

Blue Suede

CAMBRIDGE'S

ROCK RAG

News

No.9



40p

NEWS AND COMMENT

BLUE SUEDE NEWS struggles out again. If this issue is rather small blame it on Radio One. Not only did I have to spend precious typing time watching Peter Powell score a hat-trick at the Abbey - but I caught a cold while I was at it too, which has not helped in throwing this issue together, so that it's also late again. Apologies therefore if you were looking forward to reading about Peeved Records or the Peterborough music scene, but look out for them next time.

STRAWBERRY FAIR this year is on June 2. BSN has been asked to help with the organisation of the music. We feel that it would be nice to get the music out of the tent again, and that it would be nice if it could go on throughout the afternoon as it used to do. What do you think - please let us know. Also bands that would like to play please let us have tapes. For further details talk to James Hall on Cam 321260.

AQUADANCE have been recording in the studio built by Kenny Jones, and have been joined on backing vocals by Kiki Dee - it will be interesting to hear the results if they are ever released.

STREETLIGHTS have returned to the scene. Bob Mardon's projected partnership with James Dann in D.Lights has not worked out, and Bob has decided to concentrate on the smaller scale local work that he especially enjoys doing. D.Lights meantime will continue to work out of Duxford with the capacity to deal with the biggest events anywhere in the country.

JON LEWIN, you may have noticed, has not graced our pages for a while - and the reason is that he is busy writing for other publications that can afford to pay him for his efforts. Apart from Broadsheet and the Cambridge Weekly News (who are now paying him) you can find him writing for a new monthly publication out of the Melody Maker stable called "One, Two, Testing". This is particularly aimed at musicians, with extensive reviews of instruments and music making equipment - but also has reviews of bands, records and videos. Jon's first article was on the making of the Whistle Test; and since then he has written about making videos, and has been reviewing a clutch of new guitars.

SINDY AND THE ACTION MEN have a new drummer - Paul Foulsham, ex-754 - and have added a keyboard player, who is Graham Duckworth.

DOUBLE YELLOW LINE are one of the new bands to get in touch with me. They are Nick Maunder, guitar; Simon Bishop, drums; Ben Ashby, bass; Chris Williams, vocals. I forgot to get a contact number off Nick when he rang, so perhaps he would let me know in due course.

FAST FRIENDS have also been in touch, following my enquiry in the last issue. Darren Green, who rang me (ex-G Men, albeit briefly) tells me they are new wave/Ultravox type band, with 8 members that include 2 girls, sax, keys, percussion and symmonds drums. See them at City Limits on March 17th.

STABLE STUDIOS, where the Wobbly Jellies are recording, are cheaper than some - but not quite as cheap as I made out in the last issue for 5 days. It should have read £350 for 5 days - still a good deal; and according to Keith of the Jellies they are very helpfull people there too.

THE ALMA has had its music licence reduced to one day a week. Nick has not decided yet which day it will be, but quite probably it will be Saturday. In the meantime he is quite entitled to put on accoustic duos on other days - so if you want to perform like that, let him know. The restriction does not come into force until April 1st - until then there is a full programme of bands.

RORY GALLAGHER, DAVID LINDLEY, JUAN MARTIN and RICHARD THOMPSON all on the same bill. This guitar night which covers the complete range from Folk and Jazz to Rock and Blues is not to be missed. March 23rd at the Guildhall.

THE ALMA

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FREE ADMISSION

From Our Own Correspondent

There's nothing like putting something in print to cause a complete reversal or reappraisal of a situation. In a previous issue of this very magazine I declared, in a somewhat poignant article, that I had hung up my rock'n'roll shoes, and put on a different hat. (Oh the wonder of mixed metaphors) Well now I've got to eat it - my hat. A little story:

Cambridge is a strange place. It produces huge amounts of raw human talent (both in town and university), and yet makes very little use of it. Much of this creativity and knowledge makes its way to London because it's easier to achieve in London. It is easy to do in Cambridge, and to make believe that the doing is achieving; but every now and again you stop and look back over a period of time and realise that nothing lasting has been achieved - except an increase in age. It is a much talked about fact that the last Cambridge band who really made it are, or were, the Pink Floyd. But they didn't make it in Cambridge at all - they made it in London. I mean, of course, that they didn't make it in Cambridge in the way that, say, the Two-Tone bands made it in Coventry. To make headway fast in any line of business you nearly always need to be at the nub - and the nub of the music business is in London.

Now quite a few Cambridge bands have made it as far as London, only to realise that they are competing on a completely different level. Far from being the biggest thing since sliced bread, as they are locally, they become just another of the many bands hoping to crack it; a few disappointing gigs, no record deal, and away from friends and the bands fall apart. BUT a lot of those involved stay in London, join or form other bands that are successful, or become journalists, publishers, A&R men, producers - the list is endless. A glance at Graeme's family trees will show just how many people from Cambridge have done extremely well in other bands - and I personally know dozens involved in the rest.

So, anyway. On the top floor of a large warehouse/factory behind Oxford Street is Caplin Music's offices and studio. Paul Caplin was at Cambridge University and formed a band which moved to London and fell apart. Some of its members

formed another band - Animal Magnet - which quite by chance included a couple of other Cambridge city hopefuls. This also fell apart, although it did get a record deal. He then formed Hazi Fantazee with his girlfriend Kate, and made some money from a couple of reasonable chart successes which enabled him to form Caplin Music as a production and publishing company. Then into his life walked Roger Jackson, another Cambridge town old hand - and between them they launched Marilyn.

Caplin Music is, with the financial help of a major record company, about to become a record label and expand. It is busy finding new young talent to mould and exploit, and I have been approached to see if I am interested in becoming part of this expansion. I am. Very. Another ex-Cambs person is also involved (also ex-Animal Magnet), though due to continuing legal problems he cannot, as yet, be named. If Roger, Paul, the nameless one and myself do end up forming the basis of this team, it will be entirely Cambs people moulding the careers of up and coming young stars.

As Paul said, "if any more Cambridge people get involved, we might as well move to Cambridge"; which, of course, he won't because the nub is in London. Which is where I shall have to move to. Now where's my hat? Ah - munch, munch.

ANDY METCALFE

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GREAT DIVIDE



The story so far. Ed Harbud (E) and Steve Penn (S), fresh out of the Dogma Cats, discovered funk-obsessed bassman Steve Bone and formed the Great Divide. Boo Hewerdine (B) gradually slipped out of the disintegrating Placebo Thing to sharing the singing and guitar duties with Steve Penn. A track on the "Honey For Tea" compilation was followed by a single "Who Broke The Love Bank?" on Wimp Records. Mike Scott of the Waterboys saw them play at the Moonlight Club and recommended them to Nigel Grange, the head of Ensign Records. After a gig at Clare Cellars they were finally signed. A spell in the studio with Heaven 17 producer Greg Walsh finally produced a single "Whispered In Heaven" last October, which was withdrawn after a disappointing media response. Soon afterwards Steve Bone departed in unhappy circumstances. They have just finished producing and performing on a prospective BONK single "The God Game". Their own new single, "Money And Time" is released on April 8th.

Confused? I spoke to these budding popstars at their home 4-track studio deep in rural Cambridgeshire. Steve and Ed are 27; Boo is 23.

Why The Great Divide?

Steve Bone thought of that. It was "Inroads To The Great Divide" (B).

What does it mean?

Nothing(S). It means a lot actually(E). It's what it means to other people that was important(S). We were also called "The Long Goodbye" for a while, but that was a mistake(B).

Early Great Divide ephemera seemed to betray an unhealthy obsession with elephants.

It was a completely contrived attempt, part of trying to get signed - we thought "let's think of a symbol, contrive it, and send it out." We sent out 1,000 elephants, as a free way into a gig we hoped we'd get signed at.... We sent out loads of elephants with The Great Divide written on, and loads of them with the date on...and in fact it was at that gig (at the Moonlight Club) that Mike Scott saw us - he didn't even get an invitation(B). Apparently elephants when they go to their graveyard, they pass over the great divide.(B).

"The Great Divide - it's an apt name."
(Ensign Press Release)

How do you feel about Wimp in retrospect?

It was purely to do a single as a demo to get on a major label. I think that was understood from the beginning. Our contract was very open, as all their contracts are, I think(E).

We're obviously still friendly, otherwise we wouldn't be doing this Face thing (producing their next single).(E) Love Bank was all over the place, but it's good(S).

Rumour has it that the Great Divide's Ensign contract provided Wimp with a sizeable windfall.

Not really, no(E). Really they got money back because they'd pressed up another 1,000 or 2,000 singles...because they were just about to do another push on it, and Ensign bought them as they wanted to put the song out(S).

Essentially they bought the song from Wimp(E).

The first thing Ensign did was find them a famous producer.

Richard Burgess came down(E). He was a nice chap, but he never rang back(S). Then young Greg's name came on the horizon, and it sounded pretty good(E). Actually, he's a brilliant chap, Greg(B). We learnt a lot off him(E).

What of the stories of hours spent dropping suitcases?

It's true - all groups do that; it's just that we prefer to work quicker(B). The bit on "Got To Be Love" where it goes 'whoosh' took about 7 hours(B). It's the classic procedure you go through - we've learnt as from this week he (Nigel Grange) almost put us through it deliberately to make us grow up - which in a way has certainly helped us(E).

Heaven 17 have been sitting in a London studio for the last 3 months just tooting tunes(B). They're recording their album, but they haven't written the songs(S). £600 a day(E).

Out of the Greg Walsh sessions came "Whispered In Heaven".

Ed wrote the lyric(B). As it said in 'Music Week' - "wet quasi-religious lyric"(E).

If you heard the demo, it's a very different song - I think it got blanded rather dramatically(B). Where the song as a single fell down was the public face of the Great Divide as a new band - it was a little bland(E).

According to Ed's ex-girlfriend "Whispered In Heaven" is played 3 times a day on Frankfurt Radio.

"The single neatly encapsulates the band's musical feel" (Ensign)

The band are now all on a wage and write, rehearse and record songs all day.

It was because of "Money And Time" that we were able to leave work. We took the demo in because I'd taken a couple of days off work and written 5 songs, and I said if we weren't working I could write songs all the time - so he said "leave work"(B). He was saying let's put Boo and I on wages and leave the others at work because we were writing most(S)...then I piped up I was doing as much as the others(E). It came round to what to do about Steve Bone(B).

They aren't easily drawn on the subject of their departed bass player. Under duress they explained.

I never want to take anything away from what Steve Bone did because, with Steve (Penn) and I, he spent months and months creating the Great Divide from the very beginning(E).

He wasn't putting very much into it(S). He used to be a bit destructive about things we did(E).

We were quite sneaky and underhand about it, and we were ashamed people for quite a long time because we decided it while he was away on holiday. It was a very ugly sort of thing(B).

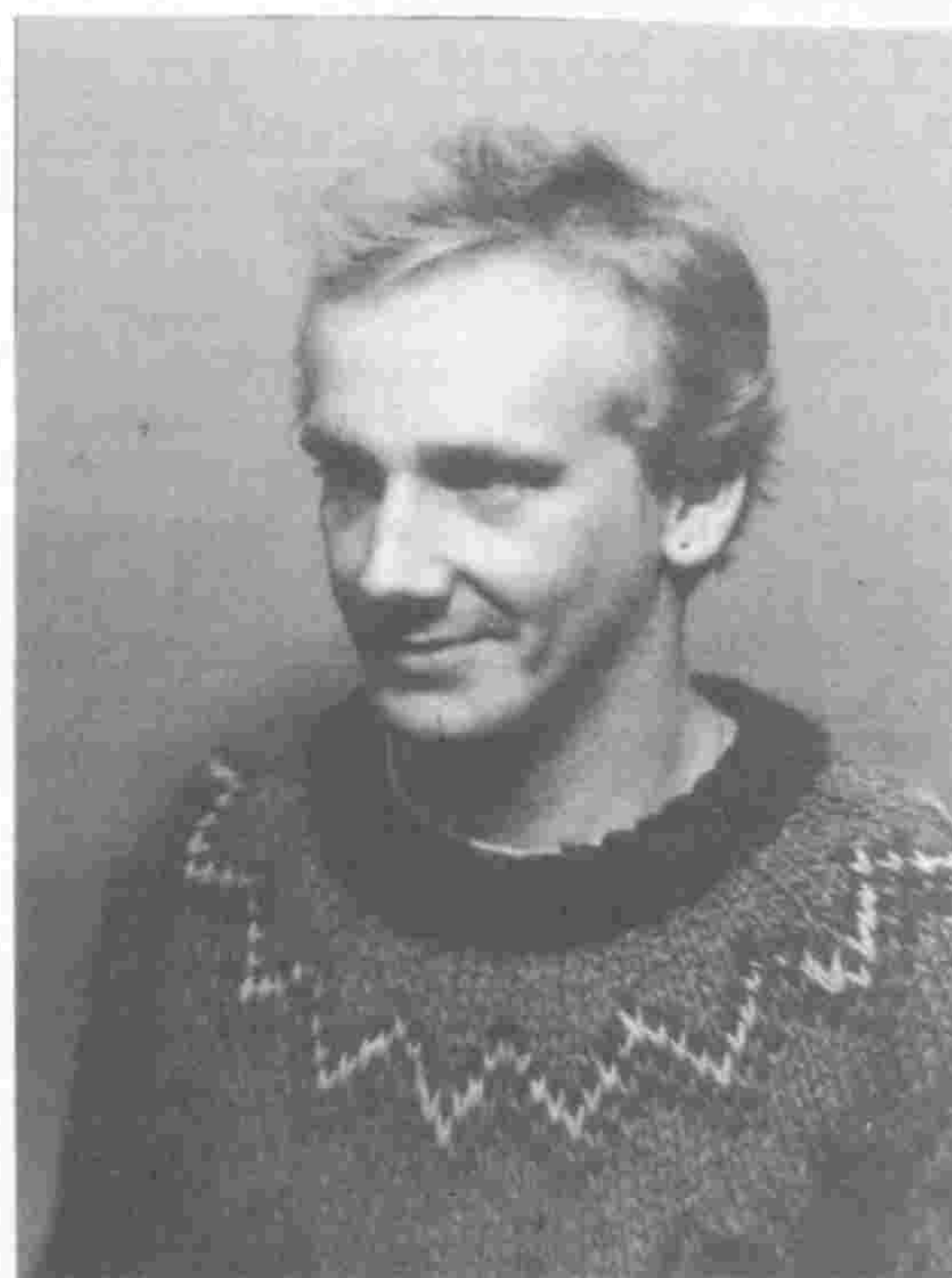
He likes funk music, but he wasn't flexible - he was just a different person(B).

We're all a little mild-mannered - in fact Greg Walsh was semi-amused; we were the only group that told him when he was doing the mix "turn me down, turn me down". Bone was one of the "turn me up" brigade.

Steve's own taste seemed completely contrary to the way the band was shaping; he was a black music fan, for instance. ...As we were saying, however, the Great Divide thrive on musical diversity. Steve Bone was in the band."(Ensign)

The new single "Money And Time" took a lot of both. Why?

We started recording on October 30th, and recorded it in 4 hours...then they sent us back to record instruments over, which went a bit over the top(B)... then we took all that off(S)...then they wanted a different instrument playing a solo, so Steve recorded a guitar solo. Then they decided that they wanted this



American person to mix it, so it was sent to America and lost over Christmas during the big freeze. He (John Morales) did 6 different mixes...it's OK, it's not really brilliant(B)...it's just a different start(S).

GREAT DIVIDE

He was meant to come over to London to meet us, but he disappeared having caught a disease off a chicken or something; and then he had personal problems...by the end of that week we had a day in Spaceward and we said "can we have a go?" - and we did it(B). There will be an American mix on the B-side of the 12"(E).

Is it going to be a hit?

Yes(ALL).

Would you mind if it wasn't?

If it doesn't get in the Top 100 you can bring me a hat and I will eat it. I really think it will(B).

It's a very different organisation than the last single. Dave Robinson doesn't just let them put out records to disappear. They work like mad at Island(B). (Ensign is now run in the shadow of the Stiff/Island organisation.) They're all jumping up and down about it - highly excited. We're making a video(E).

What is "Money And Time About"?(I should have known better than to ask them this after a lengthy discussion of the Smiths)

Transcending pop music(B). Changing people's lives(S). It's rather complex(B). The song is incredibly ironic at the moment, but not necessarily descriptive(E).

You are making records which you hope people are going to buy. What do you think the people who buy them are going to get out of them?

No, that first bit's wrong - we KNOW people are going to buy(B). See if you can get that wink on tape(E).

If somebody is going to have their lives changed by pop music ever, they ought to be locked up(B).

What can they have their life changed by?

By something a bit more interesting - pop music has changed our lives, but that's because we do it all day(B).

The Great Divide is the kind of band that's hard to pin down....(Ensign)

On March 8th the Great Divide play their first gig since Steve Bone left. They will not be drawn into discussing it, though it seems possible that they will be augmented by extra musicians.

The Co-op brass band(B). The Dividends(E). It will be a surprise(E).

What would you say if Ensign said to you they'd got you a 25-date tour supporting the Thompson Twins?

We'd say "how are they going to tell the difference?"(B)



Boo's name is being whispered in the same breath as Tina Turner's. Why?

Greg(Walsh) asked me to make a tape of songs Tina Turner might like to cover. I put on things like "Damaged Goods" (The Gang Of Four) and "Let's Stay Together", which I thought he'd already know(B).

Furthermore there's something in the air that suggests that Boo may be forging even more intimate links with Ms Turner ...but that's another story (for a future issue of BSN - Ed.); meantime, where to now?

We've a few songs in the can, and a few written fairly recently. We've got so much stuff(S). It's not really a problem. We want to see how the record is reacted to, so that maybe we can react a bit differently(B).

After the gig on March 8th the Great Divide will be making a video with the man responsible for the Madness videos; will be producing The Face; may perform behind Bonk to promote his new single, and will be waiting for "Money And Time" to climb the charts. It's too easy to be overenthusiastic about happenings within one's reach; but from the two listens I've had, if the single gets a fair splattering of airplay, their faith should be justified. The chorus is already infuriatingly stuck in my brain on an eternal tape loop - that's a bit irritating for me, but a good sign for them.

GREAT DIVIDE:

ON OFF KNOBS AND THE AMPS

MARK GLENNY bass
MIKE GOTT gtr
HAWK NORTON vox

LEISURE SOUNDS:

Dogma Cats Single
"Expels/Choke" Oct '80.
SRS 33.
Ersatz Single
"Smile In Shadow/
House of Cards".
SRS 32. 1980.

Leisure Sounds Cassette:
Dogma Cats live at Dogma Cafe /
The Dogmatic Duo (Steve & Ed).
Sept. 1980. 50p. 1 hour.

Significant Dates:

12/10/82 - Signed to Wimp Records.
20/10/82 - "Honey For Tea" released.
13/12/82 - "Who Broke The Love Bank" released (WIMP 004).
10/3/83 - Signed to Ensign
10/10/83 - "Whispered In Heaven".

NIFTYWOOD I

GREG WHITTLE bass
GEORDIE WINKLES gtr
PETE LARCOMBE gtr
DAVE LARCOMBE drums
BOO VOX gtr

NIFTYWOOD II

SIMON HUNT gtr
TOM KEMP bass
DAVE LARCOMBE drums
BOO VOX gtr

NECROMANCER

SIMON LINDSEY drums
PHIL DARKE bass
RALPH HONEY gtr
JARRYL EVERETT gtr
SIMON HUNT keys
KEITH VOX

MANDY MORTON BAND

MANDY MORTON vox/gtr
DOMINIC GREEN drums
SIMON HUNT gtr/keys
SEAN BOUCOUSIS bass

BOO TO A GOOSE

MIKE GOTT bass
BOO VOX gtr
DRUM MACHINE
PAT FISH sax
THE JAZZ BUTCHER

ERSATZ I

HUGH ASHTON bass/keys
ADRIAN TIERNY-JONES vox/gtr
ADRIAN BASSETT drums
GRAHAM PLUNKET gtr

ERSATZ II

HUGH ASHTON bass/keys
ADRIAN TIERNY-JONES vox/gtr
ADRIAN BASSETT drums
JOHN HARRIS gtr to SITFO

PLACEBO THING I

XANIA STIDWORTHY keys
DAVE LARCOMBE drums
MIKE GOTT bass
BOO VOX gtr

DOGMA CATS I

STEVE PENN gtr
ED HARBUD drums
DICK SELL bass
RICHARD KENZIE gtr
JOHN HERRING vox
May '75
Jan '79

SINDY AND THE ACTION MEN

DAVID GOWAR gtr
PHIL DARKE bass
PAUL FOULSHAM drums
PENNY DEWAAL vox
MALCOLM RANDALL sax
GRAHAM DUCKWORTH keys
ex 754

PLACEBO THING II

DAVE LARCOMBE drums
MIKE GOTT bass
BOO VOX gtr
HUGH ASHTON keys

DOGMA CATS II

STEVE PENN vox/gtr
ED HARBUD drums
DICK SELL bass
RICHARD KENZIE vox/gtr
Jan '79
Oct '81

BARRIER FADES

HUGH ASHTON bass
ADRIAN TIERNY-JONES vox/gtr
STEVE PENN vox/gtr
ED HARBUD drums

Strawberry Fair June '81
last Dogma Cats gig.

PLACEBO THING III

GAVIN HAMMOND bass
DAVE LARCOMBE drums
MIKE GOTT bass
BOO VOX gtr

WALLPAPER WALLPAPER

STEVE PENN vox/gtr
ED HARBUD drums
HUGH ASHTON bass

THE RAPIERS I

JANE EDWARDS vox
PAUL WESTON vox/gtr
GAVIN HAMMOND bass
DAVE LARCOMBE drums
MARK GRAHAM keys

GREAT DIVIDE I

STEVE PENN vox/gtr
ED HARBUD drums
STEVE BONE vox/bass
Oct 29th 1981
to Feb 1982

THE RAPIERS II

JANE EDWARDS vox
PAUL WESTON vox/gtr
CHRIS HOPKINS bass
DAVE LARCOMBE drums
MARK GRAHAM keys
to WOBBLY JEWELIES
to TENNIS DINNER
to SITFO

GREAT DIVIDE II

BOO VOX keys
STEVE PENN vox/gtr
ED HARBUD drums
STEVE BONE vox/bass
Feb '82
Oct '83

PERFECT VISION

JON LEWIN vox/gtr
JAMES DANIEL bass
GILES THOMAS gtr
DAVE LARCOMBE drums
STEVE XERRI vox/keys

GREAT DIVIDE III

BOO VOX/gtr keys
STEVE PENN vox/gtr
ED HARBUD drums

© 1984
Graeme Mackenzie.

The Barrier Fades started at the same time as the Dogma Cats II was still going. They did one gig at Peterborough. Wallpaper Wallpaper started Aug '81 and made a demo tape.

Steve and Ed finish Dogma Cats (who had appeared on BBC TV East "Weekend") in Oct '81, and recruit Steve Bone to form Great Divide I. Boo, still with Placebo Thing, appeared on their first demo tapes - and guested at their first gig at Sound Cellar 20/2/82. Boo learnt keys in order to join in Feb '82 when Placebo Thing split.

REVIEWS

ROARING BOYS - DINGWALLS/LEGENDS

It's been eighteen months since the Models left Cambridge, acquired a manager/publisher, and changed their name to the Roaring Boys. Well, I suppose one out of three's not bad. Saddled with a couple of congenital road accidents for business managers and a name to make strong men retch, it's encouraging to see they haven't given up - and in fact have got better.

Having started life as an uneasy mating of sanitised Costello and limited Madness, passed through a fit of adolescent pretension, two drummers and a guitarist, and enough dodgy clothes to fill an issue of the Face, the current (and best) Roaring Model Boys are 'paying their dues' (a singularly un-80s concept if ever there was one) by gigging in some of the most unappetising music-biz watering holes of the capital.

Sunday night at Dingwalls is Audition Night, where five of the least talented or persistent bands to submit tapes to the hallowed venue get to play to each others' friends for no money. In that kind of company, the R.M.B.s stand out like a sore thumb. For one thing, they have finally discovered a musical style they can play convincingly; they now sound like a more rocky Duran Duran with horns. They've tightened up to the point where they sound more professional than most professional bands (at least until the ends of the songs - see below), and in Niall McColl they have one of the most interesting and tasteful

guitarists I've seen for years. Their half hour of fame was too short, and bracketed by two completely ghastly attempts at Dr. Feelgood-dom, they looked completely out of place.

Two nights later they were to be found at Legends - the sort of place you'd take your mother, if you wanted to pair her off with a leather-trousered Italian. Without the distraction of affordable alcohol, the strengths and weaknesses of their set were more apparent. The sound, rather than the songs, carries the momentum, and the slickness and energy of the presentation is a real plus; not so Paul Michel's gaucheness in between songs.

The one new item, the Roxy-ish "House Of Stone", got the best reaction of the night. The R.M.B.s seem to have all the necessary ingredients for pop stardom; five pretty faces (more or less), some catchy songs, and slick presentation. The horn section is a major factor in the sound, giving it a polish that sets them apart from conventional rock line-ups. What they need now is a long period of gigging in front of big audiences; they're definitely not destined to play pubs for ever. With this in mind, I'd recommend seeing them at City Limits in a couple of weeks; in a year or so, they could be gracing the video screens of the States, and only visible here through piles of screaming 'Jackie' readers.

MARTIN SCOTT

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SAMURAI - CITY LIMITS

If you have not heard of Samurai, you should have done - they are a five piece rock band based in the Cambridge area. Featured are Roger Brown on lead guitar, Malcolm Hayes also on lead guitar, Nigel Heath on bass guitar, Martin Priddy on drums and Phil Brown on vocals.

City Limits was fairly full when I arrived, and the audience were a mixed bunch. The average age was older than is usual for a rock group and the usual black leathers were also not much in evidence. Right from the start of the gig I was impressed with the mixing and the professional sound of the band - each instrument could be heard clearly and I could understand the words of the songs. Resplendent in black and red, Phil Brown seemed to exude enjoyment and confidence, putting everything he had into his performance - and reminding me very much of David Coverdale.

During the break I noticed that quite a few more people had arrived, including a group of about six young ladies on a hen night. Three of them took over the stage and started singing to the audience; this impromptu jam session was met with resounding cheers and even the band joined in the fun.

The second Samurai set included "Just Looking", "The Wall", "Little Miss Lucy", "No Need To Lie" and "You Said". The first was a medium-tempo song which heralded near disaster. Phil got so carried away that he nearly knocked the drum kit flying. "The Wall" had the audience happily singing along; "Little Miss Lucy" and "No Need To Lie" were rock 'n' rollers which had the audience boogieing down - but "You Said", which was a heavier number, was the classic of the evening. This was not because it was an exceptionally brilliant number, but because of what was done to Malcolm. It



Samurai have become far more straightforward than they used to be, but still remain versatile, playing mostly their own songs though including a smattering of cover versions. Each set at City Limits contained ten numbers all of which were greeted with enthusiasm, and highlights of the first set were "Bet You Believe", "Wishing Well", "Medley" and "What's Wrong". "Bet You Believe" showed just how good a guitarist Roger is, though his style is very much in the classic rock mould. "Wishing Well" (immortalised by Free) was played faster than usual, with the band's own interpretation - which was refreshing as there is nothing worse than hearing local bands play carbon-copies of famous songs. So far all the songs had been heavy rock, but for "What's Wrong" Samurai diversified a little and played some rock 'n' roll, which made a welcome change from the heavier stuff.

was his birthday, so he was abandoned by his compatriots who proceeded to spray him with instant string. He was covered in the stuff yet just carried on playing; the song was continued and the audience were grooving all the way to the back.

After such a finale Samurai could not possibly have hoped to get away without an encore. In fact they did two; the first being the Steve Gibbons classic "Tulane" which, well played and thoroughly appreciated, brought back memories of his concert in December. "Turn On The Light" was very heavy, and ended an evening of excellent rock - and judging from all the applause it was an opinion shared by everyone else. Samurai had conquered.

Quote Of The Week: "I used to swear I would never change to go on stage. But I ended up wearing a pair of black ballet tights!" Dumpy (of Rusty Nuts)

LYN GUY

BILLY BRAGG/PURE THOUGHT - CITY LIMITS

The one art that never really responded to the changes that punk brought with it was that of the solo singer-songwriter. A few peripheral artists like Patrick Fitzgerald and Kevin Hewick struggled to little avail, but otherwise prospective songwriters either formed bands or became poets. That was hardly surprising when you consider that the singer-songwriter was the easiest possible target for punk's barbed tongue - those wimps with acoustic guitars mumbling on about existential irrelevancies and middle-class menopause. Billy Bragg has been put forward as the person to fill this gap at last - a performer who claims more affinity to the Ramones and the Clash than to Roy Harper or James Taylor.

No doubt encouraged by his momentary trendiness, and his position at the top of the indie album chart, over 200 crammed inside City Limits ("it's like Woodstock - is anyone having a baby?" inquired Billy) - reputedly a similar number were turned away. Pure Thought kept the waiting audience adequately entertained. They fit easily into the Opposition mould of bands who have discovered the 'new conventionality'. That means we got a lot of atmospheric sounds and strident songs capped by Robb Appleton's perfected version of the new wave voice - where the vocalist strains so hard to get the right intervals to sound emotional that he ends up communicating nothing. They come across to much better effect on their new demo, but they still need to find some much stronger songs, or a more original direction - at the moment they sound like Danse Society, which is hardly worth the bother.

Billy Bragg was a success before he even played a note; he has the performer's skill of surreptitiously drawing the audience under his control. There's a contradiction in his set between the entertaining Bragg banter and the more serious matter of his songs - he's talented at both, but in performance the first seems to triumph over the second, so that the musical and verbal gags carry on over into the songs.

The banter mainly involved ridiculing and mimicing his musical contemporaries, and playing snatches of others' songs (68 Guns, House Of The Rising Sun, Sailing, Blowing In The Wind, Smoke On The Water). The music involved playing all of his excellent "Life's A Riot" album, and ten other songs including the



opening abrasive version of John Cale's "Fear" and the closing "Route 66" parody "The A13" with Wiggy.

Some of these new songs will sound happier in the seclusion of a recording studio - "Like Soldiers Do" is too good to clown about with, and interject "Satisfaction" into. Nevertheless, occasionally he managed to utilise the emotional potential of just a man and his guitar. On "Island Of No Return", about his short spell in the army, his body shook with stiffness as he pushed his chin onto the mike, swiping his guitar almost percussively to punctuate the song's lyrics. At the few moments like this he offered more than just entertainment.

From what we heard on Saturday Billy Bragg will keep on making good records for some time now, but the dangers in his position are already clear. He not only has to cope with the problem of what to do when the novelty of his combination of abrasive guitar and voice have worn off; but also with the dilemma of whether to embrace or reject his obvious appeal to the teenage bedroom audience. Already on Saturday "New England" was, most unsuitably, a singalong nursery rhyme led by a row of starstruck girls at the front - surely Billy Bragg doesn't want to become the Al Stewart of our generation.

CHRIS HEATH

PREVIEWS

LARRY MILLER BAND at CITY LIMITS on Friday 9th. A rhythm 'n' blues band, veering towards southern boogie, that in fact comes from Reading. They have an album out called "Right Chaps" from which came the single "Leave It Out, No Good" - a fine driving piece of rock 'n' roll. Though the style is not original, most of their material is self-penned - and Larry is said to be a bit of a wit too, even indulging in George Formby impersonations.

FLACO JIMENEZ & PETER ROWAN at FISHER HALL on Tuesday 13th. Congratulations to Gaye Holder for organising this date on the Tex-Mex tour. Anyone who saw these boys at the Folk Festival will need no persuading to support this gig. For those of you that don't know about things like the Free Mexican Airforce Flaco and Pete play a mixture of Tex-Mex swing and bluegrass that I suppose is more easily described for the uninitiated as country-rock. But their songs are firmly based in the contry and people of their homes, and they have not allowed their music to be diluted and diverted by the need to have hits in the in the normal c'n'w vein. Pete is the showman who plays great guitar and sings, while Flaco stands back and plays the accordion with all the mastery of the acknowledged expert. Is it 'rock' you're asking? Maybe not, but it sure as hell rocks, and it is amongst the finest entertainment you are likely to see in the city this year.

THE NEXT BLUE SUEDE NEWS is scheduled for Friday 23rd March - but I won't make any foolish promises on that score. In addition to Peeved and Peterborough, we have an interview with Benjamin Zephaniah, plus all the usual stuff.



**KITE RECORDING
STUDIO**

P.A. HIRE

1 KW. OR 2KW. RIG.
16:4 DESK, MONITORS,
EXPERIENCED CREW, OWN TRANSPORT
BEST RATES, BEST SOUND
REVOX HIRE, TAPE COPYING
TEL. ROGER: CAM. 313250

GIG GUIDE

- Fri 9: CITY LIMITS - LARRY MILLER BAND
FISHER HALL - CONFLICT + SLAP
KAT
GIRTON COLLEGE - KATRINA AND
THE WAVES
Impington Village College -
Adverse FX + The Brink +
Plaza
Melbourne SSC - Strata
Peterborough, Wirrina - Lindisfarne
Ipswich, Gaumont - Hawkwind
- Sat 10: CITY LIMITS - NATURAL ROOTS
ALMA - TOBY JUG & WASHBOARD
Bar Hill - Poet Painter + Clay
Dolz + The Lovely
- Sun 11: Peterborough, Glasshouse(lunch) -
Zebra
Peterborough, Key(evening) -
Roy Harper
- Mon 12: Northampton, Derngate - Ian Dury
- Tue 13: ALMA - GIGGLESTICKS ATLT
FISHER HALL - FLACO JIMENEZ &
PETER ROWAN
Ipswich, Gaumont - Whitesnake
- Wed 14: CITY LIMITS - PHOENYX
- Thu 15: HOWARD MALLETT - POET PAINTER
ALMA - STRING SWING
Stevenage, Bowes Lyons - Perfect
Disaster
Northampton, Derngate -
Lindisfarne
- Fri 16: CITY LIMITS - ROARING BOYS
- Sat 17: CITY LIMITS - 32/20
ALMA - PRIVATE LINE
Ipswich, Gaumont - Style Council
+ Questions + Billy Bragg
- Sun 18: Peterborough, Glasshouse(lunch) -
Energy
Stevenage, Bowes Lyons -
Vibrators
- Mon 19:
- Tue 20: ALMA - COUER DE LION
FISHER HALL - FINAL SCREAM +
STORMED + VANISHING POINT
- Wed 21: CITY LIMITS - ?
- Thu 22: ALMA - MISBEHAVIOUR
- Fri 23: GUILDHALL - RORY GALLAGHER +
DAVID LINDLEY + JUAN MARTIN +
RICHARD THOMPSON
FISHER HALL - VIBRATORS
CITY LIMITS - WOBBLY JELLIES
Melbourne SSC - State Of Mind
Dunstable, Queensway - The Rods
+ Metallica + Exciter

BANDS

Katrina And The Waves - Alex 314857
Dolly Mixture - Hester 355114
Great Divide - Ed 9582 578
Aquadance - Ray 247802
Hondo - 211371
The Face - Paddy & Mark 313520
Sindy And Action Men - Dave 8263875
Trux - Sue 93 31550
Wobbly Jellies - Keith 352125
Perfect Vision - Jon 313564
Frigidaires - Rid 355568
Andy Goes Shopping - Marc 316091
Toby Jug And Washboard - Trevor 68184
The Lonely - Ted 351708
Holders Heroes - John 860638
Your Dinner - 211371
So What - 211371
S.I.T.F.O. - Mark 314366
Zoom - Chris 355806
Pure Thought - Robb 68442
Phoenix - Steve 354917
Final Scream - Robin 323249
Worlds End Band - John 246327
Safety Valve - Dave 0480 51490
Su Lyn - Roger 313250
Misbehaviour - Pete 351947
Rendez Vous - Murray 245455
Sahara - Quentin 68975
Neutral Vision - 0480 66088
Dr. Skull - Viv 322438
Stormed - Mike 321885
R.T.'s Wasp Club - Steve 357495
Roaring Boys - Paul 01 435 0843
Fax - Martin 68850
Gothique - Chris 93 80926
Vanishing Point - Gavin 829725
Slap Kat - Olli 355702
String Swing - Hugh 351455
Horizon - Tim Fanning Rm 514 YMCA 356998
Racing Heart - Nick 313292
Man Who Suddenly Fell Over - Chris 314038
Americans On Heat - Chris 314038
Chinamen - Hugh 350285
Flock Of Willies - Trevor 68184
The Light Blues - Nick 211424
Gigglesticks ATLT - Barry Prince, Fitz.
20th Century - Mathew Lefroy, Trinity
The Point - Philip Hartigan, Clare
Force 9 - Nigel Pink, Fulbourn
State Of Mind - Martyn 316211
32/20 - Eddy, Oundle 72118
Samurai - Phil 314772
Sax Appeal - Alan, Ely 5236
Habit Of Perfection
The Lovely
Talos
Tutch
Energy
13th Chime
Clay Dolz
Self Righteous Brothers
Andy Talking And The Ghost Of
Electricity - 65925

Exploding Hamsters - Fish 315495
Personal Touch
Precious Little Idols
Senior Service
Dum Dum Boys
Rhythm Method
Dirty Mac And The Kerbcrawlers
Hall Of Mirrors
De Gulpa Twins - Andy 276408
Total Onslaught - Jim Barrell, 9 Field Way
Double Yellow Line
New Electric Sex Dwarfs
Spoons
Loan Sharks
Fast Friends - Darren 841420
Poet Painter - Richard, Histon 4073
Adverse FX
The Brink
Plaza

LIGHTS HIRE

Streetlights - Bob 249594
Just Lites - 0954 50851
Softspot - 244639
Mad - Peterborough 222914/41276
D. Lights Design - 834212
Clare JCR

P.A. HIRE

Stavros - 245047
Roger Chatterton - 313250
Dave Gonut - 0328 76394
Skysound - 358644
Cheops - 249889
Cambridge Rock - 316091
Mad - Peterborough 222914/41276

RECORDING STUDIOS

Spaceward - 9889 600
Kite Studios - 313250
Cheops - 249889
Skysound - 358644
School Hse.Studios - Bury St.Eds. 810723
Stable Studios - Harlow 871090/870520

VIDEO RECORDING

Neil Roberts - 210320
P.T.V. Productions - 0480 61900
Spaceward - 9889 600

BARS

Outside Bars - Tim 9889 607
Cam Bars - Mitch 60340

VENUES

City Limits - 60340
The Alma - 64965
Fisher Hall - 350018
Guildhall - 358977
Kelsey Kerridge Sports Hall - 358977
Sea Cadet Hall
CCAT Canteen, Batman, Theatre - 312518
Man On The Moon - Jazz
Golden Hind; Rob Roy - Folk
Last Resort
Pickeral; Flambards; Pitts - Acoustic
UNIVERSITY HALLS - See article in BSN 1.