

4th Cambridge Rock Group Competition

Heat previews 21 January to 24 March 1988



Spiritwalk, last year's winners. Photograph from Cambridge Weekly News.

Souvenir Programme Price twenty-five pence or free with S&H11

Heat one

Curious

The contest starts with this aptly-named jazz-rock four piece from Chatteris. They may be five strong by the time you read this. They will have to be very strong to progress from this heat, which is easily the toughest of the lot. Line-



up: Hilary Bailey (bass/vox); Robin Bailey (drums); Ruth Herman (gtr./keybds.); Jason Ratcliffe (gtr.).

Nutmeg

Describe themselves as heavy, pop, new wave, r&b and punk, which is probably about right! The band's presentation hinges around the lunatic antics of singer Tom Dalpra. 1987 saw the release of their 12" sin-

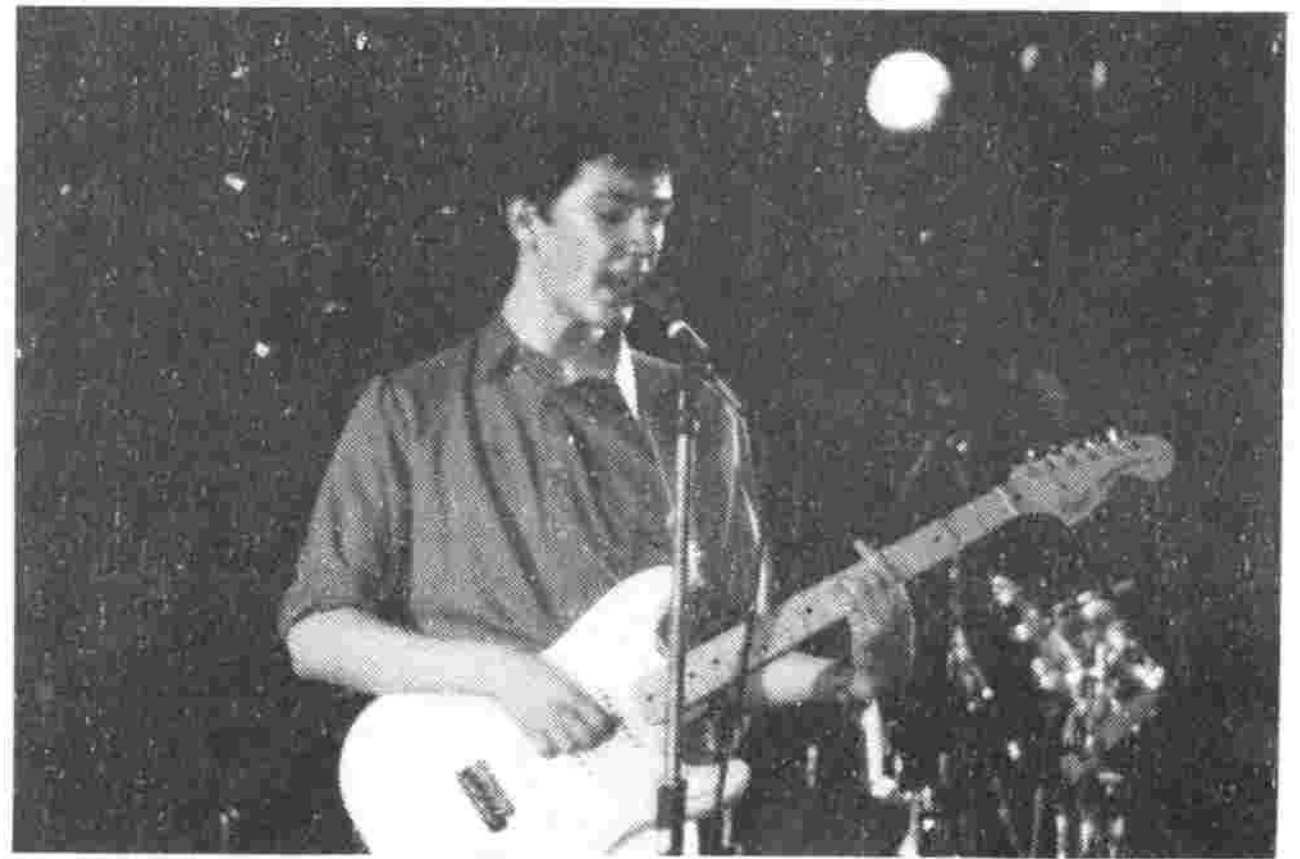
gle 'And In England They're Going Mental', one of their stage favourites. Some of the band's new material is even better. Rest of the band: Matthew Hobbs (gtr.); Rich Scurrah (gtr.); Simon Palastanga (bass); Neil Taylor (drums).

Turn to Blue

You'd be hard pressed to find a more contrasting band to Nutmeg than Turn to Blue (see tape review on page 12). I must confess it took me about three gigs before I could appreciate the finer points of this bunch; lightweight pop tunes and delicate vocal harmonies — charming, but will it fill the vast expanse of the Corn Exchange? Line-up Trevor Bryant (gtr./vox); David Thompson (bass/vox); Nick McNamara (keybds.).

The Bogus Renegades

Four very capable 16 year olds with a tendency to play songs which were



born before they were. Constant gigging and three years's experience as a school band make them well-equipped to compete. The BR's huge band of followers are sure to give them plenty of encouragement, too. Line-up: Richard Turner (vox/rhythm gtr.); Garrie Fleet (lead gtr.); Giles Channon (bass); Crispin Jones (keybds.); Stephen Hill (drums).

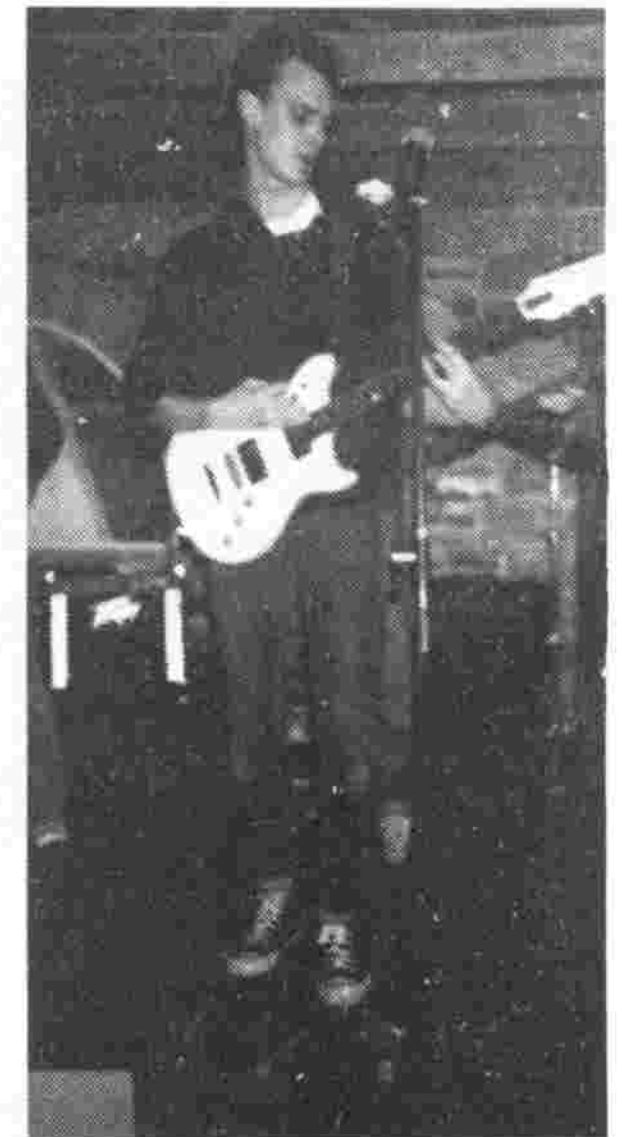
The James Dean Quartet

Five piece combo from CCAT: describe themselves as new wave(ish) funk. Have played several gigs, but not many of late.

Singer/guitarist Adrian Blundell is CCAT Student Union's full-time Ents. Officer. Rest of the band: Jon Cheyne (bass); Steve Dann (gtr./vox); Barnaby Green (drums); Nik Soteduh (percussion).

Indiscretion

Last year's best young band return, having replaced lead guitarist Mark Fowell with Rowan Robertson, who's said to be even better. Rest of the band: Richard Fairclough (vox/rhythm gtr.); Janne Jarvis (bass); Kevin Hart (drums).



The Fires in Arabia

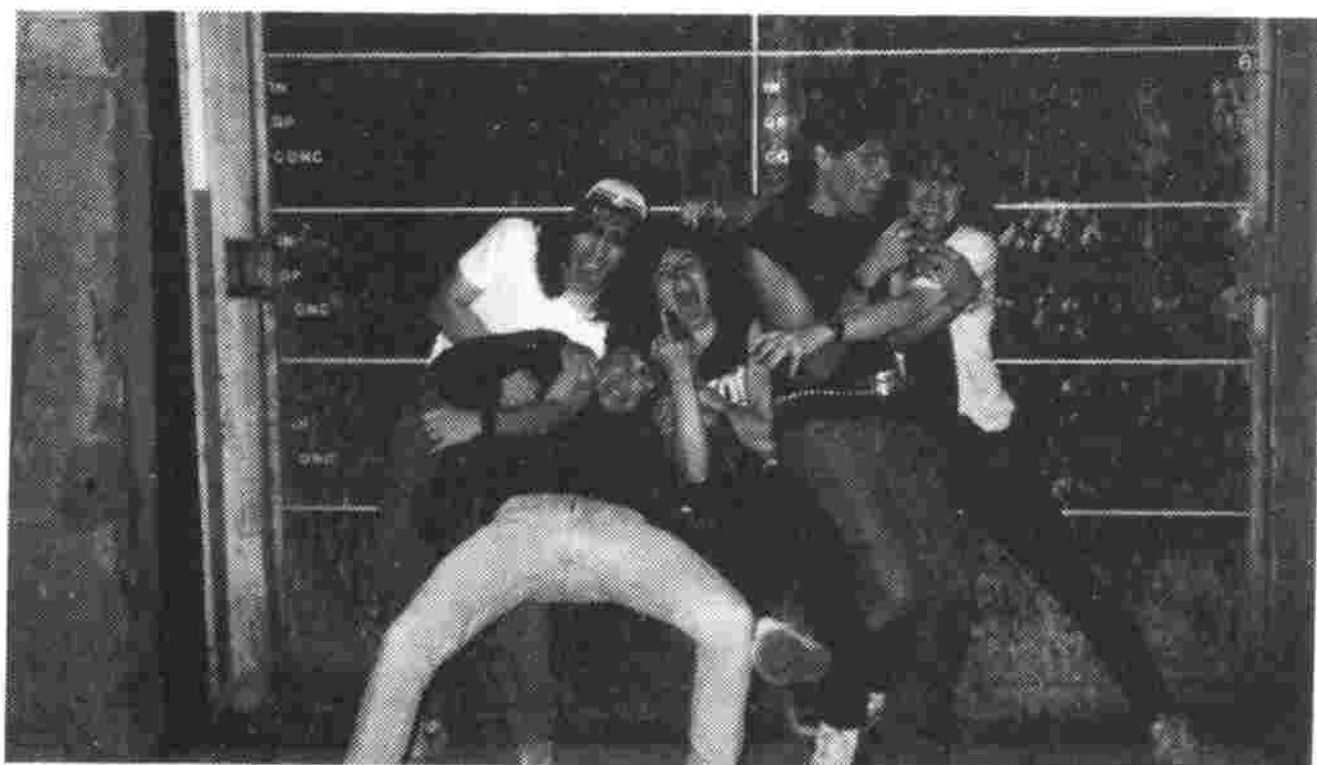
Four piece new wave rock band previously associated with Grinding Halt and one of last year's entrants, The Parody. Line-up: Steve O'Sheta (bass); Paul Collinson (vox); Chris Mallows (gtr.); Ralph Westbrook (drums).

Paul Christoforou

Infernal Death



New thrash metal band who have impressed at their recent Burleigh Arms gigs. Bassist Chris Cutting and singer Mark Wretham also have connections with Arcana, another local thrash band. Leave plenty of room at the front of the stage for the moshers. Other band members: Steve Asbridge



(drums); James Lord (lead gtr.); Dan Waldman (2nd gtr.).

Abraxas

This blues/rock band have gigged extensively during 1987. Seasoned local musicians who have previously played with the likes of Ronnie Thompson's Wasp Club, 7.54 and Zebedee. Playing one short in the competition, due to the 'one band only' rule: keyboards player Tim Harding is playing in Heat five with his other band, Strikeforce. Lineup: Roger Smith (vox); Pete Harris (gtr.); Steve Betts (bass); Brian Smith (drums).

Session 57

This three year old rock'n'roll band is probably the most experienced of all the bands in the competition: they

have regular weekly slots at the Man on the Moon and the Burleigh Arms, gig all over the country and frequently on the continent, averaging well over 200 gigs each year. They released an E.P. about a year ago, and are currently halfway through recording their first LP. Lineup: Lee Hugman (drums); Steve Gates (vox/gtr.); Colin Lomas (bass); Richard Turner (lead gtr.).

The Priests of Vengeance

They describe themselves as new wave, but judging by their warm-up gig at the Burleigh just before Christmas, they're out-and-out goths à la Sisters/Nephilim. Guitarist James Cupit and singer Gary Shepherd were previously with the impressive but inconsistent Hollow Land, and Dave Wick perfected his bass patterns during his five years with Ramsey new wavers Red Over White. Drummer Roland is vaguely related to the Sisters' Doktor Avalanche.

This Beeno

Of all heats, Heat 2 provides the widest variety of what can be classified as rock music. This Beeno, semi-finalists last year, provide a total contrast to what has preced-

Heat two

ed them, with no drummer nor bassist, singer/guitarist Richard Heeps will be accompanied (as last year) by John Gregg on guitar and Richard Sewell on trumpet, although there's a question mark over John's availability. Claire Brooker, singer with the Principle, will be making a guest appearance as backing vocalist. Whimsy pop.

The Mullahs

↓
The mega lineup which played in last year's competition has now been pared down to a five piece. This band has improved in leaps and bounds during 1987. Probably the highlight of their year was the prestigious support slot to Bronski Beat

at the Corn Exchange. Comparisons between singer Shaun Murphy and Jimmy Somerville are unfortunate but inevitable. Rest of the band: Steve Hewitt (gtr.); David Candlin (bass); Graham Wilde (drums); Jon Whitmore (sax).

The Catholic Boys from County Hell

This Pogue-ish folk-punk band from CCAT have been gigging on and off over the past twelve months. Lineup: Dik Ugly (vox/keybds.); Keith Mitchell (mandolin/gtr.); Robbie Traynor (bass); Clive Philips (bongos); Richard Bradshaw (whistle).

Phil Johnson



Sitting in Cafés

Recently formed new wave combo, with just a handful of gigs behind them (two of them as support to the Sardines). See tape review on page 12. Line-up: Ben Gellner (vox/keybds.); Paul Clarke (gtr.); Jon Enkel (drums); Peter Roythorne (bass).

The Wood

↓
Four piece student, often sounding like the Velvet Underground meets Siouxsie and the Banshees. The two A&R men who visited Radio Cambridgeshire's Rock Show during last November gave The Wood the thumbs down, but then, what do they know? Line-up: Lawrence George (gtr.); Siri Wright (vox); Andy Robling (bass); Crip Julian (drums).



Sound Advice



Four piece combo from Bar Hill. Sound Advice have spent the past three months warming up for the competition by playing numerous gigs at the Burleigh Arms. See tape review on page 12. Line-up: Mark Ablewhite (vox); Shaun Burrell (bass); Richard Watts (gtr.); David Watts (drums).

The Desmonds

Be prepared for some comic relief from Viscount, Neon and Arable Desmond, who play tractor, combine and baked potatoes respectively. The music? EEC punk/arable rap!

Woolly Mammoth

Sixth form heavy rock band. Lead singer Andy Evans fronted one of last year's outfits, The Demise. Rest of the band: Stuart Osborne (lead gtr.); Russell Moore (bass); Tim Wilson (drums).



Heat three



Kronenbourg

←
Gary Brown's back, not with Strange Brew, but a slight variation on the same theme. Gary describes this lot as 'dodgy'. Rest of the band; Joley Scott (gtr.); Parkes (bass); Stranski (keybds.); Stiv (drums).

T.V. Messiahs

Recently formed Indie-pop/new wave band. Line up: Mark Dyer (vox/gtr.); John Platten (gtr.); Howard Blackburn (bass); Darren Lumb (drums).

Paul Christoforou

Street Legal

→

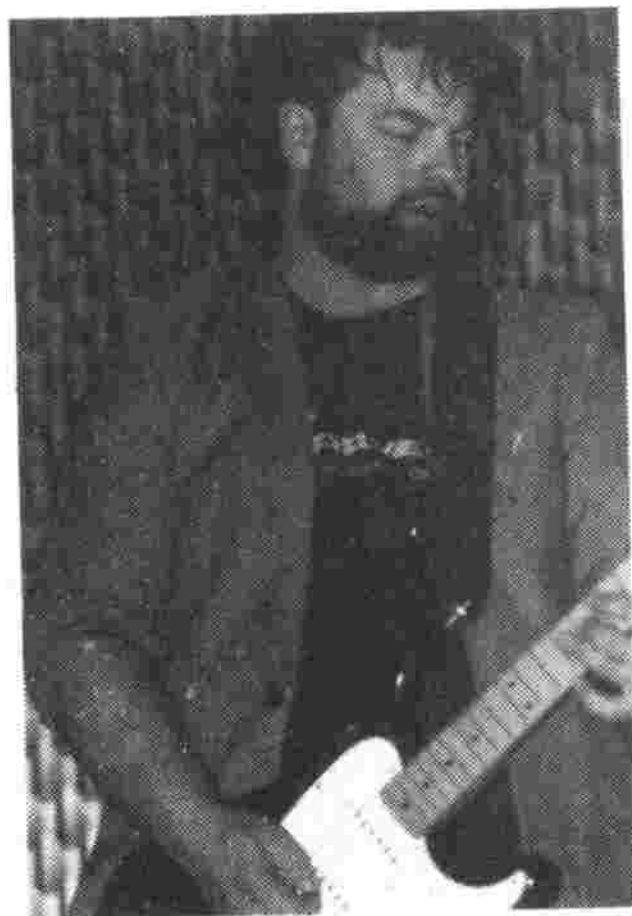
This year-old group describe themselves as pop rock, but my impression from just one sighting is that their music veers more towards blues/hard rock. Pete Lowes (bass) and Paul Skelton (rhythm gtr.) were previously with Spike. A six track tape (recorded at Flightpath last November) is available from the band. Rest of the line-up: Mick Fairclough (lead gtr.); Mark Stickings (drums); Gary Barker (vox); Fiona Jones (keybds./backing vcls.).

Heat four

The Poppyheads

→

One of the best student combos, The Poppyheads describe themselves as psychedelic punk: a year ago, I described them as folk-rock. Since then, Rob Young has joined the line-up to give them a tougher sound. The Poppyheads had a four-track flexidisc released in 1987 via a Bristol-based fanzine. Rest of the band: David Barbenel (vox/gtr.); Andrew 'Prof' Zurek (bass); Nigel X (drums); Del Davies (keybds./backing vcls.).



Mel's Kitchen

This guitar pop group, who are among The Poppyheads' biggest fans, made an impressive debut at the Burleigh three months ago. Andrew Lindsay (gtr.) used to play with the notorious Men From Uncle; Matt Williams

(singer) and Iain Bell (bass) were previously with The Claim, a Cottenham punk band who played in the 1985 competition. The band's ambition is to support The Wedding Present! Other band member: James Kilsby (drums).



The Children of Some Tradition

Having been voted the best young band of the 1986 competition, the Children were expected to be a strong contender for the 1987 competition, until their exclusion due to the 'distance from Cambridge' rule. Happily, this rule has been discarded for this year's competition. The Children also have a former member of The Men From Uncle in their line-up, bassist Sara Onyett who joined during the summer of '87. Rhythm guitarist Desmond Ford left the band a couple of months ago. Rest of the band: Jon Haynes (vox); Toby Smith (gtr.); Adrian Paice (drums).

Deja-Vu

This progressive rock group made their debut last May, and have subsequently gigged regularly throughout the county. A 'serious-minded' band whose music is 'highly-structured', they plan to release a single 'Beauty and The Beast' this year. Guitarist Sean Manning has an option to take up a place at the Guitar Institute in California. Rest of the group: Debbi Jayne (vox); Ian Corney (drms); Dave Challenger (bass); Gordon Reid (keybds.).

That Saxe

A new young band from the St. Ives area, they have yet to gig in Cambridge, but have already played at the Rock Garden in London. Their enthusiastic manager, Nadine Bass, describes the band as 'young, exuberant, highly visual' and their music as 'the new blue sound'. Demo tape available. Line-up: Mark Aston (vox/gtr.); Clive Bass (drums); Sam Dowson (cello); James Stewart (keybds.); James Denham (bass).

Bhagwan Fresh and the Gurus of Jive

Yet another new sixth form college band who made their debut (minus vocalist) just before Christmas. Play a mixture of funk, soul and go-go. Line-up: Tim Lee (keybds.); Chris Swales (bass); John Hasleham (gtr.); Rod Norman (drums); Guy (vox).

Phil Johnson

Heat five

Strike Force

Recently formed heavy rock band, with a few gigs under their belts. Ex-Rendezvous members Tim Harding (keybds.) and Bruce Wright (gtr.) are the joint owners of



Flightpath Recording Studio. Other members of the group are Terry Bass (vox); Bernie Sawford (bass); Graham Smith (drums).

Chopper

↓
Four students, two Oxford, two Cambridge, who play punk faster than the speed of sound. Expect at least a dozen songs in their 20-minute set. Line-up: James Parker (drums); Tom Hodgkinson (bass); O.J. May (gtr.); Hugo Deadman (vox).

House Grinder

→
A heavy funk combo, comprising four of our most active local musicians, culled from bands as diverse as the Sardines (Paul Weston -

guitar) and The Mood Assassins (Phil Darke - bass, Jason Smith - keybds./percussion, and Chris Mann). Chris doubles up on drums and, surprisingly, vocals. See the Chris Mann interview on page 5.

Blue Lizard Rhythm

Another student band with two years' experience and a number of May Ball appearances behind them. Line-up: Chris Eddis (bass); James Graham-Maw (vox); Charlie Burkett (drums); Luke Piper (gtr.); Dia Bishop (harmonica).

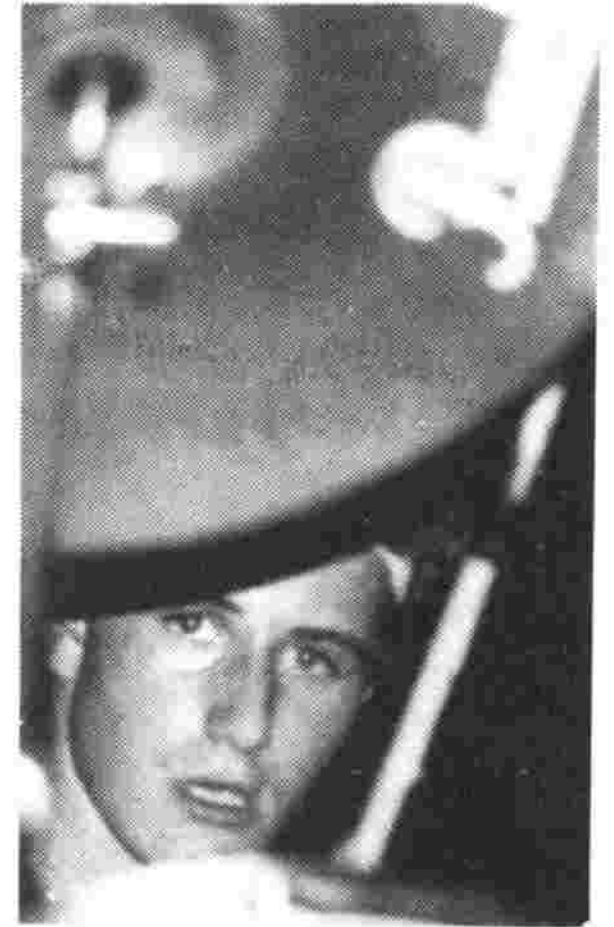
The Bare Yogis

New sixth form college guitar rock/pop trio, who have made frequent appearances at the Burleigh in the past three months. Line-up: Adrian Hobart (drums); Andrew Hauser (bass); Paul Lambert (gtr./vox).



Standpoint

↓
Standpoint return for a third attempt. Last year they reached the semi-final stages: however,



most of 1987 was spent looking for a drummer, until ex-Surfin' Druid Paul Garner obliged around October. Rest of the group: Zak Justin (vox); Andy Northrop (bass); Jeff Prince (gtr.).

The Mirror Brothers

A five piece funk band from Haverhill. Line-up: Darren Green (sax); Edward Cox (bass/vox); David Mayers (keybds./vox); Graham Hulyer (gtr.); Philip Lamb (drums).

Paul Christoforou

Viva

↓ Viva were an early 80s local rock band: original members Gary and Mary Cates (better known as Mary Hannigan) decided to put together another Viva, having played with Phoenix, Real to Real and KGB. Viva normally specialise in covers of well-known pop songs, particularly Tina Turner and Aretha Franklin numbers, which suit Mary's soulful voice. Other band members: Steve Beaney (gtr.); Shakeel Subrati (bass).



Bible John

Andy Graves, quirky Cambridge musician, is back for his fourth Rock Competition, having played in 'different' groups on each occasion — The Frieze in 1985, The Glass Asylum in 1986 and Halo of Flies in 1987. Supported by his Glass Asylum/Halo of Flies singer/keyboards player, Tim Bryce, this year's offering could well be a synth-dominated sound, reminiscent of Andy's Fridge Freezer period (1983—1986) but expect the unexpected.

The Way

Last year's finalists, This Side Up, entered this year's competition as The Way. However, personal commitments have subsequently led to the departure of singer/guitarist Steve Linford. If bassist Graham Allen can get a new band together, then they will be playing in this heat: if not, Steve Linford will be performing, with Jo Tinker taking the vocals. Jo was well known as a backing singer with Double Yellow Line and, latterly, Crosstalk.



Graham and the Mushrooms

A loud psychedelic thrash band from the St. Ives area, who have made tremendous progress in 1987. They had a flexi-disc released nationally via Underground rock music magazine, and linked this with a promotional gig at Hammersmith Clarendon. A six track tape is available from the band. Line-up: Graham Probert (vox/gtr.); Des Cahill (lead gtr.); Rod Izah (bass); Jason Kidman (drums).

The Surfin' Druids

→ Third-placed in last year's competition, but revamped at the end of last summer, when drummer Paul Garner left to form his own band, and bassist Matt Maunder went to Southampton University. Vocalist Jez Quaile has found more than capable replacements in Richard Barker (bass) and Simon Sheldrick (drums).

In The Pocket

↑ New funk/go go band fronted by Mark Fowell, guitarist with last year's best young band winners, Indiscretion. Gordon Laurie (bass) and Joel White (rhythm gtr.) played with The Debut in last year's competition. Other members: Quentin Maile (keybds.); Barnaby Green (drums).

Phil Johnson



In Flight

This hard/progressive rock group are back again, for the third consecutive year. Last year, Michael (Elvis) Stevenson won the 'best guitarist of the competition' award. At the time of writing, it is not known whether In Flight will have a keyboards player (Richard Lamont's keyboard work in last year's competition certainly gave the band a 'progressive' sound). Other band members: Phil Bryant (drums); Neil Petit (bass).

Heat six

Judges

Paul Christoforou (Scene and Heard)
Chris Hunt (Music Maker Publications)
Phil Johnson (Cambridge Weekly News)
Peter Mitchell (Cambridge Evening News)
Plus a representative from BBC Radio Cambridgeshire

Past winners

1985 1st: The Detective, 2nd: Camera Shy, 3rd: Exploding Hamsters
1986 1st: Double Yellow Line, 2nd: President Reagan Is Clever, 3rd: Therapy
1987 1st: Spiritwalk, 2nd: Serious Business, 3rd: Surfin' Druids

Prizes

	Donated by	Awarded to
£300	Cambridge City Council	Competition winners
£150	Cambridge City Council	Runners-up
£100	Cambridge City Council	Third place
£50	Cambridge City Council	Fourth place
£30	Cambridge City Council	Heat winners
Recording session	Flightpath Studios	Third place
to be announced	Music Village	to be announced
Recording session	QualiSound Studios	Runners-up
£50	Scene and Heard	Best original song
Recording session	Spaceward Studios	selected by the editors
Free hairstyling	Transformers Hairstylists	Competition winners
Bass guitar	Washburn UK	Band of their choice
Guitar	Washburn UK	Performer of their choice
Drum machine	Yamaha Music Ltd	Performer of their choice
		to be announced

Venue

The Corn Exchange,
Cambridge

Heat dates

Heat one 21 January
Heat two 28 January
Heat three 4 February
Heat four 11 February
Heat five 18 February
Heat six 25 February

Semi-finals

3 March, 10 March

The backline

Equipment to be used by all bands
Peavey Amps
Premier Drumkit
Sabian Cymbals
PA supplied by Star Hire

Final: 24 March