



## Judd aids Reps

Another of the not-yet conquering heroes has returned. Philip Judd, co-founder and three times ex-member of Split Enz, slipped back into New Zealand last month. He is the fourth member of the band which left for England two years ago to return to live in Auckland, and his departure leaves singer Tim Finn as the only original member of the band still with them.

His current duties include work with the dreaded Suburban Reptiles on their next Phonogram single. As well as producing the disc, Judd will play a little guitar on it in place of the now-departed Reptiles guitarist, Billy Planet, although it is highly unlikely that this arrangement will extend to live work. At the moment, it is not certain that Billy Planet will be joining Split Enz.

## Interview FRANK GIBSON

Frank Gibson has done well. Thirteen months ago he left Dr Tree, Auckland's jazz rock combo, and New Zealand for Britain, and now he's back on his first tour as Leo Sayer's drummer staying at five star hotels and drinking Heinekens. What went right?

"I know Bruce Lynch who plays bass for Cat Stevens — we used to live together for two years and we were great friends. I know Dave Macrae (Pacific Eardrum), Billy Kristian and Chris Thompson who's with Manfred Mann. It was just a matter of looking them up and waiting to see what happened."

So Frank had the right connections, but there's no way that he would have made it if he didn't know a snare drum from a tom-tom, in other words he's good. How did he meet Sayer?



"Well some studio things started to happen because I had been recommended to a big contractor or fixer in London. You see in studio gigs you work for a fixer and you're on a list of drummers he's got and he knows what you're best at and he'll put you on certain gigs he thinks you're suited for. This guy I worked for, his name is David Katz, thought I'd suit Leo. Leo actually asked for a different drummer but Katz said I've got somebody you'll like better. I did two things in the studio for Leo and I got the tour."

Gibson would be the first to admit that luck played an important part in his successful emergence from the wealth of musical talent that thrives in London, but his versatility and sheer capacity for hard work circulated his name around the right places.

"I worked hard — I never turned down a gig in London since I got there. I didn't care what it was — I've done some funny old pub gigs just to get my head about. I did a lot of jazz and be-bop gigs, in fact, I was working six or seven be-bop gigs a week for months and doing sessions in the daytime — TV shows, commercials, rock'n'roll records, demos and anything that's going. I auditioned and toured Israel with Tina Charles. The thing is to circulate and let a lot of people hear you and some of them are bound to like the way you play."

Gibson is enjoying the security of a regular wage with Sayer and the relatively carefree

existence of being part of a unit rather than being responsible for a band as he was with Dr Tree. But Sayer's music with its cross blendings of sophisticated pop and Anglicised funk is entirely different from the style he was accustomed to playing with Dr Tree. Does this change bother him?

"No, I think Leo Sayer is every bit as valid as anything I've ever tried and what's more he reaches more people. I've changed my ideas a lot since I've got there and I think communicating with people is very important. I love being part of it, and he communicates so well, he's such a good performer. I love the gig. I've always played in a variety of styles, and playing with Leo is just another style."

Can he see himself returning to the style that he was playing with Dr Tree?

"I haven't played anything remotely like what I played with Dr Tree since I left but I will get around to it and I'll play with some very good players — even better than Dr Tree. Eventually I might go on my own but at the moment I'm enjoying working with other people."

Gibson has worked himself into an enviable position in the pop biz, definitely a Kiwi makes good storyline here and the future looks even more promising as he is appearing on his first Sayer album recorded live later this year in Los Angeles. He deserves it.

George Kay

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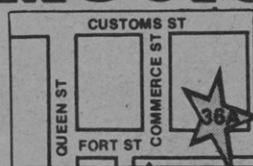
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