



BILLY: Consenting adults, only please. Of course, the number in the title may vary from listener to listener ...

How about "Baby I Need You Tonight"? DUSTY: It was originally called "I Have A Headache", but we changed it to make Billy feel better.

There's a song here called "Sharp Dressed Man". Is that a description of ZZ Top? BILLY: Well, this year I'm sporting the traditional yet ever-so-popular turquoise gator shirt with the classic, timeless faded Levis, finished off with a fine set of alligator loafers.

FRANK: I'm feeling sharp in a sports jacket and striped shirt, some simple, yet elegant, corduroy slacks and Italian loafers that I bought on sale. Actually I think they're a half-size too small.

DUSTY: I always look cool in basic balck not to mention my cheap Beatle boots that are also a half-size too small in case I have to sing.

You sing better with tight shoes?

DUSTY: Not better, just higher. It worked for Smokey Robinson, didn't it?

There's a tune here called "Got Me Under Pressure". Anything to do with the cooling system of your car?

BILLY: Actually, it's a nod to our French fans because we wrote it just to rhyme 'limousine' with 'French cuisine'. We also talked about Pavlov's dog but he's not French.

FRANK: He's Russian. A Russian thug, er, hooligan.

"Gimme All Your Loving" is the first single. DUSTY: As much loving as we're getting, it should be a single.

Tell us, is there really an overall message on this album?

FRANK: Get it where you can and have a good time going for it.

Do you guys go in for putting encoded messages backwards on your records?

BILLY: Doesn't everybody?

DUSTY: It's hard enough for people to understand our lyrics frontwards.

How do you account for the tremendous concert response you've generated in the last few years? The level of enthusiasm is as high as it's ever been, if not higher.

BILLY: Must be the Red Kryptonite again.

How about a word on the album cover artwork for *Eliminator*?

FRANK: It features our '32 Ford Coupe ... our pride and joy.

DUSTY: Actually, it's only our pride. Our joy is the '65 Chevy Impala' "El Dorado Bar" convertible. You've seen it in *Low Rider* magazine, haven't you?

BILLY: Hot rods and rock and roll go together ...

DUSTY: People say they really enjoy listening to us while driving. It's great because we have a driving type sound.

BILLY: We recommend the use of a fuzz-buster while listening to ZZ Top and driving. Otherwise, we're not responsible for speeding tickets.

One last question. If ZZ Top had never existed, what would you guys be doing today?

DUSTY: We'd probably be down-and-out derelicts in some obscure corner of Houston. FRANK: It's hard to answer. We've all been playing since we were so young. Music is the only thing we really do.

BILLY: I think I'd be travelling ... moving around ... looking for —

FRANK and DUSTY: More Red Kryptonite!!

THE END

Mania?

Hammersmith Odeon
Monday 28 November '83
December '83

There are no two ways about it, 1983 has got to go down as the year of the Top. One can hardly turn a page in any of the music papers without reading something about the Texas Hombres. ZZ Mania? Why not!

Dusty Hill, Bill Gibbons and Frank Beard have finally made the transition from cult status to the big time with the apparent coolness of changing their Stetsons, which, considering the amount of years they've been slogging the circuits is a hell of a way to do it.

Of course the "Lil' Boogie band" have always been a GREAT band, it's just that now EVERYBODY knows it, and a great deal of their current success must be credited to their excellent "Eliminator" album.

Tonight was their second Hammersmith date, and a regular hoedown it was too. My first thought was how sporting it was for ZZ to give support act, "Wendy and the Rockets" a fairly large use of the lights, all so often, the support has to endure the harsh glare of a single spotlight, which usually follows their stage movements half an hour too late. Wendy and the boys got a more than generous use of the rig and used it to their advantage by turning in a superb set.

They're one band to look out for in the future, visually and musically exciting, they are a classy Aussie export. Wendy has a dynamic voice, and although earlier numbers reminded me of Pat Benatar, that's as far as the similarities go, Good stuff.

ZZ Top never looked

like putting a foot wrong all night, the evening was an exercise in backing up their hard gigging reputation to the hilt. The crowd were miraculously transformed into whooping Texas outlaws. Stetsons, were rife and some members of the audience had even gone as far as to wear full length beards!

Hammersmith was one hell of a bucking and rolling bronco tonight, and ZZ Top broke them with the opening bars of "Under Pressure" and didn't slip out of the saddle for a second. Imagination is a great escape, but the power to invoke it is an even greater gift, ZZ have the gift.

Eliminator was well represented and earlier numbers like "10 Foot Pole" and "Party On The Patio", demonstrated the band's eccentric humour brilliantly. Their humour carries a definite Zappa influence and it is rumoured that they are one of his favourite bands. I mean who else would use a totally over the top light show, complete with pyrotechnics, dry ice and lasers to highlight a basic boogie number called "Cheap Sunglasses"? It's a classic kitsch and I love it.

Frank Beard's contribution could so easily be overlooked due to the magnetic double act of Hill and Gibbons, if it were not for the fact that he is such a brilliant drummer. Underated ... you bet.

What more can I add that hasn't been said about ZZ Top? They've made it to the big time, good luck to them, they more than deserve it. All I'll say is that a cult band is a safe band because everyone who is into them thinks they're underated.

Once the transition is made and suddenly EVERYONE loves ya baby the price of worldwide fame is a heavy mortgage. I hope ZZ Top

continue to boogie for as long as they want, BUT ... watch out for the backlash Amigos.
MARK STOREY

Image Deceives

Newcastle City Hall

Fewer times can the expression "You can't judge a book by its cover" have been more appropriate than in the case of this American band.

ZZ Top pronounced (zee-zee tarp), with the long wispy beards looking like crimped false pieces, look like real Hicks from the backwoods.

But once this Texan trio strike up the music, images become irrelevant. No, more than that, their appearance becomes almost an integral part of the sound.

Guitarist Billy Gibbons and bassist Dusty Hill, who share the vocals, and drummer Frank Beard, belt out an inspired brand of rock 'n' roll that has brought them huge album sales in America, as well as a cult following in this country, especially among fellow musicians.

Cult or not, they proved last night just why they can sell out their short and all-too-frequent tour of Britain. If you saw their fine performance on last week's The Tube, then you should have heard them at the City Hall, they were even better.

Their powerful playing sparkled with invention, sparked in no small measure, I'm sure, by the rapturous audience. It all added up to an electrifying experience of the best in modern day interpretation of old-time rock 'n' roll.

PETER KINGHORN

ZZ Top could be Coming!

A New Zealand tour is definitely on the cards.
Watch this space for details!

