



Th' Dudes, 1977: Dobbyn, Morris, Hambling, Ulrich, White.

attention.

The new era had taken hold. In May, 1979, Peter Kennedy of Rough Justice spoke for many when he said, "Twelve months ago we were considered ragers. Now they think we're laid back. That's punk rock, I suppose. But what can we do? None of us are into new wave." Barry Jenkin, who in issue three had prescribed Little Feat and Steely Dan, saying "There's not a hell of a lot to English punk rock, with its chord after chord," was now a cult hero as Dr Rock.

In late '79 Roy Colbert

observed Toy Love's triumphant return to Dunedin: "Knox asks the crowd if they'd like to know about the Auckland scene. Derision drowns him out. He sticks a safety pin in his cheek."

By that time, Toy Love had received a rave review from the NME for their explosive debut 'Rebel/Squeeze'. At home, critics had stopped reviewing local records apologetically long before, and by 1980 the era of the single was underway. Although that was the year that Hello Sailor, Th' Dudes and Toy Love split, the live scene was

booming (a 50-yard queue for a Streettalk Gluepot gig — by 6.30pm!) and an extraordinary number of 7" gems were released (plus MP Marilyn Waring's cover of Lennon's 'Working Class Hero'). In May alone, the singles column reviewed the Swingers' 'One Good Reason', Toy Love's 'Don't Ask Me', Crocodiles' 'Tears', Graham Brazier's 'Six Piece Chamber', Th' Dudes' 'Bliss', Streettalk, the Terrorways (on Ripper), Spelling Mistakes' 'Feel So Good', Features' 'City Scenes' — the latter two on new indie Propeller, which was to prove a key element in the next wave.

It had been predicted as far back as July, 1979, when a letter from the North Shore said: "RIU, you're all old men. You don't believe young bands can do it, do you? ... Well us young bands are coming! (PS: I'll drop into the RSA next month and help ya with the next issue.)"

Appropriately, the first mention of the Screaming Meemees, in November 1980, was when they were co-billed at the Spelling Mistakes' final gig at XS. "On that note," wrote Karen Stevens, "ended the last of the second wave of punk bands. You gotta move with the times ... The Meemees dislike labels, but agree to having their music

In the 1980 reader's poll, the Toy Love album put Split Enz' *True Colours* in second place.

Mid '81 saw the Swingers' 'Counting the Beat' being the fastest No 1 in Australia since 'Daddy Cool' in 1971, and Dave Dobbyn's "Divers" playing the Rumba Bar: "After 'Lipstick Power', could make be on its way?" From Flying Nun Records came its first release, by the Clean: "Tally Ho" cost \$50 to make and it sounds a bit that way," said Roy Colbert.

Propeller, meanwhile, was peaking with the Screaming Blamatic Roadshow and RIU's first colour covers, made possible by the 'I'd love a beer' campaign and Jim Beam. In Dunedin, said George Kay, "The Chills showed Penknife Glides and Danse Macabre the value of good songs over professional presentation" — an alternative criticism being levelled by Don MacKay at the Australian bands at Sweetwaters. "But New Zealand bands have gotten too head up the bum about credibility and artiness, and unless they recapture the art of showmanship they will have their home market stolen from under their noses."

More New Zealand bands than ever were touring, but in March 1982 grim days were being

described as post-beat psychedelia. Screaming Meemees are moving with the times."

By the next issue, the Propeller wave had started: Blam Blam Blam were pictured, and the Newmatics came third (to Hattie and the Hotshots) in the Battle of the Bands. Mark Phillips, reviewing December's North Shore Spectacular at XS, wrote: "Auckland's North Shore is rapidly becoming the city's new mecca for aspiring young bands. The Meemees are rapidly developing a following that could see 1981 being their year. It's not hard to see why they've become the darlings of the North Shore set."

predicted for the new-found "industry." Murray Cammick: "The last few years in Auckland rock and roll have been a lot of fun and many have grown accustomed to getting their live music highs in sweaty pubs listening to neat NZ songs. Going to Logan Campbell Centre to watch the often tired, perfunctory performances by visiting stars can be tedious work compared with the privilege of being there as good songs are knocked into shape by one of several of the best local bands. So why are so many people saying, 'It's not exciting anymore?'"

Among the reasons mooted CONTINUES OVER PAGE

L I V E

Screaming Blam-matic Roadshow

Otago University, July 27

The much-touted Screaming Blam-matic tour hit Dunedin at the end of last month and left a few new fans and revised opinions. Post-gig opinion, especially from the young punks, was that the Meemees carried the night. They were first on and since I last saw them (Sweetwaters) they've made big improvements in the musicianship department, and their songs, although still rough and lively, are neater and more definable. Still a fan.

The Newmatics, two saxophonists in tow, are NZ's ska clones and on the night they had to work hard to regain lost momentum caused through a

broken guitar string. Lead singer Mark Clare with his Dexys' jacket, injected all he had into an on-the-spot shank that moved the audience physically but failed to reach the soul. On a good night I'm sure they can hold their own but this time out they missed.

Revised opinion time. Blam Blam Blam at Sweetwaters were too precious and self-consciously artful to let themselves rock'n'roll. That criticism no longer applies. In the Union they gave a performance rich with ideas and excitement. Their songs are now durable. Sure, they still owe their rent to the Gang of Four and other academics, but they've trained their music into an intelligent and locally relevant toughness. Best of the night, minority opinion.

George Kay

AUGUST '81



The Clean get clean, 1982.

4 5 S

Screaming Meemees See Me Go (Propeller)

This is already a genuine number one, and it has been exposed on radio and TV, so you've no excuse for not making up your own mind about it. After their part in the Blamatic Roadshow tour, many of you should have seen them on stage, too. The question that occurs to me is, which is the real Meemees? The studio cuts seem to communicate little of the intense drive that make the Meemees New Zealand's hottest teen act. Listen to them live at Mainstreet on the 12-inch and you'll see what they are capable of.

The Clean Tallyho (Flying Nun)

The Clean bring back the Jansen Transonic sound in what could well be a tribute to the Simple Image, and the days when a local record could be number one for six weeks. 'Tallyho' stands with the early Toy Love as an argument for Dunedin as New Zealand's home of the pure pop melody. The flip, 'Platypus' seems to feature vocals from a volunteer from the audience.

Francis Stark

SEPT '81

Herbs, French Letter (Warrior)

A soothing Scuth seas calypso beat as in sipping rum and coke under a palm tree until anti-nuclear lyrics hit you — like a falling coconut — this is a protest song. Side Two is a longer dub version. Great production.

Dance Exponents Victoria (Mushroom)

'Victoria' is irritatingly catchy. Starts slowly with plenty of space and builds in classic manner. Very melodic. Flip, 'Can't Kiss the Lips of a Memory' provides a good antidote.

Mark Phillips

AUG '82

Tall Dwarfs Louie Likes His Daily Dip (Flying Nun)

Once Chris and Alec were pop stars, recording artists or whatever. But now Chris is a producer, doing more with four tracks than those with 20 more. Songs take a backseat to sounds. There's no lyric sheet but there's a 'how we did it' sheet. The guitar sound on 'Maybe' and 'Pictures' is so live, if ya didn't know they were tall, you'd think they were in the speakers. My fave sounds? There are lots to choose from, well, ahh, the psychedelic guitar on 'Song of the Silents', umm, there's so many. It's like a funny radio show, there's talk too. 'Louie' is rap. Chris knows you don't have to be black to waffle. Recommended.

Murray Cammick

SEPT '82

It was twenty years ago today . . .



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