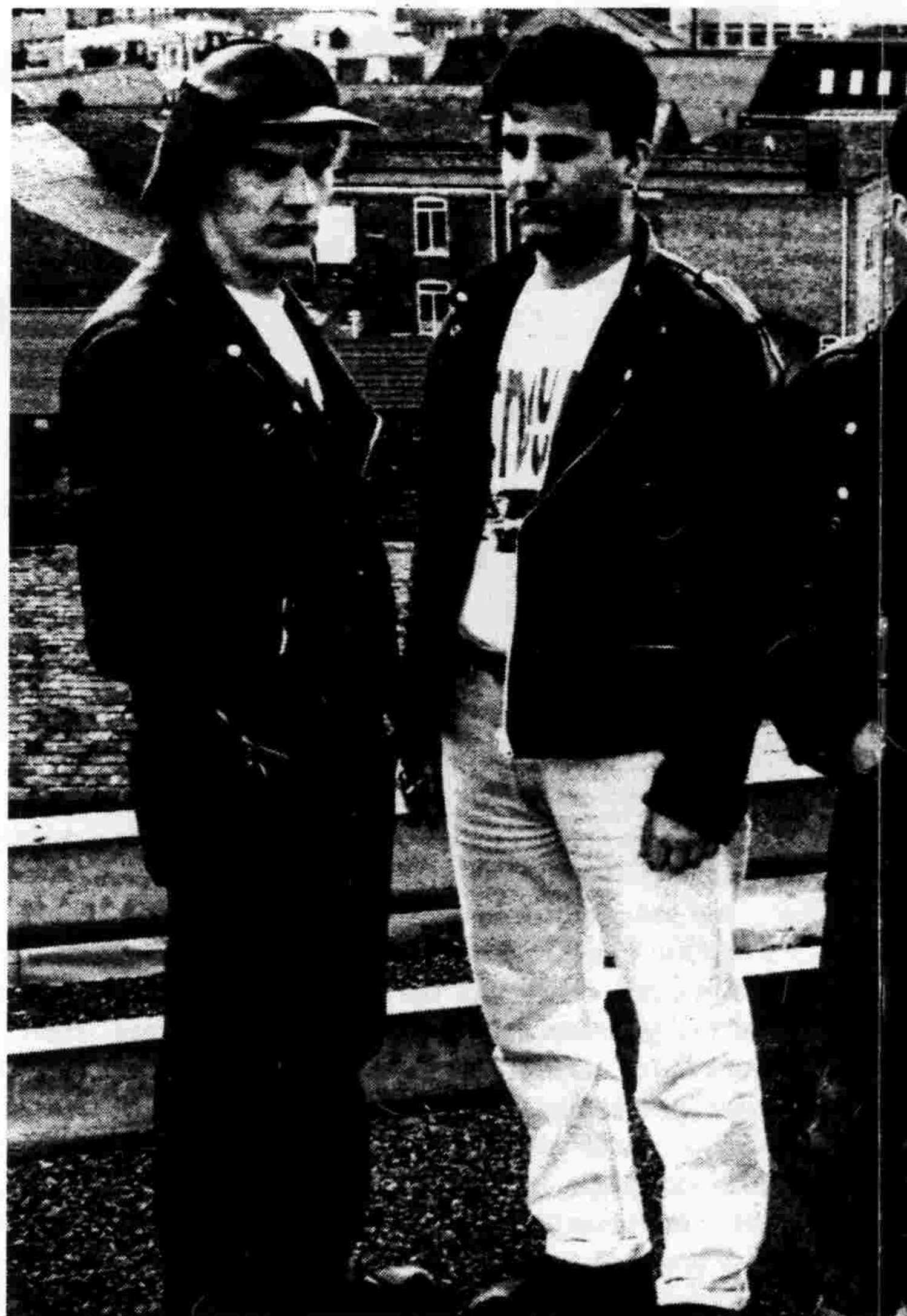
Will: "Because we're better than our former bands basically. And it's very easy to become a flavour of the month in Peterborough because there are so few bands that when a new one comes around everyone seems to want to find out about them very quickly."

"Admittedly we have been quite fortunate - we were lucky to get both the Fat Lady Sings and Soup Dragons supports. And Mick and Sarah Jane have helped a lot too, but wouldn't have got the attention if we weren't a good enough band."

"It's not like we've just pulled in a lot of favours and we haven't been hassling anyone either. Everything we've achieved we've got because people like the band."

"Nowadays it seems to be a lot easier to get taken seriously

Caught In THE



as a band in Peterborough because of all the exposure you can get on Hereward Radio and the availability of support slots at The Cresset and The Junction. It all goes to make you seem more like a proper group rather than just another local band. A few years ago the only gigs available here were in the Crown or the Glasshouse but it's much better now."

What did Stephen Street make of you?

Dave: "It was kind of strange meeting him at first because it was like the bit in the Comic Strip where they meet Nicholas Parsons and they're going 'it's Nicholas bloody Parsons' all the time. I just couldn't help thinking 'it's Stephen bloody Street'. Anyway I had a conversation with him for about 20 minutes and just found myself disagreeing with everything he said. Not because he thought we were shit or anything, it's just that what he looks for in a band and my reasons for being in a band are completely different. And everything he saw in The Honeytrap I didn't."

Isn't it difficult though, to agree with anyone else outside the band about the group and your music?

Will: "Yes, because it usually depends on how wide their sphere of listening is. If their idea of an 'indie' group is a certain band and they listen to us and think we too are an 'indie' group then they will either compare us or say we sound like them. Obviously if someone says we're a brilliant band then we'll agree with them and if they say

THE HONEYTRAP



they hate us then it's like, so what?"

"We are very positive towards things though and don't really need to rely on other people saying we're good or bad. But basically I think we write very good songs and perform them well."

Do you all write or is there one main songwriter?

Adam: "What usually happens is that Dave comes up with a song idea or some lyrics and we then bash it into shape in the rehearsal room until it is a Honeytrap song, rather than just a David Shamma composition."

Dave: "I'm probably the worst musician in the band, but I come up with most of the initial ideas and I usually have an impression of how they should go in head. But when we all get together it can change quite dramatically. All the songs are Honeytrap songs, I don't think we sound like anyone else, and we certainly don't try and contrive a sound."

After quite an active first year what do you have planned for this year?

Dave: "I personally would like to get a better tape together. I like the one we've done but it's six months old now and not as representative as it once was. At the moment I have no qualms about anyone seeing us live - it's definitely where we are at our strongest - and I want the same for our demo. I want to be able to slap it on anyone's desk and say 'if you don't like it then that's your problem' but at the moment I can't because I'm not satisfied with it

either."

Will: "If we only achieve this year what we did last year then I think we will have failed. Ideally I want someone in the business either interested in, or working for us by the end of 1991. Last year we had no direction and just followed our noses and it worked, but now I think we really need some direction and someone working for us on the inside of the business would be a great help."

"At the moment we are essentially a live band but it is really hard to get any kind of following together. I know when I go to see a band for the first time I have difficulty really getting into them if I have never heard them before so it must be the same for people who come to see us."

Dave: "Last year I got far more out of winning a few people over at several small gigs in Leicester than I did in playing with the Soup Dragons as it really felt like we were getting somewhere."

(As we were speaking news of the Gulf War ceasefire came on the television news).

Dave: "I mean here we are talking about pop music and then something like this happens and it just makes it all seem so irrelevant. Obviously we are all closely involved anyway (the Shamas have relatives in the area) but this makes you realise how insignificant The Honeytrap are in the whole scheme of world events."

Your review in the last issue of S&H praised the fact that you have a message in your songs but don't preach. How far do you go to get a message across?

Dave: "It's something I feel more strongly about than Will, but I would never resort to sloganeering and just try to get my point over. Music is all about communication and I think it is important to try and do this."

"But music will not change anything - it just provides a soundtrack. Bob Dylan and the rest of them didn't stop the war in Vietnam, they were just commenting on what they saw and felt. It's like all those songs and band names that have been censored during this war, what really is the point? How can the planners seriously think that the names Massive Attack or Bomb The Bass will seriously undermine the war effort. And it just shows up how weak and shallow the reasons for the war are anyway."

"But music can bring people together and enlighten them. I'm more of a political animal than Will is so I probably do write about political issues more - but to keep it interesting it has to come from a personal standpoint rather than a party political one. For example Billy Bragg says just as much to me with his love songs as he does with his political ones and that's where I would like to be at too."

Will: "Until we have a deal or a record out all we can hope to achieve is to be an excellent 'in your face' kind of a live band. I think it was Barney from New Order who said that live music is all about going out with your mates, having a few drinks and watching a good band. And I think that's what we are about."

Dave: "We are all 100 per cent committed to this band and are going all out to ensure it succeeds. We have a good solid line-up, an excellent catalogue of songs which we play really well. Now all that there is left for us to do is to just get out there and kick some ass."

KEVAN ROBERTS

REVIEWS

1991 ANGLIAN ROCK COMPETITION

The Cambridge Rock Competition (or Anglian Rock Competition, as we must now learn to call it) still has much to offer. There are few other opportunities for local bands to play in front of a large-ish audience, just as there are few other chances for that audience to see seven or eight groups of widely ranging styles and abilities play under the same roof. The heats are often value for money, and those who grumble about the Rock Comp. would grumble more if there wasn't one. Nevertheless, it is threatening to become something akin to a selling hurdle at Huntingdon races, where the same unmotivated and talentless horses who've plodded around countless times before perform with as little enthusiasm as they inspire, occasionally running on for a place without showing any signs of improvement. Many tournament veterans have come out this year and played a set which suggests the intervening twelve months have not intervened enough. The competition is now far too long, a holdall for much that is vapid and unoriginal.

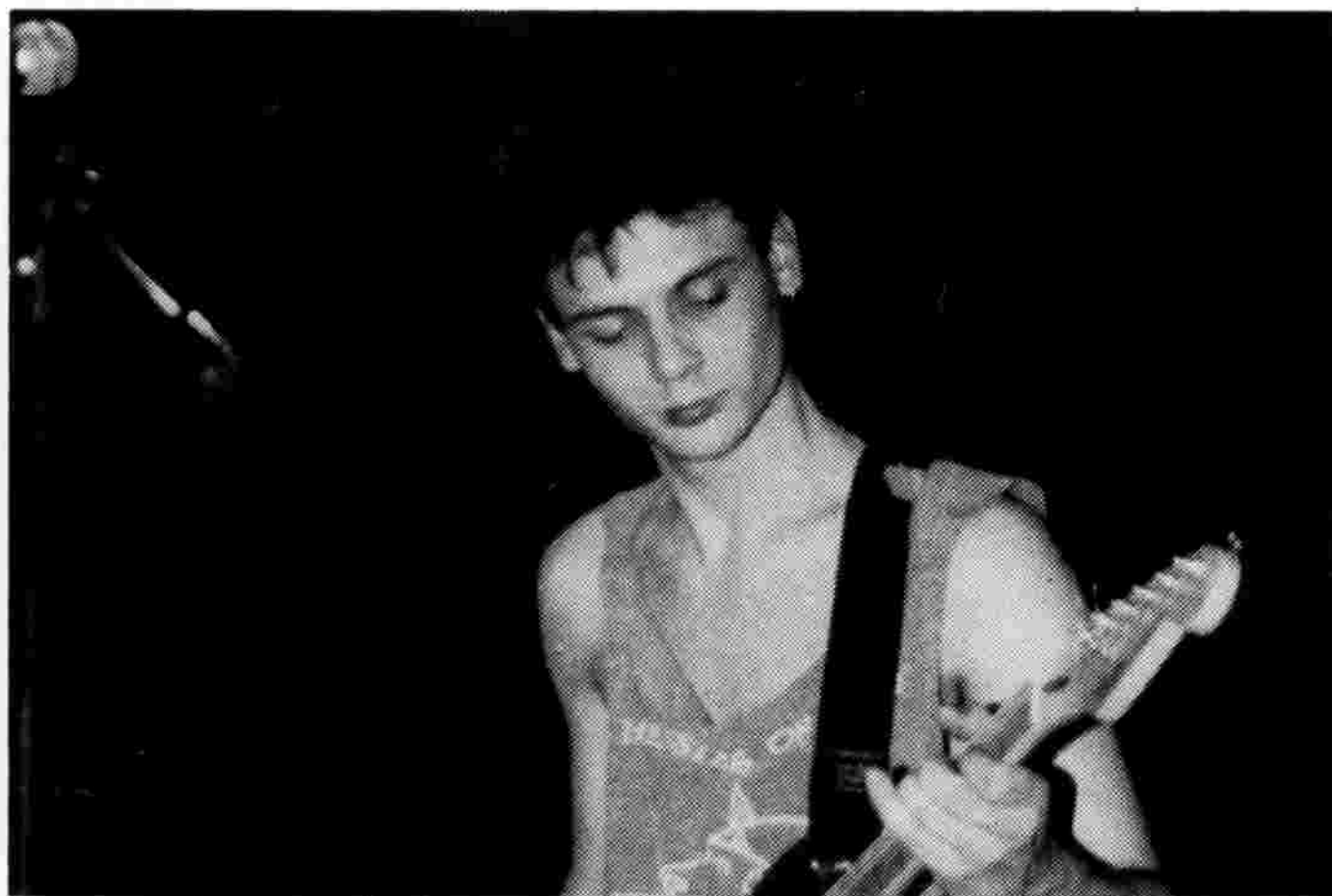
HEAT ONE

POK'ER and LICK'ER, the first band this year, were worse than vapid and unoriginal: they were irredeemable toot. Their choice of name suggested they would cover well, but they promised more than they delivered. Watching their stage antics (lots of twiddled drumsticks, for example) was about as nauseating as watching a man with haemorrhoids trying to find a comfortable position on a patio bench. After last season's fiasco, when one of his band lost a wig, vocalist Julian Clarke has obviously found a band with more integrity (or more hair). Unless my eyes deceived me, he was joined by Julian Rutan, who remains infected by guitar-hero habits, leaving a cigarette in the machine-head, pulling his gosh-I'm-so-good faces, and being generally irritating. Po'ker and Lick'er can all play their instruments, but then Argentina can play football. 'Hard rock' should try harder to move with the times. It would be Bad Manners to fault COLONEL HATHI'S DAWN PATROL. Gary Brown's enthusiasm still seems undimmed, and though their music can be too derivative, his band are at the same time fresh and competent. There were a few familiar faces in this year's line-up, although at least two group members appeared to be doing nothing. Too many people and too many hats, but good clean fun, well received by both the crowd and the judges, who awarded Colonel Hathi second place. CREED were, in my opinion, the best band of the evening by some distance. After a Shakatak-type overture which was proficient enough to fool many, they hastened thrashily in on a session where even the cock-ups were mind-boggling. Driven along by a drummer who used his bass drum as if it were a snare, their excellent songs were laced with the type of guitar playing which invites pretentious reviewing. This prevents me from banging on about Creed at greater length, except to note that they combined virtues which were seen only fleetingly in other bands on show. Content with and committed to their

material, they showed signs of ongoing development, rather than stagnant self-satisfaction. I will be trying to see this band again. Sad to relate, EXISTENCE LTD. were instantly forgettable. Out of date in every respect (ripped jeans are always a bad sign), they droned on so insipidly that it was difficult to distinguish one saccharin-soaked rocksong from the next. However, there was one section of slow splayed chords which showed a glimmer of potential. JULIE JUSTE was more a case of just Julie (it's the way I tell'em, missus). Instead of the anticipated five-piece, she took to the stage with a solitary guitarist. Both were understandably sheepish at first, but by the end of their set, Michael was milling around as if infected by beri-beri,



and Julie was fiddling with her dress like "a Romany bint in a field with her paints" (HMHB fans will get that one). To be fair, the music was pleasant, Julie could sing, and the lyrics were worth attention. It was a shame that their sound was not more suited to the wide expanses of the Corn Exchange, and these two would have stood more of a chance if they had not been stood up. THE UPPER ROOM were as disappointing as the judges' decision to make them heat winners. They possess undoubted ability and polish, write songs with a smack of intelligence, and carry themselves well on stage. But why bands like this are described as 'classy' and 'professional' is beyond me; the most amateur approach of all is to reproduce tired and tested 'music-biz' formulae, without rigour or inquiry, and to churn out compositions and sentiments which are, to a great extent, pseud. I'm sure The Upper Room have the best intentions, and they undeniably gave it the proverbial 200%, but their music is so inoffensive as to be deeply offensive. They treated us to a set not far removed from the one we heard last year (twice), including the protest song 'Southern Discomfort'. Methinks they protest too much. The evening perked up with the appearance of PROHIBITION. As with Colonel Hathi, there are few illusions about what is on offer: the band's T-shirts all advertised the brand of unadulterated, well-grooved gothstomp which proved so enjoyable last year. They were unlucky not to get past their heat then, and the

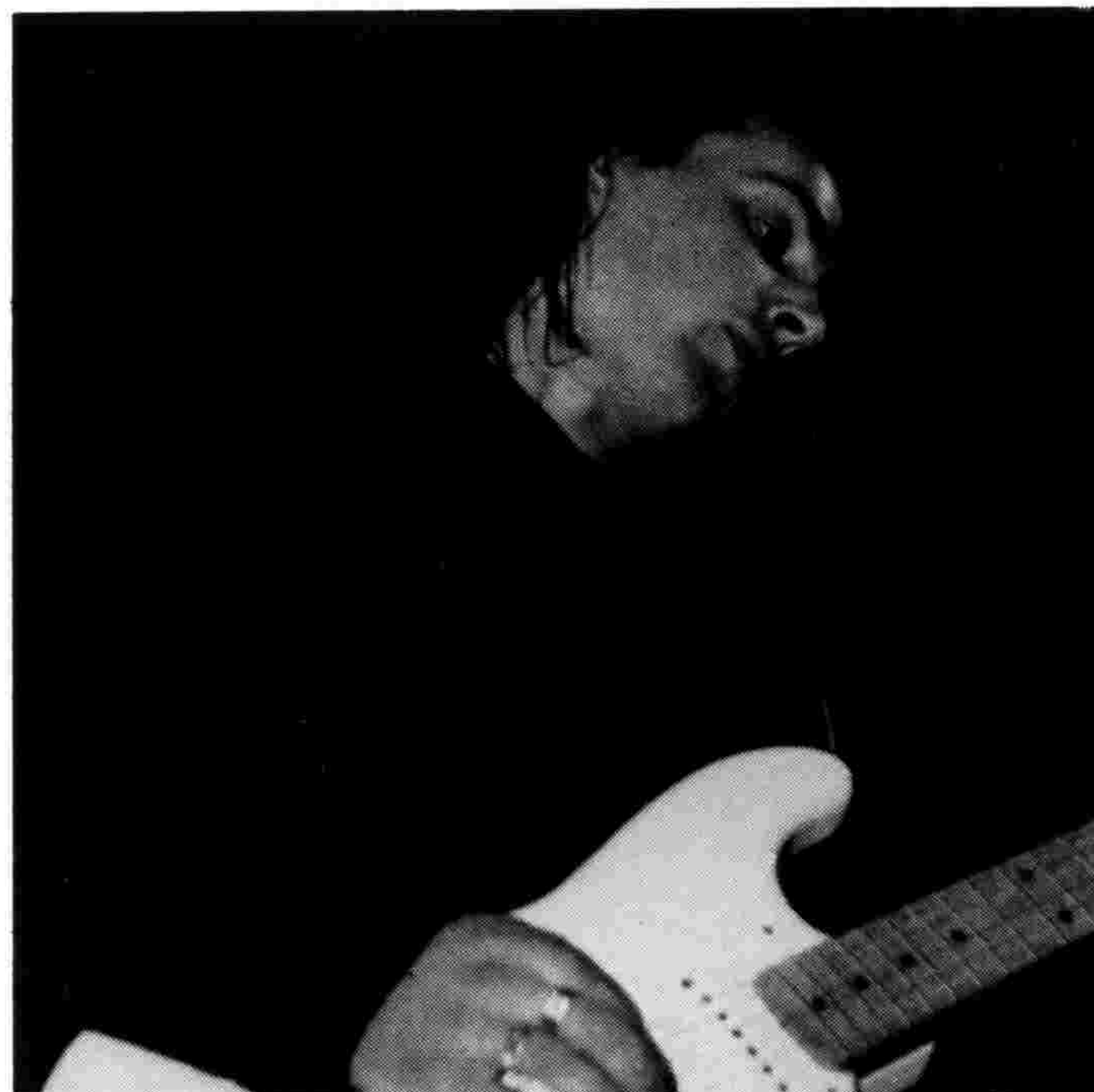


same was true here (they must be sick and tired of being drawn against The Upper Room). The change in personnel has worked in their favour, too. Recovering from a broken string and some early lapses, Prohibition powered onwards with an endearing ponderousness, especially in 'Turmoil'. Nothing earth-shattering, but much less obnoxious than some of the things we were to suffer in later weeks. SUBTERFUGE rounded off affairs, and came a marginal second on my scorecard, mainly for the extraordinary noises like a helicopter propeller winding down, which emanated from somewhere during one of their songs. In general, they made a hearty racket, which was invigorating enough to provoke a spate of stagediving. I'm afraid the cut of the bassist's shirt didn't flatter him, but he helped contribute to some slightly off-beat hurdy gurdy which was most enjoyable. The Upper Room and Colonel Hathi's Dawn Patrol lived to fight another day, as Dickie Davies used to say on World of Sport, but one was left with the impression that this competition is in need of a change or a rest as urgently as Mr. Davies.

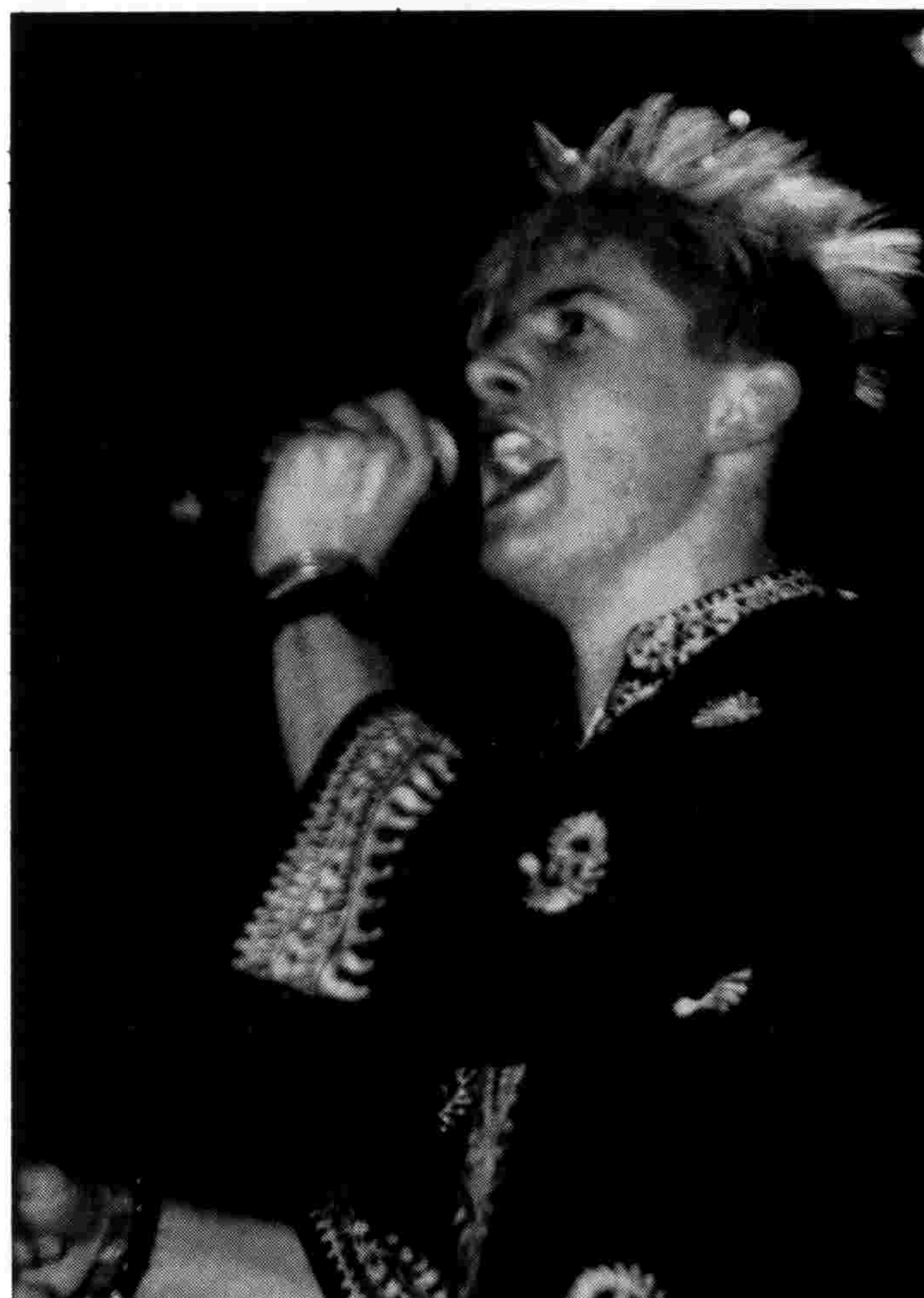
MALCOLM SPURT

HEAT TWO

Sometimes, the bands in the Rock Competition make you want to cry because they are so lacking in imagination and ideas. Group after group trundle on with guitars, vocals and drums in a style that wouldn't have gone amiss in 1972. So it was good to see some bands doing something marginally different this week. ME, LION AND THE YIP YAP YARDIES, for example, drew immediate attention because of their similarity to a hippy convoy. When it came to the music, The Yips went a long way towards cutting a good groove (as they say) with a dancey reggae sound that went way over the heads of fans of 1972. Someone brought along their record collection and played samples from one or two. It all got a bit tatty towards the end, but they were unfortunate not to get through. The band that actually won this heat was 67 SLAMMERS from that well-known rock'n'roll town - Welwyn Garden City. They deserved to go through, impressing all with a melodic if a little traditional indie/guitar thing. I can almost see them on the front of Sounds now. Also going through were 706 who must have stumbled into the wrong venue. They were a jazz fusion group, not featuring much in the way of guitars, although the bass guitar player must be one of the best in this year's competition. Some top class musicianship made them an obvious one to go through, but they were a touch bland for my liking. Going back to the



first band on, VITAL ESCAPE (formerly Tiger's Eye, I'm told) again impressed not only with their funky metal sound but also for their elfine shoes. Then there was also THE UNCUT VERSION, an evangelistic band with a vocalist who brightened up proceedings by talking to the audience. Also unlucky not to go through were IMMACULATE DECEPTION (a typical rock competition band name), a punk thrash group fronted by John



Lydon (not really). Which just leaves MAYHEM, whose set of cliched heavy rock was instantly forgettable. Altogether, not a bad week. Maybe the greater diversity is down to it being an 'Anglian' Rock Competition; but probably not.

JONATHAN GOODACRE

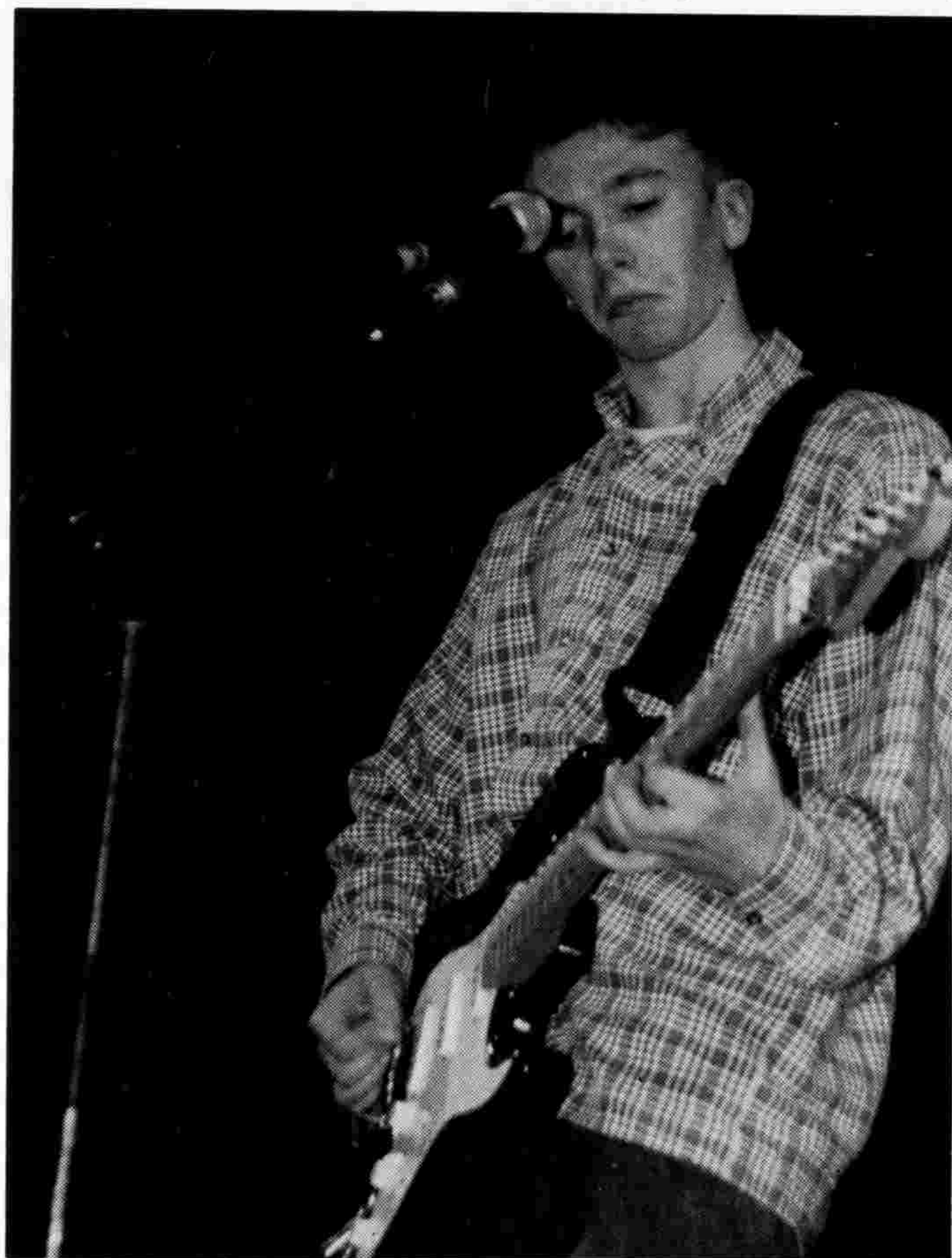
HEAT THREE

THE GODBOTHERERS were the first of several student bands to brave the boards tonight, and as they gathered confidence, they gave an accurate rendition of their post-Smiths pop. Good harmonies and good tunes are now augmented by an accordionist, who seems blissfully unaware



how much it looks like he is wrestling with an over-full filing cabinet. All nine of THE ADVENTURE KINGS MCKENZIE seemed suspiciously familiar... wait a minute, there can't be two Soham vocalists who dare sing with one foot on the monitor... yes, it's finally all begun to get to This Replica and Nutmeg, and they've time-travelled to meet one another in 1978. And it's hip. No-one is more surprised than they are. "Yeah, come on, groove, groove, groove that thaaang!". Give up the day job. BELLWETHER, second university band of the night, seemed a little bit tame in comparison. Pleasant unmemorable songs about sad things like breaking up a relationship with a girl, happy things like starting a relationship with a girl, and in-betweeny, just-can't-put-your-finger-on-it things like just coasting along in a relationship with a girl. Observant musos will have noticed last year's guitarist (from their previous incarnation as Quiff) watching emotionally from the crowd, his tie and pinstripe suit bringing an even sadder sad feeling to their lyric "when Monday comes, where will you be when Monday comes?". Third and final university offering were THE QUICKFITTERS, a disturbingly young bunch from Selwyn College with a nice line in Waterboys rip-offs. Musically inventive, but evidently hampered by not having a relationship with a girl to write songs about. Headbands are usually a bit of a mistake if you want to avoid a journalistic pigeonhole, so I shed no tears in declaring HUD shite heavy metal. ANGSTROM, who followed them, were good heavy metal. So it goes. Next were KEITH'S DAD, the band that many had been waiting for. Unquestionably the masters of the sardonic lyric and the pint-splutteringly shite guitar solo, they seemed a bit undirected tonight, though as usual for pure entertainment they steal the show. THE DENIAL were the surprise of the night, totally committed to their Wellerish, aggressive attitude, and as tight as Geoff Cape's ringpiece. And that "Dave Crozier is full of shite"

T-shirt can't have done them any favours as they were cruelly snubbed by the judges, who went instead for Adventure Kings McKenzie followed by, gasps of disbelief,



the Quickfitters. The Rock Comp. - Ladbrookes wouldn't go anywhere near it.

BEN MILLER

HEAT FOUR

The opening band was GAB MERINGUE, a three piece from Warboys. Their first two songs were OK, but spoilt by unnecessary key changes, always a sign that the songs are actually crap. One song had a definite Gary Moore influence, and although some of the guitar sounds were good, it was always ruined by wank solos (daddy was in the audience, however, and was delighted by his son's efforts). Next on were THE BUZZ, described as a trio specialising in obscure sixties soul classics (oh yawn) - and, sure enough, they were shite. Covers bands really shouldn't bother, but I did like The Jam song they covered, which I can't remember the name of (damn!). New guitar pop band TRAIN had a dreadful singer and a complete chisler on backing vocals. The jangly guitar became a bit repetitive, although the bass was good, if not clever. SHADES OF INDIFFERENCE, the judges' choice on the night, followed; a rock / pop band with an annoying synth sound in all their songs. The efforts of the frontman, however, did not go unnoticed - even if his voice was not brilliant. FORFEIT had a changed line-up from last year - for the worse - but this band was one of the better



efforts on the night. The SUBVERSIVE TOADSTOOLS were next, a young looking band whose music was much worse than it sounded! What is it about shite bands from Ramsey, with awful singers that people go mad about? SAFFRON'S DAUGHTER took my vote - a thrashy band who didn't just produce a wall of noise. I liked the singing and drums, and (planned or not) their static look. Finally, THE LA LA TREE, and man's last hope went out the window. A very clean pop band, with good voice and bass - oh so nice! The introduction of backing vocals gave them a fuller - almost Style Council - sound, but if two members of my band asked me to leave the stage while they played a duo, I'd say "big elephant's fanny". I didn't need to wait for the result - they were the other band from this heat through to the semis.

HARRY EDWARDS

HEAT FIVE

It was a cold Valentine's evening when I arrived at the Corn Exchange; so cold, it seems, that hardly anyone else braved the snow to attend. However, all the bands turned up, and the heat began. First to appear were SWEET JANE, an indie pop band which has good vocals. I enjoyed these at first, but soon got quite bored of them by the end of their set. Despite this though, they did get through to the semi-finals, in the runners-up position. Next on were INCIPIENT. I can appreciate some heavy metal as being good, but not these. The bass player walking around the audience was an interesting touch, but not interesting enough to secure a place in the next round. Still waiting for a band to really enthuse over, and on came THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF BETTY BLUE. They had the fans, they had the T-shirts, they had the boy with the whistle dancing on stage, but they didn't have the music - not for me, anyhow. Next! SHE SAID, SHE SAID - an ordinary rock band, who played ordinarily through most of their set. That changed, however, in the final song, a catchy compilation including The Soup Dragons, Happy Mondays and even Gazza, amongst others. They were the winners of this heat. Then came THE NINE RIDERS, a four piece band from Haverhill who are rather keen on alcohol, and who perhaps should be renamed The Nine Minutes, because that's how long they lasted on stage. Although vocalist Mark Cowling took charge throughout the set, it wasn't entirely song lyrics which came out of his mouth! The band was disqualified for being drunk and for misuse of the stage equipment, but what was heard of their set was actually quite good, and I think that they would have probably got

through - especially if they had played their 'Chocolate Bunnies' song. Still, they enjoyed themselves, but maybe the other five Riders would have done better! After that bit of excitement REBUS DREAM brought the audience back down to earth with a thump, an obvious pub rock band which really wasn't anything special. Only two bands left to play, there is hope yet. The first of these is TIMEWAVE. There is an exhibitionist in all of us, but most of us learn how to control ourselves: the lead singer of Timewave hasn't. He



performed a striptease throughout his act, whilst dancing like John Travolta. The music didn't do anything for me, either. They would make a good cabaret act. Finally, THREEHEAD. And what's this? People dancing? They must be good. But no, they didn't really appeal to me. They're young and they're popular, but they're nothing special; maybe that will change with time. One of their songs was called 'Bleak', and that unfortunately was the general outcome of this evening.

KERRI SELLENS

HEAT SIX

In previous years, the Rock Competition heats were full of punters looking out for bands worth watching. This year, the situation has reversed, with many bands playing on a big stage in front of just a handful of their friends. Heat 6 was one of the best attended heats, and it was CITIZEN, a trio from the Kings Lynn area, who opened with a bog standard set of melodic rock. On the credit side, this band were near note perfect, and sounded like a session off the Friday Rock Show: what they lacked was the stage presence so essential to bands that play this particular style of music. PRIVATE IDAHO looked a better proposition - they certainly had energy and made an agreeable noise. The rhythm section were on form, and the drummer must be worth a few bob on the transfer market. Although this performance did not win them a place in the semi-finals, perseverance and a few more gigs (if they can find them) are recommended. BEYOND THIS POINT were a touch old fashioned; the singer's shirt was almost as loud as his band! They did sound as though they were getting their act together, though listening to the process was a somewhat tedious experience. HIGHER BREED, a bluesy rock band from Ely, suffered from a similar predicament: whilst one of their songs, 'Angel', was well constructed and thus thoroughly enjoyable, what followed was little more than a

shambles. MISINTERPRETED came from Hitchin and changed their name to Zippy's Last Fish for the night: their ideas ran out there, for their contribution to the competition was negligible. They looked young and inexperienced, and lacked the know-how to play a decent 20 minute set of indie rock (their chosen style). The first sign of life for over an hour was provided by WHAT IT IS. Like Vigil's Aunty (from whom this band have inherited two members), they are strident power popsters. Their lively performance was a good audience warm-up for THE COLOR FACTORY. Sole survivors from last year's final, they were full of beans as always, and probably as aware as the rest of us that they could have sung 'Three Blind Mice' and still won this heat. A late challenge for the runners-up spot was put in by OUT OF ORDER. This band did have a lot going for them, most notably



a good vocalist and some well-rehearsed songs which were played in an Erasure / Simple Minds vein. Not surprisingly, they got what they came for. But what of the audience? For £2.50, they saw eight bands, of whom three or four made the admission charge seem like a bargain. It appears that interest in the contest has dwindled, and the most likely causes for this appear to be the fall-off in the number of entrants from the City of Cambridge, together with the alternative choices for our time and money offered by the number of national bands which come to either the Corn Exchange or The Junction.

PAUL CHRISTOFOROU

HEAT SEVEN

First on, SIOUX CITY, glam rock (catsinthealleyratsinmy-snakeskinboots), I was reliably informed. That information proved to be about as accurate as a Scud missile; therefore a bluesy Quireboyish "all on the chorus" bit of r'n'r, well executed, though their image (despite a rather sexy guitarist in frills, furiously sucking in his cheeks) needs some attention. The rest were mainly garbed in Faith No More t-shirts... never mind. The diminutive singer, although verging dangerously on the side of corpulent, did a good job: a promising start to the proceedings. Next, another



heavy metal band. SLAM - Def Leppard with David Coverdale vocals, very old and very professional. They blotted their copybook by singing about the Gulf... though I felt a much better person form listening to it... thank you for sharing your thoughts with me. 'part from that, tight and well-performed, even if it has been done before. APOLLYON reminded me of Warrant, certainly the most contemporary of the heavy rock bands so far. Thrash metal is slowly waning from the mainstream of metal, so, suffice to say, I was quite impressed with their grinning, bouncy presentation, best so far, after a fashion. TRIBE OF DAN, with their kitbag wielding following, were the favourites going into the heat - quite justifiably. Pixie-like vocals, independent end of the rock market, a highly endearing scruffball singer strumming away at his Telecaster, by the end of their set, they had certainly impressed. One thing that really irritated me was the bass which wasn't earthed properly, and thus clicked like fuck every time he played (pretentious muso journalist! - Ed.). Following that, NO WAY!, very young and not very good...sorry...another fat singer...one very tortured version of 'Jumpin' Jack Flash' and not a lot else. DREAM DISCIPLES, singer resplendent in his Dukla Prague away kit turned out to be a very angry young man with something to say. Offered something which could be best described as extremely adolescent version of New Model Army. The clogs in the audience didn't tap, so 'nuff said. Then there was PROMISE... one of them wore leather trousers and hush puppies...arf arfarf. Started off like The Who and then rapidly descended into that U2 bollocks that was so much in vogue a little while ago. They did a song about the Gulf...I feel much better as a person for listening to it... thanks for sharing your feelings with me. No songs. Lastly, GENERATION NATION walked on, looking and sounding like that Basildon band of ex insurance clerks, Depeche Mode. However, despite the leather and hideous vocals, they were a very very weak keyboard band. Not at all impressive. So, after a good start, the heat slipped back into the now all too familiar groups who hide behind the word 'local', or wield it like a French riot policeman, and turned embarrassed blushes into the aftermath glow of furious rage at such an affront.

MARK "fat bastard" CURTIS

HEAT EIGHT

It is small wonder that this event is so sparsely attended: although it offers an excellent opportunity for the emerging acts of the area to ply their wares in a large venue, potential attendees are discouraged by the amount of heats involved and, to a larger extent, by the embarrassing lack of individuality and inventiveness of the competitors.



THE CARNIVAL are a five piece of 16 year olds led by an over-confident and rather uncharismatic vocalist, who perform cover versions of rock, funk and blues in an uninspiring manner. HENRY AND ME appear for a second year,



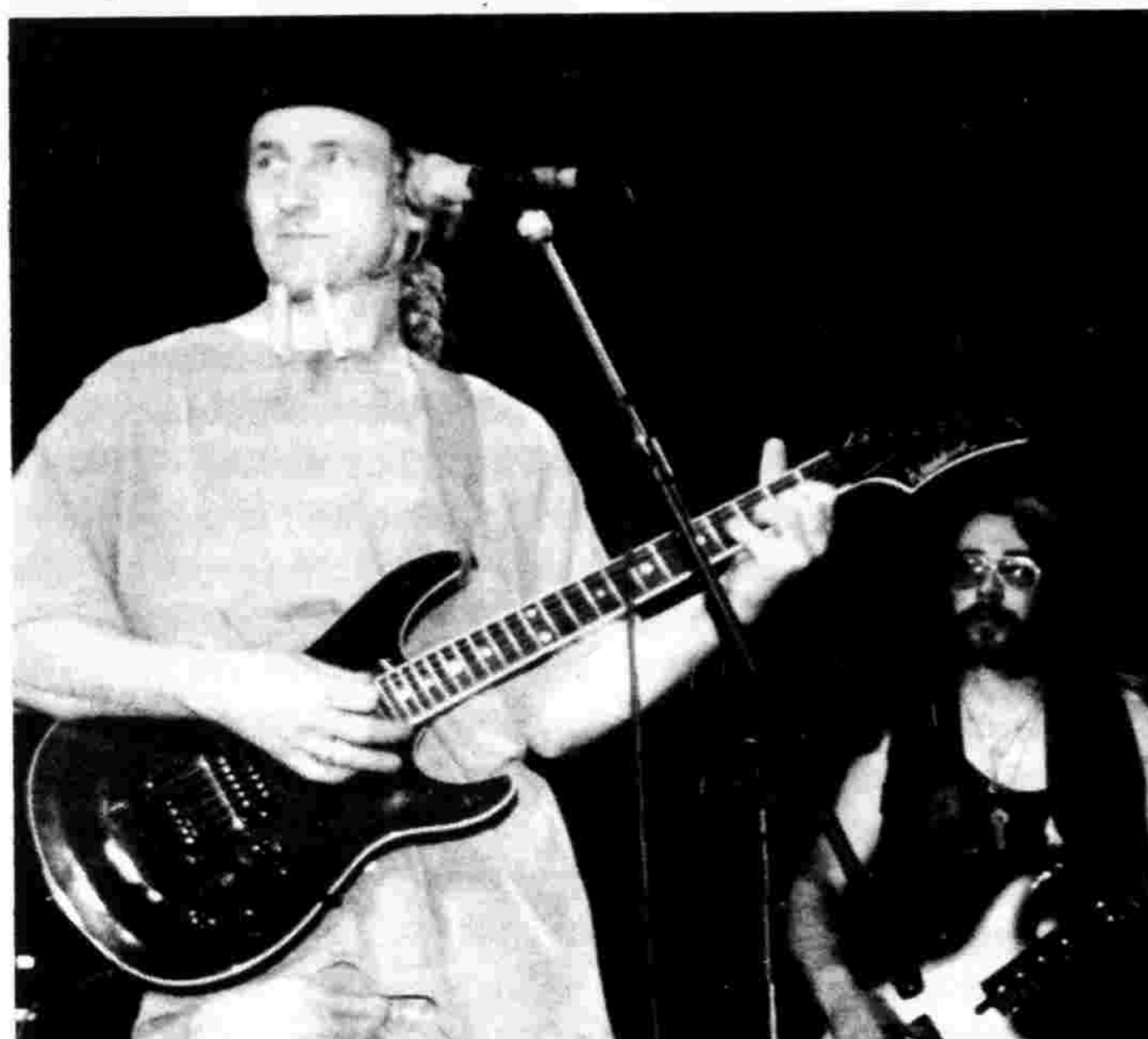
proffering some tuneful funk with moments of pleasant keyboard underlay. Then there's THE WEIRD BROTHERS, who receive ten out of ten for innovation, presenting folk-inspired duetting female vocalists alongside a guitarist who resembles in looks and style Jason from Spaceman 3, and a keyboard player who alternates with acoustic guitar. The vocalists render pleasant harmonies, but the songs lack intensity and variation, and largely fail to take shape. Very nascent but nevertheless talented. QUICKSAND BEACH PARTY are a trio from Robinson College and attempt to imitate the jangly guitar merriment of The Brilliant Corners and The Bodines. However, flat vocals and rather drab bass playing result in mediocrity. DIRTY FINGERS are an experienced Cambridge heavy rock quartet, fronted by an Alice Cooper devotee. The songs typically feature firm bass lines and anthemic choruses, though some of the guitar solos lack penetration and the vocalist's range is a touch limited. Nevertheless, they are capable in their field, if a shade bland. SUDDEN DESCENT whine on for their twenty minutes with an uninspiring blend of thrash metal and rock. Tonight's qualifiers, and deservedly so, are CATCH JACK and THE VIEW FROM WITHOUT. The former quartet startle the crowd with a varied, five song set, opening with the tuneful, jangly, appropriately titled, 'Competition Time', and progressing to a steel edged punky-feel fourth song. The final song begins with an atmospheric whirring guitar effect, develops with a rampant lead solo, then runs out of time! The View From Without owe much of their prowess to singer Jon Haynes, whose strong tenor strains are well

suited to such a large venue. Their Simply Red style rock blues is very professionally rendered, and their coup de grace 'Change Of Direction' soars to a raging finale. They have acquired a more punchy, rocky feel since I saw them in November, and should make the final with ease.

ALASTAIR NICOLSON

SEMI-FINALS

It was a disappointing first semi-final: only two bands on the night were worthy of a place in the final, and even then the judges managed to cock it up by ignoring the claims of sonic dance groovers THE ADVENTURE KINGS MCKENZIE. TRIBE OF DAN (Mk. 2) were far and away the outstanding band on the night - a sort of New Model Army with humour and tunes. 706's improvisational jazz ramblings were lost on me after about five minutes; OUT OF ORDER were cheerful, if unimaginative; both THE LA LA TREE and THE UPPER ROOM were



very competent, but lacked conviction; CATCH JACK changed their match-winning set from the previous week - they obviously had forgotten Beach Boys singer Mike Love's oft-quoted advice to Brian Wilson: "don't fuck with the formula"; and SHE SAID SHE SAID were frankly out of their depth; how on earth did they get through their heat?

The second semi-final was better, though seven of the eight bands were no more than workmanlike - only THE COLOR FACTORY showed any semblance of inspiration. COL. HATHI performed an all-original ska set in double quick time - Gary Brown wanted to get in front of the television to watch the Manchester Utd. game; Jon Haynes did an excellent Percy Plant impression in THE VIEW FROM WITHOUT's final song; 67 SLAMMERS had some catchy, if conventional, tunes; SHADES OF INDIFFERENCE's keyboards were just a little too 'sweet'; SWEET JANE looked a competent indie rock band; ditto THE QUICKFITTERS. The judges' verdict: The Color Factory, The View From Without and 67 Slammers.

Match of the day on 31st March: the Color Factory v Tribe Of Dan, kick-off 7.30pm. The spectators will include 67 Slammers, The La La Tree, The View From Without and Out Of Order.

BIG RON

RECORDS

THE DEAR JOHNS

SHAME / HISTORY

derekrandallrecords DWR 001

What a strange but utterly nice bunch of chaps The Dear Johns are. Their debut single on the newly formed derekrandallrecords label sees The Dear Johns a little unsure of which musical path to take, but still lyrically cynical and enjoying themselves. Their amazing success at last year's Rock Competition final was a real breath of fresh air, as the funky threesome swung their trendy college pants, had a laugh and a curry, and won over much of the crowd.



'Shame', the A-side, is a tight, choppy workout, with Ben's vocals and guitar hinting a lot at Gedge's Wedding Present, although not so monotonic in presentation. The production here is exceptionally crisp and well-balanced, as it is also on side B, where we find the shorter, dancier 'History', full of anguished, sensitive Morrissey-infected vocals and twangy, spikey guitars. A lot is expected of The Dear Johns, and this is definitely a step in the right direction.

(Available at The Dear Johns gigs, price £1.50, and by mail order from derekrandallrecords, 20 Alliance Court, Cambridge CB1 4XE, at £1.75, inc. p&p)

PETE GARNER

CROSSLAND

PARTY PIECE / PROTECT ME

Freefall Records FALL 005

A bit of a surprise, this. For their second single, the band have plumped for 'Party Piece', a lively number which always goes down well at gigs. Vocalist Chris Williams, who was criticised in S&H no. 25 for his stage movements, bounces his way through a three minute jaunt which is Crossland at their most commercial, though the song is by no means typical of their usual style. I think I slightly prefer the B-side, 'Protect Me'. This is more representative of the band: a slow edgy build-up, a little Simple Minds-ish as usual, with heavy riffs and chorus. You either like them, or you find them a bit hard on the ears, depending on your taste. As a promotional exercise, the single should be seen as well as heard, for the record is nicely packaged in a well-designed picture sleeve with all the relevant information, and credits for all concerned. Well done lads!

PAUL CHRISTOFOROU

THRILLED SKINNY

LET THERE BE SHELVING E.P.

Hunchback / Glut Records HUNCH 008 / FRIDGE 005

Thrilled Skinny's somewhat strange but well-documented fetishes about walls, shelves, brackets, etc. continue with yet another DIY EP from the hardworking Luton lads. The high speed guitar-sodden cacophany of their superb debut album has been toned down, and more emphasis has been given to the vocals (the lyrics of which are enclosed on a handy sheet) and to the other instruments (apple and hunting horn?). That said, it loses none of its speedcore power and blistering effectiveness. These four longer and comparatively slower tracks have all been well thought out and given a greater structure and depth.

The title track is indeed the jewel in the box here: starting with the familiar oddball organ trill, it crashes into simple three chord thrashing and an irresistible chorus, before collapsing in on itself in a mass of guitar chaos, whistles, etc. 'Outside Your Room' leads with sombre keyboards before a really brutal bassline whips the song into action. Simon Goalpost sounds like an angry young Paul Weller, and as he bellows out the immortal line "I've wasted all my hours writing songs that no-one sings", you can't help feeling that this record could well mark the beginning of the change.

(Available from Hunchback Records, P.O. Box 487, Luton LU1 4QZ, price £1.75 [inc. p&p])

PETE GARNER

THE CHARLOTTES

THINGS COME APART L.P.

Cherry Red Records BRED 92

There are perhaps a few initial disappointments to be felt looking at the track listing of this LP. Owing to Simon joining Slowdive just before the final recording session, it doesn't include the epic 'Fireworks', which, for many, was the highlight of the last tour. Also, some of the titles are already in fans' collections. The opener 'Liar' was, of course, previewed with a 12" release last year, but 'Love In The Emptiness' is a new recording of the Subway single. It is faster and the Minstrel Court studio has produced a fuller sound. Unfortunately, the tone of the vocals is distractingly different, and I was reminded of the Anglia TV announcer's comment after a video clip of Elizabeth Fraser singing 'Song to The Siren': "I hope her cold gets better." I don't think I would have commented if I hadn't heard the original version, and no doubt this one will grow on me until eventually I will feel as wrong as that announcer was. 'See Me Feel' is a loud punky thrash that some of you may have on CD: the song dates back to the Peel session of late '89. 'Beautify' is nearly as old and was the regular gig opener to warm up the crowd; it sounds sadly anonymous here.

The rest of the album is wonderful. Pride of place goes to the nine minutes long 'By My Side'. It is a slow, moody multilayered piece, over which Petra holds those long dreamy notes in double-tracked harmonies. She is also more emotional on the exciting 'Mad Girl's Love Song' (another standout on the autumn tour) and 'Prayer Song', which also features some imaginative drum patterns by Simon - you can hear why he was considered integral to the Charlottes' sound. 'By My Side' and 'Mad...' also include some striking little bassnote clusters by Andrew Wade that highlight the

'less means more' dictum. The LP closes with 'We're Going Wrong', a track which might find hi-fi buffs checking whether the record is off-centre - but it's Graham wittily slurring the notes to give them a bizarre drunken sound.

If this is really the end of The Charlottes, then they can look back on a body of work that can stand up to comparison with any of their contemporaries. But with 'Liar' zooming up the U.S. college radio charts, and this LP already being snapped up by licencees in Germany, Italy and Japan, this could be just the end of a chapter.

ANDREW CLIFTON

TAPES

BIG CLOTHES FOR LUCY

So Tired

Three track demo

Big Clothes For Lucy have a Camchester sound; an exciting hybrid of Mancunian style and Oxbridge confidence. Lucy, who is just over a year old, will, I'm sure, grow up to be a very big gal indeed.

'So Tired' and 'It Doesn't Matter' are vehicles for the undulating funk-me guitars laid upon needle-sharp percussion. In classic '90's psychedelia mode, the background bubbles with launderette noises. But Lucy is not music to wash smells to. The group has a strong musical identity thanks, in part, to Mr. Jesudason, their composer-in-residence, who has a name as formidable as his talent. These two tracks are fast and funky, but not furious.

'Never As You Say' is a down-tempo ditty with musical elements reduced to a skeletal framework - a sort of 'Lucy on the F-Plan' number - which sets off Disbrey's luxuriously languid vocals to full effect. Not only is the song a good hum, it also proves that the band don't need to wrap themselves in a kaleidoscope of sounds in order to prove their ability.

The group has a smooth-edged professionalism which is reflected in every aspect, from the tape cover to the music itself. But can you take a gang of four seriously who are named Disbrey, Jesudason, Gottlieb and Dr. Sardonicus? I think you should, because Big Clothes For Lucy deserve to be huge... a size 18 at least.

EMMA FINN

THE BROTHERHOOD

Three track demo

Unfortunately, since little information accompanies this demo, I can't tell you much about the band's background. However, on the first hearing, it is apparent that The Brotherhood have come a very long way in two years. This offering begins with 'Feelgood', a great song with a really catchy chorus. What's most pleasing is to find a local band that makes use of warm and accurate harmonies: other bands take note. Harmonies, executed correctly, can make you sound so much more professional - too many people are unaware of the importance of backing vocals, and the degree to which they can enhance and fill out a song. Second on the menu is 'Shine on', which, although has a much thought-about arrangement, tends to over-indulge itself and thus loses

momentum. However, the band show that they at least have an understanding of the need for light and shade. The last track, 'Taxi', is a slower, more sensitive song in which The Brotherhood try to illustrate their more emotive and passionate side: but although the harmonies are still exceptional, sadly, the lyrics are limp. What promises much delivers little. 'Taxi' is struggling at the leash, trying so desperately to explode into the rock epic it wants to become... but it doesn't quite make it. Having said that, from experience I can concede that it is much harder to reproduce the depth of feeling in a studio that comes so naturally on stage. It's probably a result of the staid and clinical atmosphere of the studio, compared with the excitement and lightning spark generated so often when playing to a packed house in some dodgy backstreet boozier. To sum up, the Brotherhood have the knack of finding great hook lines for their songs, a quality all too rare these days: I hope they continue to do so.

IAN DOCHERTY

SCARLET TEARS

Four track demo

Scarlet Tears consists of Dan (bass/vox), Sid (drums) and Jess (gtr./vox). This demo, recorded in December 1990, is a lively, aggressive representation of a band who have probably experienced a good deal of success with their live performances: it's loud, gutsy, rough and ready, and is something I would have bought in the early '80's when I was going through my New Model Army / Killing Joke phase. 'Halloween game' and 'Razor's edge' owe a lot to the punk era, and pay more attention to brash, rhythmical patterns than to melody. This is a refreshing change, though, bearing in mind today's trend of one bass note on the down beat coupled with some unintelligible airhead wailing in a cavern of reverb and echo ("got any pills, man?"). 'World keeps turning' and 'Upside down', although seeming to offer more of the same, give a hint that there are other influences at work here. They have closer leanings towards heavy rock and r'n'b than I expected. I would suggest that these boys are better songwriters than this tape gives them credit for, and I'm sure that, in time, they will produce more accomplished material with a wider range of appeal. More confidence in their writing ability, rather than a live audience-pleasing approach, will undoubtedly give rise to a very good band. I would like to hear more in about two years time... if they can stay together that long.

IAN DOCHERTY

GIGS

JACOB'S MOUSE / THIS REPLICA / KEITH'S DAD / THE NINE RIDERS
Castle Community Centre, Haverhill

"We have nothing to do with Possession whatsoever", insisted Mark Cowling, and it has to be said that THE NINE RIDERS were a pleasant surprise. The music is still Cult-ish and competent, despite a slightly novicey rhythm section, but the attitude is much more irreverent, hence songs

entitled 'Box of Chocolate Bunnies', 'Blood and Carrots' and 'Your Shirt'. Mr. Cowling used to specialise in the type of sixth-form poetry where Mills and Boon meets Dungeons and Dragons; his new lyrical direction left me wanting more. I liked this band.

It was "first time in Haverhill" for KEITH'S DAD, and judging from the audience reaction - which ranged from lukewarm to abusive - it may be their last. But Tom and the lads, like Cambridge United, usually raise their game when playing in front of a hostile crowd, and tend to turn heckles into chuckles. Several of their songs are cleverly written and cleverly executed. However, the time has come for constructive criticism: (a) jumping around every now and then like trampolinists with cartilage trouble is no substitute for the kind of almost-choreographed stage antics with which bands like The Desmonds used to entertain us: the guitarist for Keith's Dad seems to have a serious dental (or personality) disorder; (b) making capital out of "so crap it's good" material is fine, but unless they put a bit more 'wooaaargh!!!' (their word, not mine) into their music, Keith's Dad risk being laughed at, rather than with. Their record is worth buying, nonetheless.

"The best firms advertise the least", Mark Smith once said, and the best rhythm sections pose the least. THIS REPLICA prove that, even in these dance-o-matic times, you can't go far wrong with authentic bass and drum. All of a sudden they remind me of Can, for some unaccountable reason. Basically, this band are very good, and there's little more to add, except that they were not playing in the costumes - nor the style - given an airing later in the week at the Rock Competition.

JACOB'S MOUSE are clearly going places: even the moshing of both group and fans is less callow than this time last year (although stagediving from nine inches isn't too dangerous). Their music is as provoking as it is difficult to describe: tricks of repetition ricochet off slabs of distortion (hand me my NME, Mrs. Tribley), along with the kind of mystery noises used as posers on 'Ask The Family'. Fluent yet askew. I'm told the band are shortly to do the rounds in London, and they deserve all the plaudits they're bound to receive.

All the bands coped manfully with a fairly primitive PA in what was a successful evening, not least for I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU, who are still suffering at the hands of the very primitive people who stole their equipment.

MALCOLM SPURT

RIDE / SLOWDIVE

Corn Exchange, Cambridge

It seems no time at all since I shuffled along to the Sea Cadets shack to see Ride as indie newcomers; yet with their twelve-inchers penetrating the charts - 'Nowhere' being among the most vital LP releases of the past year - and the band now bill-topping at the Corn Exchange, they can hardly be described as novices.

But first, SLOWDIVE. I've read a lot about Slowdive, and I'm looking forward to hearing their set. I have to say the band is a good deal less interesting than its press. Slowdive sound like all the slow bits of Ride spliced together. Indeed, part of their problem is that they sound so much like Ride, without having any understanding of what

makes Ride so good. As their set crawls by, I think of all the other things they remind me of, like Barclay James Harvest and drying paint. Occasionally, whispered vocals surface, like Harriet out of the Sundays with laryngitis. I think there must be a clause in the contract of every band signed to Creation Records that says there has to be at least one maximum noise number somewhere in the set: the drummer has to hit all his cymbals at random, and the guitarists must pummel their guitars at thirty-two beats to the bar. Some bands are better than others at this trick. In Slowdive's case, it's a welcome relief from the valium haze of the rest of their set.

In RIDE's case, these sudden leaps of thrash are part of the dynamics of the songs. 'Dreams Burn Down' is a good example of this. The verses trickle over you like a waterfall, then the middle bits explode in your face. The tiny details about the way Ride sound are what makes them special; for example the dreamy (some would say vacant) vocals with their Home Counties vowels (don't bother to write and tell me Oxford isn't in the Home Counties: I know I'm on geographical thin ice here). And there's the way one guitar keeps up an engine room of noise, while the other lays the essence of a melody on top of it, like Dream Topping on a blancmange. In a perverse way, they're delightfully old-fashioned and not only because they're a four-piece rock band. Take the final number, 'Seagull', with its possibly contractual cranked-up ending: it's got the bass riff from 'Taxman' and guitar and harmony of The Byrds. Go and listen to 'Eight Miles High', you'll see what I mean. I know, practically everyone these days is sampling the Sixties and trying to look ecstatic. But the point about Ride is that they play with sufficient craft to avoid accusation of pastiche.

TOM WHITE

THE FARM / TOP

Corn Exchange, Cambridge

Tonight, the scallies hit Cambridge. TOP have been hailed as a revelation in many quarters, and recently had ten major labels vying for their signatures, before plumping for Island Records. Collectively, Alan Willis (drums), Joe Fearon (Bass) and Paul Cavanagh (vox/gtr.) produce spacious melodic tunes, effective in their simplicity. At times their sound lacks penetration as the bass and guitar meld, but there are moments of beauty to be found in the dreamy 'Soul Magic' and the infectious 'She's Got The World'. Given time to develop new ideas, they could blossom and reach the heights of their closest parallels, The Las.

Visions of ancient Rome grace the backdrop as THE FARM enter stage to promote their new album, 'Spartacus'. I'm not a fan of the baggy bandwagon, but there are instances when the Farm have appeal: 'All Together Now', tonight's second encore, is an apt expression of the peace and harmony which can occur in the war between the pawns of battle, and 'Tell The Story' (written after the Toxteth riots) ignites once the backing vocalist begins her soaring refrain. Other songs feature impressive keyboard effects at their inception, but all too often are succeeded by a rigid drum beat and anthemic, chanting chorus. It's a shame, because in their slower paces The Farm can whip up a fair helping of emotion: but emotional intensity does not sell records.

ALASTAIR NICOLSON

JUNCTION GIGS

SILVERFISH / FUDGE TUNNEL / THE BLACK SKY

THE BLACK SKY's fifty minutes set of gothic hardcore marked them as a band of considerable technical talent, with songs such as 'The Cage', 'Every Precious Day' and 'Wounded Land' featuring, at their inception, melodic interplay between guitar and bass which The Mission would be proud of, before exploding into swirling tornadoes beneath baritone vocal choruses. However, some of the choruses, when the guitars became synchronised, lacked punch, and 'Great Dictator' and 'War Chant' sounded a mite thrashy - but there were enough moments of promise to suggest that this Peterborough quartet can carve a name out for themselves. If The Black Sky were something of a revelation, tonight's main support, FUDGE TUNNEL, were decidedly disappointing. Their set was held together only by tight drumming, with a few moments of cultured sound penetrating the general thrash. Vocal dynamics were non-existent, the singer's tones resembling Rick Astley's, rather than the Lemmy he was trying to emulate. And so on to the stars, SILVERFISH. The personification of sonic vivacity, this cacophany raged for 45 minutes, from the opening 'Pink And Lovely' to the concluding 'Weird Shit, Don't Fuck'. In the tornado's vortex was the 'delicate' Lesley, encircling her stage in stomps and struts, thrusting out her tongue and caterwauling like the last banshee in Hell, whilst the rampant noise eddied unabated around her - an unholy mixture of hardcore and punk. There's no ceremony here, no pomp, just a teeth-grinding, soul-wrenching blast of murderous fun. Yes, fun - from the moshers' delirium on the firecracked floor to each jocose contortion on Lesley's face. An encore of 'Motherfucker', and they're gone, leaving us to crawl from the carnage to insignificant normality. Long live this exploding terror!

ALASTAIR NICOLSON

THE ATOM SEED / EASY / BASTI

Despite The Atom Seed's ability to be about the most compatible band to support, the support acts chosen for this evening's entertainment were a little inappropriate, to say the least. BASTI seem to be about one musician short of an orchestra: they have seven members, including two drummers who both appear to be following the same beat. The result might be a tight studio sound, but tonight the only result was a disorganised mess. Apart from the safety in numbers theory, Basti seemed to have little else going for them on a cramped Junction stage. EASY - perhaps another fine example of a squandered support slot? Well maybe not: they did deliver some good material and went some way to saving the red faced blushes of their predecessors. After witnessing THE ATOM SEED's performance at The Marquee last year (and being promptly blown away), I awaited a resume performance with lead-lined boots and baited breath. I am happy to report that time hasn't weathered one of the freshest funk bands since the music press declared "it's trendy to be funky". The Atom Seed fulfilled all anticipations by delivering almost all of their latest red-hot platter and maintaining their usual bull-buggering standards, which were lapped up by a funk-hungry Cambridge crowd. As encores, the classics 'Foxy Lady' and 'Wild Thing' rattled the Junction's

rafters - rafters which will not be rattled in similar style for quite some time.

RUSSELL FOULGER

('Apple Crumble' fanzine)

MISTY IN ROOTS

Steering a course between the Scylla and Charybdis of ragga and dub (African Headcharge purveyed an excellent brand of the latter at the Corn Exchange the night before), Misty In Roots compare favourably with the help-yourself -breakfasts which used to be in vogue at cheap and nasty hotels. Such was the sundry fayre available that one usually chose far too many different eatables and far too much of each, leaving the buttery (as these feeding places were invariably called) either satiate or unsatisfied. Misty In Roots offer a similarly riotous mix, except that the ingredients and the experience are entirely pleasant. Their blend of clever bass lines, roots guitar and ska brass soothes one moment, cajoles the next; they are paradoxically both old-fashioned and fashionable. Minus their splendid headgear, the two front men would bear a vague resemblance to Malcolm Marshall and Courtney Walsh, but it was the crowd who did all the bouncing (a bit laboured, that one). Good reggae has the trick of asking which side of the beat you should be moving to, and for those who are pent-up and not penthoused, no better balm could be prescribed. I can't pretend to understand the words too well, but some fun was had at the expense of yuppies. If we are to believe Shabba Ranks, roots music is on the wane everywhere but Britain; on this evidence, we must not write its obituaries yet.

MALCOLM SPURT

THE HOUSE OF LOVE

1990 was the year when The House Of Love fell from the pedestals on which they were so readily foistered by music journalists after the release of their eponymously-titled debut album in mid-1988. The adulation soon bore heavy, and 1989 saw the scratching of a proposed second album, and the departure and attempted suicide of multi-talented guitarist Terry Vickers. So, what would 1991 herald? Perhaps the pressure has proved too much: tonight's show was billed as a 'Mystery Gig' - in the same way as a Paris performance a week later - yet word has filtered around, and a full house lay in wait for their loved ones. After a tentative start, the show sprang to life with the crescendoing fifth song 'Se Dest', a volley of powerful melody surging from hypnotic balm. The momentum was sustained thereafter, aided by impressive backdrop imagery. The gentle 'Love In A Car' and the billowing 'I Don't Know Why I Love You' completed the main set, and the contrast between tenderness and perturbation continued in the two encores - 'Man To Child' aside the Stooges' 'I Wanna Be Your Dog'; and 'Beatles And The Stones' with 'Destroy The Heart'. There remains a nervousness behind Guy Chadwick's aloof pose, recognition that his band have yet to recover erewhile adoration. 1991 will be a trial, with their third album - currently in composition - marking a watershed. Yet, tribulation often instills a strong spirit, and much condemnation will be necessary to destroy this heart.

ALASTAIR NICOLSON

BANDS

Angstrom - Madingley 210021
Arcana - Cambridge 860460
Babylon - Peterborough 413703
Bay-X - Ipswich 869180
Betty Blue - Cam. 412598
Beyond This Place - Nmkt. 780524
Big Blue World - P'borough 347294
Big Clothes For Lucy - Cam. 350285
The Black Sky - P'borough 238163
Bleach - Ipswich 225131
Blind Mice - Saffron Walden 30645
The Brotherhood - Cam. 353006
Camb. Mountain Rescue - Cam. 246670
Canterbury Street - Cambridge 62567
The Cherry Orchard - Cam. 248058
The Cherrypickers - Harlow 36743
Citizen - Wisbech 772881
Coldhouse - Stamford 51251
Colonel Gomez - Ely 740900
Colonel Hathi's D. P. - Cam. 358685
The Color Factory - Ely 667385
Creed - Cambridge 315940
Crossland - Ely 663016
Dead Vogue - Thetford 890672
The Dear Johns - Cam. 336320 (day)
The Denial - Chatteris 2822
Dirty Fingers - Cambridge 61454
Donald Elsey - Chatteris 5521
Ether - Huntingdon 63932
Existence Ltd. - Cottenham 51202
Forfeit - Cambridge 410119
The Frigidaires - Cambridge 312694
Hallelujah Plan - Cambridge 811220
The Hamsters - Southend 340008
The Honeytrap - Mkt. Deeping 342254
Hope'n'Glory - Madingley 210357
I Thought I Told You - H'hill 704452
Immaculate Deception - Cam. 880048
Incipient - Huntingdon 454350
Jacob's Mouse - Haverhill 61562
Jactus - Huntingdon 457809
Jaded Hartz - St Neots 403265
Janglefeet - Peterborough 252472
Keith's Dad - Cambridge 841099
The La La Tree - Cambridge 60923
Limited Edition - Royston 261448
Magenta Bentley - Mildenhall 751756
The Moment - Ely 740244
The Nightjars - Ramsey 822745
Nightshift - Peterborough 205178
Nutmeg - Ely 721761
On The Brink - Ely 721619
Out Of Order - Mildenhall 717228
Pagan Billy - Cambridge 881113
Penelope Tree - Corby 67937
Perfect Circle - Cambridge 241702
The Pleasure Heads - P'boro' 348805
Private Idaho - Gamlingay 51209
Prohibition - St Ives 66986
Pure Mania - Peterborough 69090
The Quickfitters - Cambridge 312081
Razing Agent 500 - Cambridge 60080
Rebus Dream - Cambridge 263356
Rover Boy Combo - Cambridge 880981
Scarlet Tears - Kettering 511781

LISTINGS

Saffron's Daughter - St. Ives 64879
The Seagulls - Cambridge 863111
Session 57 - Newmarket 750724
Shades Of Indiff'ce - St Neots 72145
Shinel - Kings Lynn 772332
Side Effect - B. Stortford 658704
Slam - Cambridge 871949
Sonic Love Coalition - Cam. 872348
The Stokers - Cambridge 357025
Stormed - Cambridge 311872
Subterfuge - Cambridge 834769
Subversive Toadstools - Ramsey 842827
Sundance - Peterborough 230383
This Replica - Ely 721761
Threehead - Ely 663398
Thrilled Skinny - Luton 453385
Throws Of Passion - P'boro' 68336
Timewave - Huntingdon 52951
The Toy Box - Cambridge 67422
Tribe Of Dan - Chatteris 2689
The Uncut Version - Cam. 325637
The Upper Room - Cambridge 213927
View From Without - St Neots 75452
War Dance - Peterborough 314703

PA HIRE

Criterion - Cambridge 242688
Drum & Guitar Centre - Cam. 64410
Music Village - Cambridge 316091
NSD Sound Services - Cam. 245047
Pearce Hire - Peterborough 54950
Silent Running - Cambridge 891206
Sound Advice - Huntingdon 56642
Star Hire - Huntingdon 411159

PHOTOGRAPHY

Neil Carter - St Ives 494303
Tim George - Ramsey 812376
Steve Gillett - Cambridge 426560
Adele Heath - Peterborough 263653
Giles Hudson - Cottenham 51204
Dave Kelly - Cambridge 494564

RECORDING STUDIOS

Avalon - Barkway 8805
Carlton - Bedford 211641
Flightpath - Teversham 5213
Minstrel Court - Cambridge 207979
Quali Sound - Crafts Hill 782948
Stuarts - Huntingdon 830073

REHEARSAL ROOMS

Cambridge area
Flightpath - Teversham 5213

Quali Sound - Crafts Hill 782948
St. Barnabas Church - Cam. 352924

LIGHTING HIRE

D Lights Design - Cambridge 844500
Fuzzy - Cambridge 876651
Just Lites - Cottenham 50851
Pearce Hire - Peterborough 54950
Soft Spot - Cambridge 244639

VENUES

Cambridge

AHEC - 460008
The Alma - 64965
The Boat House - 460905
The Boat Race - 313445
Corn Exchange - 357851
The Junction - 410356
Man On The Moon - 350610
The Rock - 249292
The Wrestlers - 358777
The Zebra - 312058

Great Shelford

The Plough - Camb. 845793

Huntingdon

Lord Protector - 424720

Melbourn

Rock Club - Royston 61725

Newmarket

Rising Sun - 664337

Peterborough

Crown - 341366
Gaslight - 314378
Gladstone Arms - 344388
Norfolk Inn - 62950
The Shamrock - 312706
Shuffles - 63229
St. Ives
Floods Tavern - 67773
St. Neots
Cockney Pride - 73551
Kings Head - 74094
Sawston
University Arms - Camb. 832165

DESIGN

Fusion - Cambridge 243103
Mise En Page - Letchworth 480554

VIDEO RECORDING

Cambridge Video Unit - Cam. 241030
Status Promotions - Cam. 462244

RECORD COMPANIES

Davy Lamp - Harlow 639543
Everlasting - Cambridge 60981
Free Fall - Willingham 60182
Liverish - Bury St. Edmunds 760370
Molesworth - Ramsey 830778

PROMOTIONS

Darren John - Sudbury 676361
Laughing Gravy - P'boro' 348805
Lighthouse - Stevenage 358567
Status Promotions - Cam. 462244