

FREE

BRUM BEAT

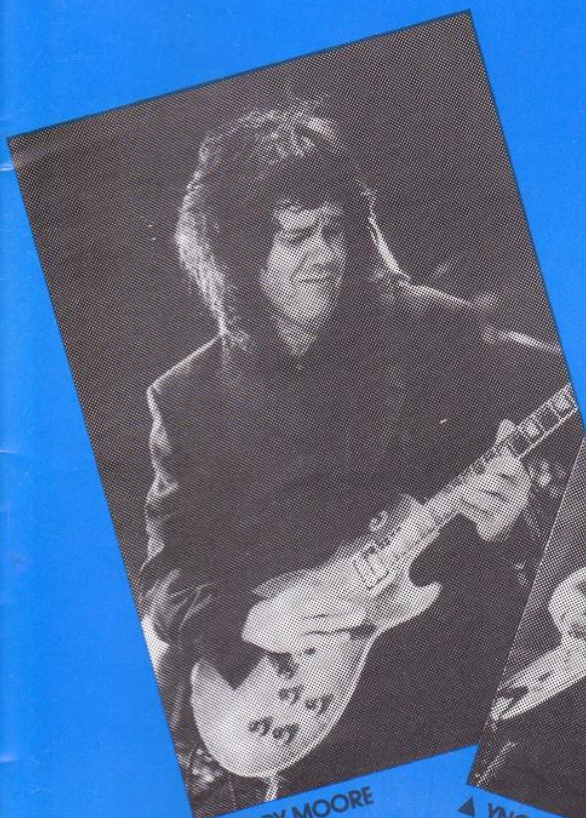
THE MIDLANDS ENTERTAINMENT MONTHLY

NUMBER 114

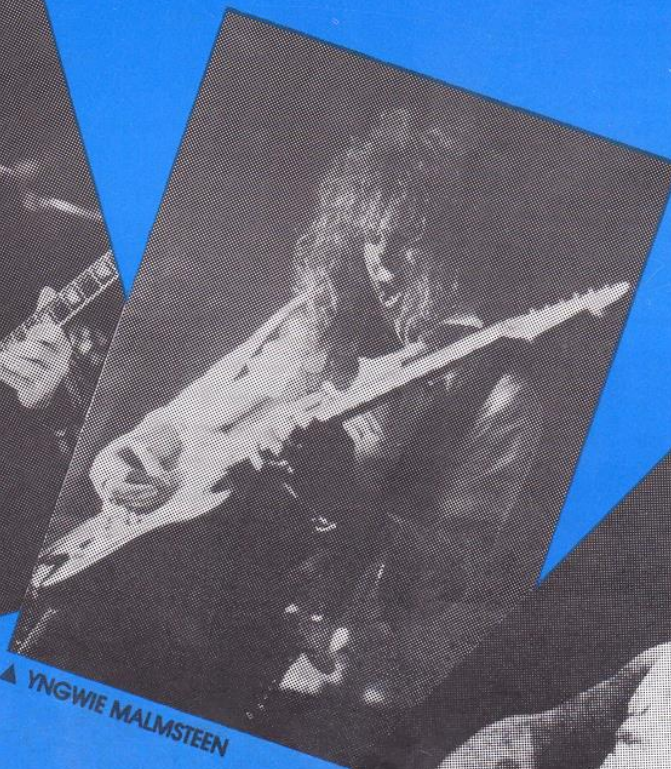
JUNE 1990

▼ SPANK THAT PLANK!

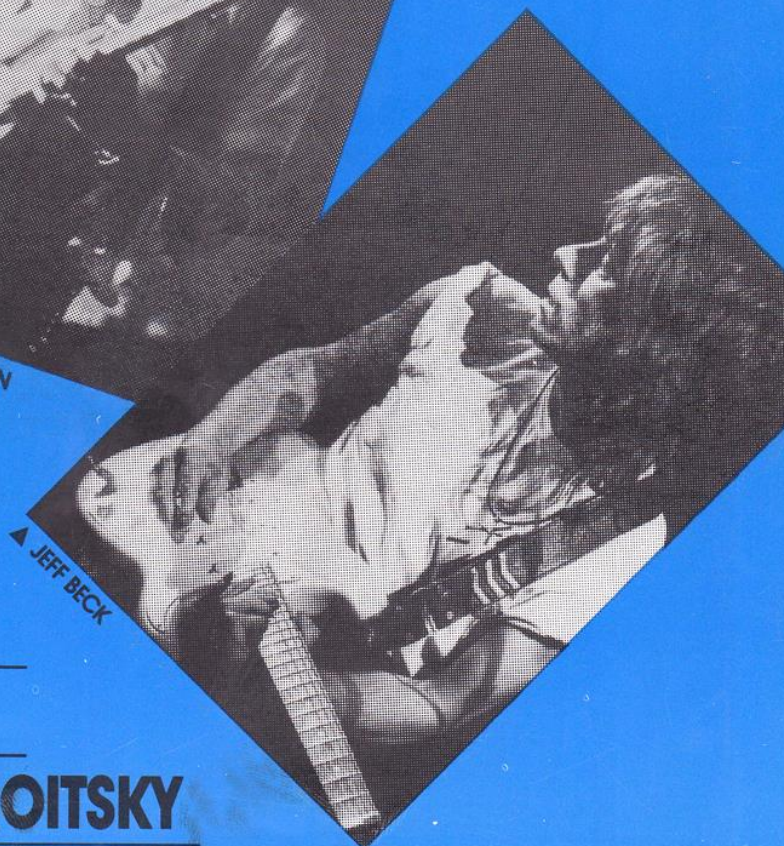
MARK HADLEY DRAWS
THREE GUITAR ACES...



▲ GARY MOORE



▲ YNGWIE MALMSTEEN



▲ JEFF BECK

► PLUS

● MADABOUT THE ENID

GARY WOOD ON A CHANGING PHENOMENON

● THE LILAC TIME

● JOHN OTWAY ● ART TROITSKY

► EXCLUSIVE REVIEWS...

● STEVE EARLE ● ONIONHEAD ● OCEAN COLOUR SCENE

... AND MORE ►

THE quandary, is whether to present this month's fare as akin to one of the works of the Old Bard, or to keep it short and make a swift getaway. Having been informed recently, that I'm often a man of numerous words, watch me swallow a few for a change.

THE summer usually brings a general winding down in the indoor proceedings, as affairs musical take to the great outdoors; an elemental gamble on numerous counts.

AS always, we kick off with the Kingswinford based conglomerate Acoustic Roots. Their only June date is at Trysull Village Hall on Saturday 16th, when they present for the first time in concert, Dave Cartwright. A Transatlantic label artist back in the early seventies, Dave subsequently moved to DJM Records, before releasing a series of self financed albums. Another in the latter category is due soon. These days Dave is on the staff at Radio Wyvern, but this date will undoubtedly prove that once in the blood, music remains an insatiable mistress. Old folkies should never rest on their laurels. A few years back, the global audience was mesmerised by the talent of Tracy Chapman. A chanteuse from the new generation of folk influenced performers, Chapman was catapulted to almost instan-

ARTHUR WOOD



▲ JOAN ARMATRADING

aneous fame. When too much pressure is applied too soon, the muse often fades. Not so with our own Joan Armatrading. Her catalogue stretches back to a 1972 duo album (shared with Pam Nestor), and titled 'Whatever's For Us'. Joan's latest platter 'Hearts and Flowers' (A&M), will be released to coincide with her latest spell on the road. On Sunday 24th, you can catch Joan at the Birmingham Hippodrome.

BACK in the mid eighties, the theory that the

music industry had begun to repeat itself on a twenty year cycle, was given some credence; Los Angeles witnessed the rise and (somewhat) swift fall of what has euphemistically been called, the Paisley Underground. De rigueur became granny glasses and Rick-enbacker guitars but most of all Bob - hippies. Hippies m-a-a-n. One of the leading bands in that revival movement, was the Long Ryders. Led by the garrulous kid from Kentucky, Sid Griffin. Rock 'n' roll with a thumb firmly placed on the

country music pulse of the American nation. The Long Ryders split up a few years back, but Sid is back again. This time, it's as a member of the Coal Porters. Slick name, huh. The Porters supported Billy Bragg on his recent UK tour. Sid and the boys are at the Breedon Bar on Tuesday 12th. Four days later, Nashville based singer/songwriter Joe Sun pays a return visit. A regular visitor to the UK, Joe is backed once again by Memphis Roots. The date once more - Saturday June 16th. Sunday 24th and that June flavour of decades long gone prevails, when Kevin Coyne and Edgar Broughton team up for a double helping of rock and blues at the Breedon.

TRACY Nelson's projected June date, mentioned in last month's column has bitten the dust. It hasn't exactly proved to be a high profile promotion to date, by the tour company involved. Publicity, or at least the total lack of it, always leaves the local promoter with an empty venue and the bill. I thought some lessons were meant to be learned. **AT** the moment a question mark hovers over the possible appearance by country great, Bobby Bare at the Breedon Bar on Wednesday 4th July. Independence day for some. Check it out by ringing 021-459 6573, nearer the date.

AND finally. As we reach toward the part which gives terminal relief, a few thoughts and comments on the first six months of the decade. A few Austin based songwriters better watch out - Freddie Krc's songs have always been based around great melodies. His lyrics of late, have become incisive and direct. 'The Wall' and 'Family Band' which he performed during his May 18th date at the Breedon being cases in point. Guy Clark's latest UK trip, finally proved that he can vary his set when the occasion arises. He may not be as prolific as some songwriters, but his latest gem (to these ears anyway) 'Gonna Build Me A Boat', was yet another example of the carpenter of words at work. Clark hopes to cut a new album in Nashville this summer. Those two alien beings from Lubbock, Butch Hancock and Jimmie Dale Gilmore have cut a live album down under for the Virgin (Australia) label. May turn out to be an import job. Who can tell? Joe Gracy recorded all five, or was that six or even seven nights of the Austin leg of the 'Butch Hancock - No Two Alike' series of concerts. One scheme is to release recordings of the concerts in a 'tape of the month' series by mail order only. Great gimmick. Gimme money, that's what I want. I said, M-O-N-E-Y.

★ Seen BSB yet? I've caught a passing glimpse and it all seemed very smooth and very slick and very well put together. Like thousands of others, I'd like to see both Sky and BSB but to do that I need either 2 dishes or an expensive motorised dish. On top of that I'll need 2 receivers. To see the Sky Movie channel I need a decoder (by the way Sky Subscribers Services of Livingstone in Scotland ... I'm still waiting for my lead ...), to see the Dutch 24 hour film channel Filmnet I need a decoder, by the end of the year WHSTV will scramble Screensport and Lifestyle meaning that I'll need more decoders. Where will it end? I'll tell you where ... a meeting of minds twixt BSB and Sky, a lot of technological expertise to produce one system with in-built decoding systems and a lot more regard given to the

SPACE JUNK

THE PIE IN THE SKY
SATELLITE COLUMN
BY
KEVIN WILSON

consumer. In other words ... about 2 years time! Can you wait? June is World Cup month and Eurosport have promised to broadcast all 52 matches ... whether you like it or not. I do so I'm okay. Winners? I've had a £5 wager on both Uruguay

and Rumania. At 33/1 and 66/1 respectively, it's money well spent I reckon! For the non-soccer lovers, Sky Movies have put together an interesting collection of new films for June including Michael Jackson's indulgent Moon-walker, Arnold Schwarzenegger's ultra violent (what do you really expect?) *Running Man*, a crazy and worthwhile Dan Aykroyd comedy *The Couch Trip* and, on June 21st when plucky little England take on the might of Egypt in the World Cup, Sky Movies has *A Midsummer's Night Nightmare* when from 8pm, you can get the s*** scared out of you thanks to the likes of *Critters*, *A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 2*, *Freddy's Nightmares*, *The Exorcist 2* and *Shivers*. Have a nice night! If you ain't seen *Critters* by the way, it's a Stephen Herek film that purports to be

'funny and frightening'. I think its neither, it's just sick. You want new innovation? Try the new all transparent dish that is beginning to appear in the electrical shops. Mind you, my technical boffin tells me that they're useless but at least they're harder to spot! I've had a few *Brum Beat* readers ask me about buying a decent satellite system and I've asked around the trade for advice so, here depending on how much you've got to spend, are the current best buys for systems that will pick up the Astra satellite (Sky, WHSV, Filmnet etc) £200-£300 : Tatung Earlybird - RRP £299 - Compact, reliable and a BSB upgraded version is due. Uniden UST 8008 - RRP £299 - Great value, looks good but having problems with compatibility to Sky Movies decoder.

Pace SS3000 - RRP £300 - An excellent basic system. £300 - £400 : NEC 3022 - £399 - A real Rolls Royce for the price. Vortec Star - £330 - A first system for a new Korean venture. Worth a look. Diskxpess DX500 - £339 - Popular system just about to be upgraded. £400+ : ITT Nokia 1100 - £400 - Finnish contender that looks the business. Panasonic TU-S100 - £450 - High specification and classy to boot. If you want my advice, buy a good inexpensive fixed dish system, wait till you can get hold of a motorised dish for a decent price and then go for it. Whatever the experts say (Clive James etc), satellite TV is here to stay and it will get cheaper as technology improves the systems and makes the price more competitive. Good viewing.

Kevin Wilson

JAY TURNER

Movements In Architecture

(Gypsy Records)

Last year's cassette only release from Jay Turner, 'Passion Roulette', featured among many fine compositions, the powerful green anthem - 'Burning Brazil'. Without doubt, one of 1989's premier songs (if not the best ...), from a promising new singer/songwriter. Question was, with 'Movements In Architecture' could Turner even manage to equal the overall standard set by his debut album. What's more, would Turner be able to produce any concrete evidence that he had further honed and developed his skills as a songwriter. On both counts, the answer according to 'Movements In Architecture' is a resounding "Yes". I believe even Turner would admit, 'Cambodia' was a song which he was compelled to write, by some inexplicable force. Definitely moulded for the nineties. A powerful indictment tracing the exploitation of man by fellow man, which lyrically transports you from the horrors of Pol-Pot's Cambodia to his exile in Thailand, on to the Tianenmen Square massacre and finally to the crumbling Berlin Wall. Threaded through the song is the hope, if not the firmly held belief that peace is 'only a step down the road, cos here comes the year 2000 ...'. If we all became true believers, one day it could all come true. I've always been a sucker for simplicity. Songs from that edge, capture the essence of what music should still be. A skill long lost in high tech, hype and fashion. 'Swim Against The Tide' is a gem, set against a backdrop of the resigned inevitability of life; a style which Jackson Browne made his own, before overtly political lyrics swamped his work. The pleasure from such tunes, makes that swim worthwhile. And again and again.

Arthur Wood

VARIOUS

Crunchhouse

(Glitterhouse)

Tad/Halo Of Flies/Bastards/Boss Hog/God Bullies/Mudhoney and six more slices of plastic pizza that demonstrate the noises made by John Peel between the music.

And all for budget pennies.

Steve Morris

RECORDED
DELIVERED

MUZZIKAS

Blues For Transylvania

(Hannibal)

Transylvania is, it seems, not a space on the Hammer film set but a long time suppressed part of Rumania. The sleeve tells us that had Mexico won a war against the US and taken Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia and Florida as spoils and then banned the music of all those places it would have the same net effect as Rumania stealing Transylvania and doing the same to its folklore. The music similarly tells the story. Even without any notion of the language its haunting quality is uncannily moving.

Steve Morris

LITTLE RED

SCHOOLHOUSE

Grubby Highway

Country Lane

(Cherry Red)

Andy Lloyd's been beaver-ing away quietly for the past few years working towards this rather wonderful collection that brings together English 60's folkiness with a heady wash of psychedelia. Tracks such as the stand-out 'Hello Hello' and 'Mind Contracting Drug' accurately recreate the mood of those early spacey Pink Floyd liquid sky days rather than the current reinterpretation of psychedelia as flailing stoned guitars and hooded sweatshirts, just as 'Good Thing' or 'Shady Pool' are well aware of the ingredients that made those first Al Stewart albums such fine fare. Listen carefully and you'll hear Lloyd slip in a few other references - too; notably a nod to Cream's 'Crossroads' on 'Good Thing', a phrase from 'Things We Said Today' on 'Holiday In Smalltown'.

Correctly taking the whisper is stronger than scream approach, the music is beautifully understated (though far from wimpy), favouring acoustic ambience with undulating - occasionally Latin - percussion, rippling guitars that weave their spidery or stoned moods with the minimum fuss and the maximum im-

pect. With the added ingredient of thoughtful lyrics, the result, reflected in the back sleeve photos, is a mesmerising 15 track fusion of the pastoral and the urban, the languid tranquility of the one, the tension of the other. An immaculate, immensely pleasurable and rewarding album.

Mike Davies

BRENDAN CROKER & THE 5 O' CLOCK SHADOWS

Boat Trips In The Bay

(Silvertone)

Resurrected by his current label, no doubt due to his Notting Hillbilly success, is Croker's 1987 indie debut. And marvellous it is too. In fact it's tempting to say it's better than last year's excellent guest endowed album. It's simply because there's so much space here alongside the variety and wit. Brendan's blues, calypso, R&B and country tastes crash head on in a pungent style cocktail that reaches an unlikely height in a dub reggae assault on Johnny Cash's 'I Walk The Line'. If I tell you that the track that follows that is a Byrdian twelve string jangle of infectious proportions I'm sure you'll get the picture.

A great album and whilst Brendan maybe no new kid, he's more than welcome on our block!

Steve Morris



▲ BRENDAN CROKER

JEZEBELLE

Bad Attitude

(Heavy Metal Records)

A band that kickstarts it's debut album with a unison cry of "One, Two, Fuck You" can be guaranteed to have, shall we say rough edges! Jezebel is an all woman rock 'n' roll band that will

never be considered for Ladies in rock pieces. They play at eleven; hard, distorted and lump hammer heavy. Bad Attitude is an album that thinks Special Brew is for cissies. It stomps and angrily swaggers. That it is not musical in any accepted way is tantamount to observing that a bulldozer is pretty shitty at cornering. Like that vehicle I suspect that when Jezebel are fully powered standing in front of them and expecting to survive is an occupation for the foolhardy.

Steve Morris

VARIOUS

... If You Just Tuned In ...

(Awareness)

A mid price low budget album sparked by the Mean Fiddler's Neil O'Brien who persuaded label boss Andy Ware to park a 16 track mobile outside the Fiddler's Acoustic room for one week in the summer of '89.

According to O'Brien, "The original idea was to record artists like Tanita Tikaram, Billy Bragg and the like who got their first exposure in the Fiddler's Acoustic room but commitments and record companies put paid to that".

Instead Neil chose to showcase the variety of talent that regularly treads the room's boards. Consequently, Ted Hawkins apart, it's unlikely that too many names will be familiar outside of London. However the quality of such acts as To Hell With Burgundy, Andrew Cunningham, Little Big Band and Sons Of The Desert is so high that impulse purchase will repay blind faith.

In fact with neck sticking out I'll predict that Katell Keineg, represented here with 'Partisans' will be the next of the Fiddler's finds.

O'Brien; "We're contemplating making a series of these albums and taking the idea on the road with a selection of bands, solos artists and a DJ".

This is the right time to get tuned in.

Steve Morris

EXCLUSIVE

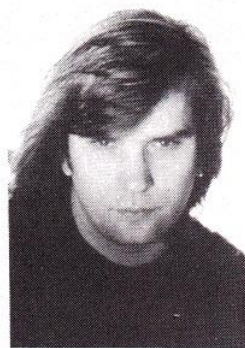
PREVIEW

STEVE EARLE

The Hard Way

(MCA)

If you thought 'Copperhead Road' was a stunner, this should blow you away. Earle's gone harder and rockier without losing his



▲ STEVE EARLE

fierce country edge and if the name Springsteen or Dylan was on the sleeve this would sell thousands more than it probably will.

For sheer 'Born To Run' glory - albeit in a less restrained tempo - there's nothing to touch 'Homeless Romanics'. That song alone should earn Earle a place in any Hall of Fame you care to mention. Mind you, there's plenty of competition. The sparse acoustic 'Bill Austin', a powerful tale of a young Indian on death row vividly recalls the 'Nebraska' album and sits in firm contrast to the gospelling drive of 'Where You Gonna Run To' or the crunching 'Justice In Ontario' which puts you in mind of some of Warren Zevon's more rumblingly angry moments.

For those who like it stomped up, the Cajun inspired 'Regular Guy' (with a riff not dissimilar to 'Devil's Right Hand'), the raunchy rumble of 'Country Girl' and the hard rocking snarling guitar-fed 'West Nashville' all give every ass in sight a good kicking. 'The Other Kind' provides a solid single trailer with its outlaw soul and drawled, leather and cactus vocals soaring into the roped and tied chorus hook. If the promised live dates turn into a full tour maybe Earle will finally find that the hard way is the path that brings most rewards.

Mike Davies

VARIOUS

ARTISTS

Voices

(Hannibal)
Heartbeats
(Special Delivery)

Two surprisingly compatible issues.

'Voices' is a generous mid price label sampler covering ground as seemingly removed as Trio Bulgarka, Nick Drake, Sandy Denny and Dagmar Krause.

A veritable boiling pot of style, sound and approach. If you like the idea of Andy Kershaw but know not what

LIVE REVIEWS

LENNY KRAVITZ

Irish Centre
Birmingham

Hard, heavy and ferociously funky. That's how likeable Lenny served up his sixties influenced soul for the 1990 love crowd. The sources of the Kravitz canon floated in and out throughout his set but ultimately it was not as a melange he impressed but as a new fresh force.

Perhaps it's because he chooses to make music organically, preferring the textures of reality, even if it means lumping Leslie cabinets about the globe, rather than the plastic feel of the synthetic palliatives that drone through modern life, that he is damned as revivalist.

In fact Hendrix's 'If Six Was Nine' was the only cover and the hard as a rock relevance to the present that he fed into the song must've had Jimi jiving in the clouds and kissing the sky.

Overkill sure, but believe me Lenny Kravitz is destined to be a major influence on the 90s.

Let love rule? ... Let Lenny rule?
Right on.

Steve Morris



▲ LENNY KRAVITZ

and as yet (generally) unrecorded territory. Considering the rate at which he pens tunes, it would literally require the release of a new album every fortnight, if Clarke were to attempt to keep pace with his production rate.

Outstanding among his new songs was 'I Will Follow You', which was some five days old. The closing coda listing the places to which Clarke would be willing to follow the person to whom the song is dedicated; this lyrically climactic testament to the power of love, closes at 'the outer gates of heaven'. Better to go for it, than not at all. 'Frank O'Sullivan and the Fields of Viet Nam', may well turn up on Clarke's second album, but for now, it remains part of a series of songs (composed in the last twelve months), where Clarke has explored and attempted to come to terms with, his Irish ancestry. The at times frantic song 'Rhythm Oil', takes its title from the book of the same name by Stanley Booth. Clarke has featured 'Rhythm Oil' a number of times over the last few months, when performing at the Border Cafe. On each succeeding occasion, the song has contained more verses. Lyrically, it's a highly charged (geo)graphic, textural, sexual odyssey, which considering its ever increasing length, may yet prove to be a satisfying substitute for the normal human reproductive activity. Song ten turned out to be 'Sleeping With The One I Love', a classic song, now some two years old. Having almost forgotten how good it was, it was pleasing to hear it given a long overdue airing.

Arthur Wood

KYLIE MINOGUE

NEC

Birmingham

On stage for about an hour and a half, Kylie Minogue sang and danced through her parade of hits in the company of a top-notch band who looked as though they'd been hand picked by Michael Hutchence rather than PWL.

The staging arranged the backing singers - six in all - in a line in front of the rhythm section, but occasionally James and Jamie - guitarist Jardine and bassist Freud - would break through the ranks to give it some plank.

And when it comes down to it, that's all you really want to know isn't it? Was it live

or was it Memorex, as the cynics are insisting?

Well, it looked live to me, drummer Creech wasn't wearing headphones, a usual sign of synchronisation to a click track, and overall the songs' tempos were much looser and more relaxed than studio preparation would have decreed. Also Kylie offered far more than merely a succession of cruddy SAW songs. She displays a judicious choice of covers, 'The Locomotion' and 'Tears On My Pillow', obviously, but also the Lennonfest treatment of 'Help' and, as first encore, Sly Stone's old 'Dance To The Music'. A quartet of dancers dwarfed the tiny star throughout, but she held her own, and more, in the hot-stepping company. She looks divine, too, which raised the libido of lusty young males in the audience. Minogue is much more than a soap star who got lucky and on the NEC stage she grabbed the crowd by the short and the Kyles.

Rowdy Yeats

BUTCH HANCOCK & JIMMIE DALE GILMORE

featuring JESSE TAYLOR

Breedon Bar & Border Cafe

Birmingham

A night of shared duets and solos supported by three acoustic folk/country guitars occasionally adorned with the high lonesome sound of a harmonica, presenting along the way, "songs which got us into this whole mess", and closing out with the unofficial state anthem 'West Texas Waltz'. If I ever get to heaven Lord, I pray that I catch the same haywagon as these guys. That great campfire in the clouds could turn out to be one hell of a hot spot.

Arthur Wood

BILLY BRAGG/ THE COAL PORTERS

Civic Hall

Wolverhampton

Billy Bragg may well be an authoritative performer capable of transferring both passion and compassion to his audiences but when the combination of PA and council acoustics join forces to obliterate the vital lyrical content he is left very much reliant on the audience's pre knowledge of his work.

Fortunately they did and a relaxed, erudite Bragg was able to blend his serious intent with running gags at the expense of Inspirational Carpets fans, Morrissey and dentists.

Performances of 'I Dreamed I Saw Phil Ochs' and 'The Internationale', prefaced with an obviously sincere speech as to its meaning, left no one in any doubt as to Bragg's worth and place in the tradition. The Coal Porters, a new aggregation fronted by Sid 'Long Ryder' Griffin, play a very commendable country rock. With an obvious few miles on the clock the CPs promise to be pretty smooth when fully run in.

Steve Morris

THE E NUMBERS/ INDIGO BLUES BAND

Polytechnic

Birmingham

Booking the E Numbers and the Indigo Blues Band to raise money for Friends Of The Earth was the dream of one man, Dave Sandall the membership secretary of Birmingham F.O.E., who with the co-sponsorship of *Brum Beat* turned the fantasy into reality and cash for F.O.E.

The event started with the usual sincere

but dull speeches but once the Indigos launched into their electric blues the audience came out of the bar and started to enjoy themselves. While Dene was belting out 'He Gives Me Love', volunteers infiltrated the revellers with raffle tickets for the night's Grand Prize Draw. The draw took longer than expected. In fact the E Numbers started to play before Dave had started on page three of his speech thanking people for donating prizes.

The E Numbers have a reputation for an hour long explosion of rock mania and it's deserved. During the first song Bertie opens a bottle of bourbon and finishes it during the last. At present their set is full of cover versions such as 'Crossroads' but a member of the band told me that they at last have some original music almost ready to perform.

It was the right night, the right atmosphere, the right music, and the right cause. A girl called 'Banana' tipped her last few coins into a collector's bucket saying that she would have to make her drink last all night (I think some were bought for her).

I was woken two days later when Dave phoned to say that over £550 had been raised on the night and money was still coming in. Let's do it again, Dave, but not next week. I need to recover.

Roy Evans



▲ JIMMIE DALE GILMORE

JESUS JONES

Irish Centre
Birmingham

A lot can happen in 3 years. Not so long ago, Jesus Jones were supporting the Inspirational Carpets (when even they were still unknown outside of John Peel) and going down as well as a pork chop at a Jewish wedding. Now, after all the hype, Jesus Jones have crashed into the charts with 'Info Freako' and 'Real, Real, Real', played Rumania with Crazyhead and Skin Games just after the downfall of Ceaucescu, and best of all... appeared in Smash Hits! Strange, eh?

Luckily, Jesus Jones are real, able to concoct a metal-clanging excitement amid a danceable PWEI groove with more samples than a sperm bank on display.

The hottest, sweatiest gig for years began as 'Trust Me' collided into the ethereal introduction and proceeded to run amok with an overdose of thrusting, headshaking and more sweat, exploding with their Pandora's Box of sampling effects. 'More Mountains' frazzled into hip-hop rhythms before newie 'Damn Good At This' and 'Broken Bones' unleashed the razor dance riffs they have made their own. Happy is never enough, Jesus said as we all sang along to 'You know what's going on, You know what's taking place, it's only me that's lost space'. What a macrocosm, eh? - or should that be microcosm? Who cares.

Andy Tipper

TERRY CLARKE

Breedon Bar & Border Cafe
Birmingham

'Blow Wind Blow' a track from his recently released and long awaited debut album 'Call Up A Hurricane', was quickly followed by 'Tennessee Wind' which only appears on the cassette and CD versions (Note to Editor: of course this is going to degenerate into a deliberately biased and commercial review). The remaining eight songs in Clarke's set, charted new

Andy Tipper