



Big Sideways' Kelly Roger and Ivan Zagni with Chris Green of Neighbours.

**It's over for another year. The world's last great four-day festival. And perhaps it was the last. Armed with Chillybins, sleeping bags and backstage passes, Don Mackay, Russell Brown, Mark Everton and Duncan Campbell caught every band on the main stage and a couple on the Aerial Railway. (Mr. Caddick & J.A. heroically stepped in when unconsciousness came between one writer and his task). So if you weren't there, can't remember, or just want a second opinion, read on...**

## FRIDAY MOCKERS

The Mockers never seem to get the breaks. Their third Sweetwaters and they get the opening spot — before the band that is supporting them on tour! The sound was dreadful but the Mockers came through. Andrew Fagen was having one of his good days and he radiated confidence under difficult conditions. The highlights were 'Trendy Lefties' and the closing number 'My Girl Friend is Cleopatra'. RB

## DABS

The Dabs seem to have a problem lifting themselves out of that honest Jam-pop three-piece groove. They were likeable, but failed to hold the audience's attention. The standout in the set was, as usual, 'Heartful of Soul'. RB

## BLOND COMEDY

Blond Comedy have some of the same problems as the Dabs (see *All Mod Cons*) and a few of their own. But they turned in a competent set and Tony leapt round the stage in a fairly entertaining fashion. Next please. RB

## NETHERWORLD DANCING TOYS

First N.I. appearance for this seven piece, including three horns, from Dunedin, promoted from Monday night because of the INXS cancellation. Tight, snappy and motivated they made the most of the opportunity. Despite the Sam and Dave and Wilson Picket covers, on the original material they often sounded more like a rock band with horns than a soul band. DM

## DAGGY AND THE DICKHEADS

The pride of Taihape we-hawed their way through an energetic set

showing why they are regarded as one of the funniest damn/dumb (delete according to taste) rock'n'roll bands around and a real bunch of cool dudes, as evidenced by the presence of Msrs White and Morris. Mark Kennedy impressed as a considerable front man but an unfortunately more considerable non-singer. DM

## NARCS

As tight as much of the audience late on Friday evening. Opening with 'First Chance to Dance', the Narcs ripped through their set with verve and confidence. A couple of promising songs from the new mini-album, a sing-a-long 'Over My Head' and an encore 'I Can See For Miles' for the people on hills who probably could. ME

## HIP SINGLES

This human yo-yo Dick Driver must be seen. Always totally in, on and round the beat his tall thin frame rockets round the stage like a seismograph needle. Again though the music doesn't quite match the delivery. Thoughtful, well put together songs, but little edge or immediacy. 'After the Party' is a hit though and the crowd loved it. ME

## MIDNIGHT OIL

Midnight Oil had the dubious distinction of being the first 'major' band of the festival. Visually they were as stunning as ever. Bald Peter Garrett (wearing initially a brightly coloured jacket and cloth hood) strode around the stage like a crazed robot, fingers outstretched and arms mechanically in time with the music. The band took the chance to air several tracks from the new album and rounded out the evening with old favourites from *Head Injuries* and *Place Without a Postcard*. Despite turning in a high energy set with the tightest diamond hard playing

you'll see anywhere in the world, the crowd's unfamiliarity with most of the material and Garrett's continual politicking meant the band failed to draw the reaction usually associated with Sweetwaters headliners. CC

## ROSE BAYONET

Midnight, Sweetwaters turned into a rock concert. Rose Bayonet gave the punters their money's worth... even if the sound system almost died of shock. They performed HM at its loudest, most visually exciting, best. Don't believe me? Ask the disappointed thousands who were refused an encore. JA

## DIEHARDS

Despite relieving probably the worst beer can bombardment of the weekend from the neanderthals, Diehards managed one of the few really entertaining sets. They are obviously young but with a whole heap of catchy Human League type, silly, simple pop songs and a lively, stylish front-boy with an apparently chronic Judy Garland fixation, they would seem to have a great future. DM

## SATURDAY

### BIG SIDEWAYS

A tailor-made festival band, these people made friends with their sheer size and energetic output. The music from 11 sources has now been fused in a common direction, a testimony to the hard work they've put in together. Songs from the new album due next month and a nice surprise in 'Falling'. Let's hope Big Sideways stay around. ME

### HATTIE AND THE HAVANA HOTSHOTS

The carnival came to Sweetwaters on Saturday afternoon. A vision of yellowness in front of a band that skipped from light samba to fruity blues. Hattie amazed the audience with three costume changes and cabaret-style panache. It was a show to make you feel good and smile at your neighbour. Pity no one started a conga line. ME

### MIDGE MARSDEN

Final performance for the current incarnation of Midge Marsden's blues boogie journey-men. Always notable for robust rather than sensitive interpretations of their material, they stormed through a set of tried and true crowd pleasers in characteristic fashion. DM

### TAJ MAHAL

Taj Mahal's set proved pretty ideal, daytime, festival fare. The approach seemed to be to play 'mix and match' with songs and styles, with elements of blues, reggae, calypso and soul all tossed into the blender. The results were sometimes bizarre, as with the reggae version of the Four Tops' 'I Can't Help Myself', sometimes a bit throwaway, as with the funky jam rave-up on the 'Purple' CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

# CHURCH

## Portrait of the young man as an Artist

**This is Steve Kilbey, bass player, singer, songwriter and spiritual leader for the Church, fresh out of the shower. His thin good looks stop short of prettiness. His manner is casual, vaguely foppish. He conducts the interview reclining on his motel bed, until the camera starts clicking. Then he sits up.**

Did you enjoy playing Sweetwaters?

"No I didn't. I hope the people who threw things... I didn't mind them throwing things at me so much, but I think the things that were going on in front of me were like something out of Dante's Inferno. There were guys hitting each other over the head with fucking cans, guys hitting each other with poles. It was just hell.



I've played all around the world and I've never seen things like that going on."

Your live sound seemed considerably different from your records.

"I don't know how we sound live."

It seemed a lot faster, more rhythmic.

"I suppose, yeah... you have to do that when you're playing to ten thousand people or whatever it was. Audiences seem to want to dance and that sort of thing, you can't be quite as quiet and delicate as you'd like to be all the time."

## King Snag Column

### SWEETWATERS by 'ARRY, age 21.

The on-site pub was rather slack  
It 'ad 'lon Red, cold but flat  
The clientele was just the pits  
Ninety per cent male — more tats than tits  
Then there's the cops in their clean blue suits  
The only ones around without piss on their boots  
From the thunderbox, which the flies surround  
And banquet on all the shit in the ground  
There's the rastas in their natty dreadlocks  
But who's got a caravan with a garbage box?  
Coz I wanna see the cricket, I wanna know the score  
It's more entertaining than this bore  
So check out the Furs, they're more my taste  
But the guy behind the mixing desk was a fucking disgrace  
Off to the backstage bar and see hundreds there  
But it's just like Mainstreet, with badly priced beer  
But at least they've got a can where you can shit in peace  
And 'ave no risk of catching 'erpes  
But the guys at the gate just wanna see my pass  
I said it's in me pocket, so shove it up your arse  
And over by mainstage there's a new sportee  
It's called see 'ow far you can get up a cabbage tree  
Without letting beer cans make you hit the dirt  
But this was for the guys with the AC/DC shirts  
So where is the editor, let's get out of this place  
I wanna go 'ome and I wanna wash me face  
So out it is for some nice fresh air  
A nice clean shirt and some fresh cold beer  
Fucking 'orrible, isn't it?

You'd rather be quiet?

"Yeah, I would. But I don't have much control live. In the studio you can control everything but live you never know what's going on."

Does that affect your enjoyment of touring?

"It does a bit, yeah. I'd rather just make records if it was up to me. But I have to make a living. Have you done any recording recently?"

"Yeah. We've just finished our third album in Sydney."

Anyone famous producing?

"Yeah, me."

And you wrote the songs. How do you do that?

"I've got my own four track studio at home. When I have time off I just go in there and whip 'em out."

And bring the completed songs to the band?

"Yeah, usually."

As the dominant figure in the band, do you ever worry that you're squashing the other three?

"No."

Or do you see the band as a vehicle for yourself?

"I don't think of it in any terms at all. Ever since I've been playing I've been writing songs and I've always been in bands and done my songs. So if they want to do it, it's up to them."

How long have you been in bands?

"Since I was 15."

How old are you now?

"Somewhere between 20 and 30."

That's very vague.

"It's none of your business how old I am. It's nobody's business. Surely age does have a bearing in pop music, especially in youth?"

"I'm just being coy and narcissistic so you can write it up in your magazine so I can look more enigmatic to your readers."

Are you usually this defensive in interviews?

"I haven't done interviews for a year and a half. You're very honoured."

Thankyou.

"That's alright. I like your magazine."

Why don't you do interviews?

"I haven't got anything to say. That's really the basic truth."

Back to the easy questions. What's the story behind your latest EP, 'Sing Songs'?

"It was originally demos that we did last May or June. There were four songs I'd written and we had 'I Am a Rock' hanging over from the *Blurred Crusade* sessions. I just thought 'Let's stick it out and see how it goes' and that's why it's called *Sing Songs*, 'cause that's all they are, just sing songs."

Many of your lyrics are full of imagery. Have you ever written poetry?

"I've got a poetry book coming out in about two months. It's called *The Crowd Invisible*."

Any particular theme to it?

"No. It's just various rantings I've written down. Stuff I've written over the years. I just thought I'd whip it out so I could say I'd released a poetry book — impress girls in clubs, that sort of thing."

Very bohemian.

"Yeah."

Russell Brown

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# ELECTRIC

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