

New Recruits Old Guard Specials Tull Talk



The Specials



Gary Brookers



Tull LP out for Xmas

Ska band **The Specials** have their debut album out in the UK. It's produced by Elvis Costello. About the production *NME's* Tony Stewart wrote — "they sound as though they just turned up, plugged in and bashed it down. They've lost none of their live impact, nor their ramshackle enthusiasm, nor any of their indelible character."

Apparently another big name, Mick Jagger, representing Rolling Stones records was among the record men chasing the Specials. But, the band wanted to maintain their own label '2 Tone' (complete with its own budget) within a larger company's structure. Chrysalis signed the Specials and '2 Tone', June '79.

The Specials came from Coventry, the nucleus being formed in mid '77. Early 1978 guitarist Roddy Byers (from punk band, Roddy Radiation & Wild Boys) and two singers joined. They toured the UK with Clash in the summer of '78 and released an independent single ("Gangsters") with another ska act called the Selector on the flip (it sold 5000).

Their first Chrysalis album is out soon and titled *The Specials*.

Ex-Stiff act **Mickey Jupp** has a new single out titled "You Made A Fool Out Of Me" and produced by ex-10cc lads, and Creme.

Out in NZ is **Gary Brookers** solo LP *No Fear Of Flying* (produced by Beatles' George Martin). Brooker was vocalist and writer for Procul Harum — the "White Shade of Pale" people. Brooker does a couple of Mickey Jupp tunes on the album and co-writes several with Pete Sinfield.

A few newbies to look out for are *Live Wire Pick It Up* (produced by Glyn Johns), **Robin Trowers** *Victims of Fury* (he plays with original Trower three piece of himself, James Dewar on bass and Bill Lordan on drums — the LP was co-produced by Trower working with Geoff Emerick) and **Buggles**, their single is called *Video Killed the Radio Star*. Buggles are Trevor Horn and Geoff Downes and they're into making "electronic pop for the eighties."

Not wanting to work with a hired man, Ian Anderson played bass on the sessions for the new Jethro Tull album *Stormwatch*.

Not being a fan of the music press, Ian interviewed himself and kindly sent us a copy.

Has Tull bassist, John Glasscock left the group?

"John had an emergency operation on his heart last summer. He had to have a valve replaced. We toured America with a stand-in bass player. When John re-joined us, he was obviously not in great physical shape. We weren't getting the results from him, musically, that he is capable of giving. He needs to take a year away from playing music and get himself sorted out and face the restrictions that his illness has placed on his life — I've no doubt however that he will return to a musical career."

Do you have a new bass player?

"Dave Pegg joined the group after the final, final Fairport concert. He fits in well. His musical tradition is not too dissimilar from our own — he's played everything from commercial jingles to ethnic folk."

The songs on *Stormwatch* seem to have a theme running through them?

"I think the songs on an album have to have a thread, something that holds them together, there are a few exceptions, but generally if a song doesn't fit in then it's thrown out."

Do you enjoy writing lyrics?

"I think I'm an achronism at this time, because I try and write lyrics that mean something, I try to avoid most of the cliches of pop music lyrics. I know that sounds awfully snotty, but I think that most pop lyrics are so much rubbish. There aren't many people whose lyrics I could pretend that I like. Ian Dury is a very good lyric writer."

How much of the new album will you feature on the US tour?

"Most of it. We will feature the material as a set piece. It will be nice to dress up the new work and present it as a whole, rather than playing another best of Jethro Tull tour."



On his recent Chrysalis album *Photo-Finish* the durable Irish guitarist Rory Gallagher includes a song called "The Last of the Independents". The title fairly sums up Gallagher himself.

One of those who made blues-rock trios fashionable, Gallagher stuck to this format through thick and thin. A man who shuns the trappings of showbiz, Rory Gallagher appears always to be dressed in checked lumberjack shirt and jeans, toting a well-worn Fender Stratocaster. His unchanging image and the constancy of his music have made him the butt of jibes from the more fashion conscious.

But Rory Gallagher has endured, staying true to the musical vision he developed as a journeyman guitarist in Irish showbands when he left school in the mid-sixties. As the eighties approach there is probably more interest in the roots music that is Gallagher's foundation than at any time since the sixties' blues boom.

Gallagher's last two Chrysalis albums, *Photo-Finish* and *Top Priority*, show no flagging of the man's spirit. He looks set to face the next decade head-on and spitting hot licks.

To uninitiated ears, Gallagher can sound as if he has made one album many times over. There is a grain of truth to this. A check of his very first recordings (released as *In The Beginning*), made prior to the first success of Taste in 1969, shows he had a firm concept of blues-

based rock way back then. Each album since those early days has been a fine tuning of that vision.

To be sure, the difference between Gallagher's better albums is a matter of degree only, vehicles as they are for guitar playing; Rory is a limited songwriter and something of an acquired taste as a vocalist.

The move to Chrysalis a couple of years ago marked an improvement in his studio albums, with the jazz inflected title track of *Calling Card* being one of the highlights of his career.

Of the earlier albums, the two live records are the best. It is in front of a crowd that Gallagher shines. His New Zealand tour of five years ago must rank as one of the best, with the guitarist setting a hot pace without resort to the baser kinds of flash that too often accompany guitar pyrotechnics.

Gallagher's music of this period was a major influence on Hammond Gamble. A good proportion of *Street Talk* material was gleaned from Gallagher.

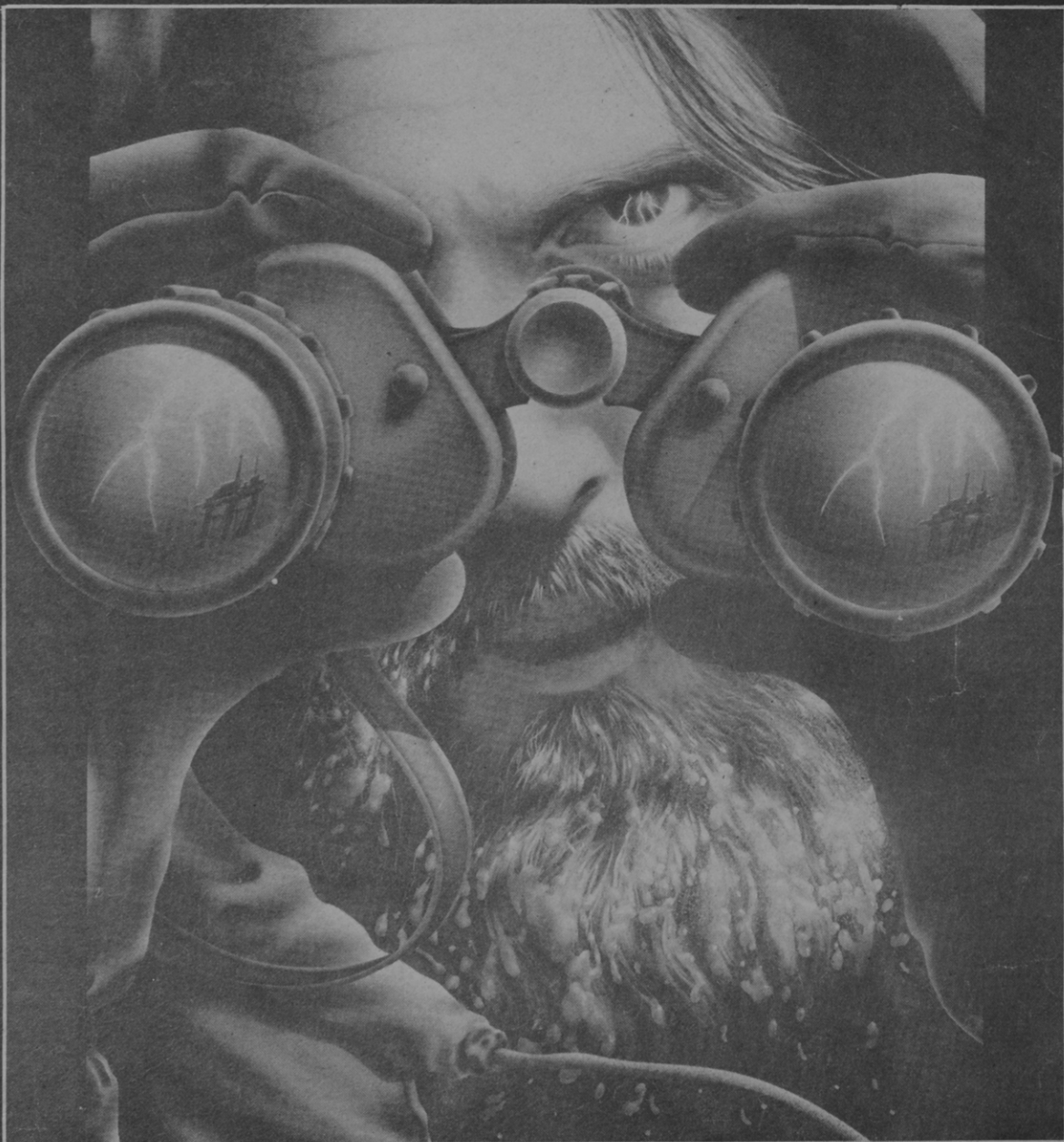
In 1972 Gallagher augmented the guitar-bass-drums format with keyboards, but the effect remained that of a trio with the piano adding texture rather than another solo voice.

For a bandleader who runs his group his way Rory Gallagher has kept a fairly constant lineup, but recently he regrouped, firing keyboards man Lou Martin and drummer Rod de'Ath. He kept his longtime bass player Gerry McAvoy and brought in drummer Ted McKenna.

The move meant a lengthy delay while *Photo-Finish* was re-recorded. The result is, if anything, better than ever. The new trio is solid and Gallagher is sparkling on all cylinders. The new album, *Top Priority*, consolidates the hard-nosed approach of *Photo-Finish*.

Working from a twin base of blues (he played guitar on Muddy Waters' Grammy award-winning *London Sessions* album) and Gaelic/folk melody, Rory Gallagher has time and again proved himself his own man. The last of the independents.

Ken Williams



The Storm explodes as Jethro Tull's newest album breaks. Ian Anderson intensifies the fury with his electrifying musical directions. Jethro Tull ... Lightning Strikes ... Again.



Chrysalis



JETHRO TULL STORMWATCH