

BEER

Tony Wilson

IT MAY COME as something of a surprise to readers of this column that it is still possible to drink 15 different beers from 8 brewers, within the city centre of Liverpool. There are 9 pubs involved and all are within walking distance of each other. By drinking half pints and walking fast the crawl can be completed in one session, but pint drinkers may need two separate attacks!

Start is from the **Duke's Crown**, Wapping, a tatty-looking pub which somehow manages to survive in an area of general decay. The Burtonwood bitter is an excellent beer to start with, and will fortify you for the hike to **The Eagle** on Paradise Street (opposite the Holiday Inn). The hand-pulled Brew 10 is the last surviving 'real' pint of the brew in Liverpool centre so make the most of it, then head for Harrington Street, where the **Pen & Wig** dispenses two brews to delight your palate, Greenalls bitter (smile if you dare!) and Youngers IPA. The Greenalls is sharp and quite dry and the Youngers sweet, heavy and strong (the strongest beer on the crawl).

Thread through the back streets, via Mathew Street to the **White Star** ("Quinns"), which is a long established Bass house with a loyal clientele, including many Post Office workers. Two good beers here, the Bass itself, and the distinctive Worthington Best Bitter.

On the corner of Williamson Square and Dawson Street is **The Shakespeare**, the nearest thing in the town centre to a street corner local, where again there are two beers to sample; Walkers bitter, still Warrington brewed and still going strong (hoppier than Tetleys!) and the first mild of the day - Tetleys. This is a convenient place to call a halt for those only doing half the

course.

On the far side of St John's Precinct, in Elliot Street, is **The Villiers**, a good pub for Higson's hoppy bitter and mild (and Bass too if you insist!) - a genuine Victorian pub with some fine decorations too, notably the "Knotty Ash Ales" mirror... worth a thousand reproduction ones.

A route taken via Cases Street, Bold Street and Slater Street to Wood Street will bring you to the **Swan**, a free house in the midst of clubland, where can be found Thwaites mild and best bitter and Boddingtons bitter. The Thwaites beers should appeal to even the most jaded palate and Boddingtons will positively jar it - one of Britain's bitterest beers, Boddingtons.

The **Roscoe Head** in Roscoe Street, is reached via Bold Street and Leece Street, close to the Post Office. Tetley's bitter is the attraction here - some would say, myself included, the best Tetley in town, always superbly kept.

The final uphill slog is to Hope Street and right into Rice Street, which will bring you to **Ye Cracker**, where Ind Coope bitter can be tasted - a rare beer for the area. Wednesday nights here mean Irish music as an added bonus before you stagger home.

Good drinking! And let me know of any other 'real ale' crawls you know.

● *Meanwhile you could work out your own crawls using 'Jars', the guide to Real Ale on Merseyside. Obtainable from me at 9 Hooton Road, Aintree, Liverpool L9 4SF. Send 25p plus a large SAE.*

NOTE: A fuller account of this crawl can be found in the June issue of 'Mersey Drinker', also obtainable from me, at 5p plus postage.

REGGAE

Ken

I HOPE this can be a regular column on reggae. There will be no pseudo-intellectual poncing, and no mimicry of Jamaican dialects. Each month, the best singles available, and the LPs worth catching will be noted.

Liverpool is not yet the best place for reggae sounds, but with patience and a few hassles, the sounds mentioned below are obtainable.

I trust, if your eyes have come this far you've loved BOB MARLEY's solo albums, and the jangling funk of TOOTS HIBBERT and the MAYTALS, and want to scrape under the surfaces of reggae music.

These past few weeks, the best single I've heard is JUSTIN HINDS' OH WHAT A FEELING on the pre-release label High Note. It's a classic. From one of Jamaica's revered musicians. A man whose lyrics have influenced MARLEY, and whose sense of daily life is joyful. This single is wondrous. A feeling that strips clouds, and spins the sun. Maybe what reggae always was. Heart and gut. The barbed wire in the belly goes, and energies are released that lift those iron boots our times fit onto our footprints. You dance. Like most recent singles it's up-tempo. Charges out of the introverted sounds of late last year. But then, Jamaica is close to revolution. There are gun battles, martial law, curfews, strikes, riots and frantic moves to the far left by the ruling PNP party. Castro spoke in Kingston on May Day. All the despair of times in shanty town is still there, but punching into better times. The bare dub tracks are gone, and call and response chants, cheer, raucous horns tear down walls, and the bass lines have to be heard in an open space. Another single just out that typifies (dare we call it out?) revolutionary music, is on the Love label, BABYLON BURNING by SKIN, FLESH AND BONES. I've played it all those rainy mornings as the gansters choose the rate of gold, and danced, cheered and danced in its magnificence.

THIRD WORLD, the band who supported the WAILERS on last summer's British tour, have their first album out. And the range amazes. From reggae to Afro rock. Get it. BOB MARLEY'S second solo album has been out some time. RASTAMAN VIBRATIONS; and it has a few superb tracks, Rat Race in particular. But there are, I think, a few bum tracks.

It does now seem that there are two separating streams in reggae. A rock-orientated production, with the harsher shanks phased out, tuneful horns, riding melody lines, and 'lighter' lyrics. And there is a genuine underground sound that frightens. Heavy heavy music, mostly, shuddering, brain itching sounds, where

a scream is communication, and where feet and ears have to unite, or paranoia invades.

Try the Dub side of BABYLON BURNING, or better, listen full volume to BURNING SPEAR on their last year's album MARCUST GARVEY. Music from a revolutionary situation. The collective expulsions of left sects understood too. Abandoned are rock style organs, and funky guitar solos, for funde style drumming, Rasta chanting, weird bullet whines from those diverted organs, and bass lines as wide as a mass movement.

So, shinning down my own crutch, the best sounds I've caught these last few weeks are in no merited order, BABYLON BURNING by SKIN, FLESH AND BONES on Love label, OH WHAT A FEELING by JUSTIN HINDS on the pre-release label HIGHNOTE, THE LONGEST LIVER by DANNY CLARKE on Atra label, and SPEAR BURNING by BURNING SPEAR on the Spear pre-release label.

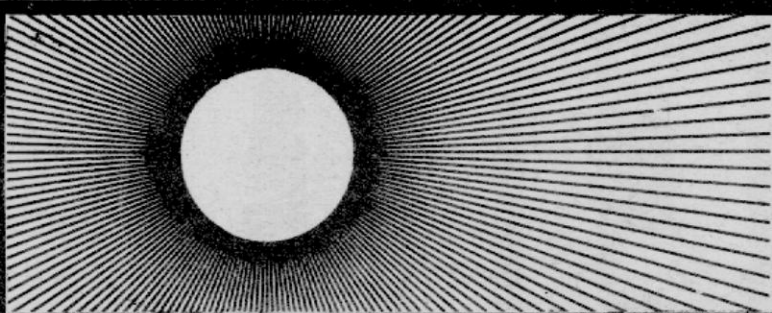
The LPs I'd fight for are: TALES OF MAZAMBIQUE by COUNT OSSIE AND THE MYSTIC REVELATION OF RASTAFARI on the new Dynamic label, THIRD WORLD by THIRD WORLD on Island label, C.B. 200 by DILLINGER on Island's American label Mango, FIGHTING DUB by SKIN, FLESH AND BONES on the Jama label, and THE RIGHT TIME by the MIGHTY DIAMONDS on Virgin's own label, with RASTAMAN VIBRATIONS by BOB MARLEY and a few of the WAILERS also on Island label.

Look out for singles from the great JUNIOR BYLES, 'BUR I BOY' in particular on the Ethnic/Flight label, a lovely hymn from LANDFORD GILZING, 'GONE ME GONE' on the Grounation label and new LPs from RAS MICHAEL on Dynamic, and PETER TOSH (remember CATCH A FIRE?) on Virgin's label, (legal hassles permitting).

NOTE: Pre-release singles and LPs are expensive. Currently singles are £1.20 each and LPs from £6 upwards. Mail order is the best way of obtaining them, if you have bread. And Black Wax in Birmingham is better than most. They do send you s.a.e. lists.

In Liverpool reggae is not too hard to come by. The best shops I know are Gaynor's in Granby Street, who gets white label pre-releases from time to time, that sell out very rapidly, and Probe records, where Geoff and Davie are very helpful, patient and take time. Virgin stocks reggae singles too, but the choice is limited.

Few clubs play roots reggae at all. The Pun, in Seel Street is possibly the best. Go after midnight, if you can get in, and you'll catch Dub and a few of the better singles available in this country.



INFORMER



"THEY MUST have been let out for the day. They ought to be locked away," said one old lady passing a performance of the Picasso Sisters.

Well, they were almost locked away a couple of years ago when busking seemed to be a bit naughtier than it is now.

But the Picassos fought the case in court and the charges were dismissed, and they carried on playing, but only for a short time.

For they disappeared for a year and it's only recently they've reared their ugly heads again. Now, with the recent addition of a girl singer, they do anything from blues and skiffle to South Pacific.

They do a regular stint outside the Bluecoat Chambers in School Lane on Saturdays from 1-2 p.m. But if you want to see them you'll have to wait - they're off to busk in Germany for the summer.

ROCKNOTES

Mike Evans

THE WEEKEND of June 5-6 proved memorable in two quite different ways for rock fans in Liverpool.

First on the Saturday night of the 5th there was the Chuck Berry gig at the Empire. I was apprehensive to say the least; the last time I saw Berry, at the Stadium four years ago, it was a shambles. He eventually came on late and played what appeared to be an unrehearsed set with a feeble English backing group, relying on a loyally enthusiastic audience to sing along the words while he just stood there, throwing in the odd flash of guitar.

And early reports of this year's tour sounded no better... the group apparently falling apart at the seams, Chuck refusing to appear till he was paid in one pound notes, even 'Rambling Rose' as a duet with his daughter, Ingrid!

But fearing the worst, I came away from the Empire having seen the best. Whether the group he had on tour - Sun Wheel - just tightened up miraculously gig by gig, or Berry himself just sorted himself out, whatever, maestro and ensemble worked perfectly, Berry visibly enjoying the playing of the group and particularly the solos from the pianist and guitarist.

All of course was basically for the songs of Chuck, and these came over word perfect for an hour and a quarter. All the imagery of 'fifties teenage America was there; the Cadillac and soda fountains, juke boxes and freeways, Sweet Little Sixteen with her high heel shoes, Johnnie B Goode with his name in lights, and six-year-old Marie in Memphis Tennessee... all Berry's own contribution to the poetry of rock. Plus his amazing guitar, which even on the most relaxed blues he played with the

fiery confidence of the true master who still - at least on this occasion - enjoys his art.

THEN on Sunday 6th it was the Jung Festival, brought together by O'Halligan's Parlour, latterly known as the Liverpool School of Boozic Lama Cream and Fun. A whole day of open air rock was the promise, and the result... no hassles like in some regular pop-fest, but just good old Mathew Street filled with more people than ever since Beatles freaks were queuing at the Cavern doors in '63.

The occasion was the unveiling of a bust and plaque dedicated to the memory of Swiss psychoanalyst and metaphysician C.G. Jung, and after the brass band and the speeches, the music began. As I balanced on a green corporation-approved folding chair with my arm precariously around the lovely Rosalind, most of what constitutes the new rock talent of Liverpool was exposed in the wine-day sun.

The Picasso Sisters, plus chick warbler who I've not seen before, were smashing... South Pacific lives! Then it was the Third Orrell Brownies, with Brian Farrell out front in glorious Cockerish style.

Everyone seemed to be waiting for Deaf School who came on with an aggressive rock attack that's a recent development... the new numbers were fine, Enricho as stunning as ever, and Betty... where's yer sister, gal?

I left before the next band started, Vice Versa, so missed them and Albert Dock who everyone said were great closers. Happy days. Isn't it nice to write a whole column without once knocking something? Never mind... back to normal next time when I'll probably have twice as much as usual to moan about.

WHAT'S ON

Wed July 14: Stray/Vice Versa (Digbys) Sat July 17: Sassafra (Stadium) Sat July 24: Pink Fairies (Stadium) Sat July 31: Heavy Metal Kids (Stadium)

- July 19. LANCASHIRE NEET. 7.45. Southport Arts Centre, Lord Street. Presented by Gary and Vera Aspey. Also Aug 2, 16 and 30. Songs, stories and humour of the north West. 75p (pensioners/students 60p).
- Aug 7. LOS PARAGUAYOS in concert. 8 p.m., Southport Arts Centre, Lord Street. £1.50 and £1.
- Aug 10. LESLIE RANDALL in LAUGHS. 8 p.m. Southport Arts Centre, Lord Street. A new one-man show of British humour. Also Aug 11, 12 and 13. 80p (pensioners/students 65p).
- Aug 14. THE ALL STAR MEDICINE SHOW. 7.45. Southport Arts Centre, Lord Street. Simon Prager, Steve Rye and Bob Hall present their own brand of good time blues, boogie, gospel and rag. 75p (pensioners/students 60p)
- Aug 27. SOUND OF FLAMENCO. 8 p.m. Southport Arts Centre, Lord Street. Recital featuring Juan Martin, one of the best of the young generation of Flamenco guitarists. (80p, pensioners/students 65p).

EVENTS

THEATRE

PLAYHOUSE 709 8363 Until July 31: THE DAY AFTER THE FAIR by Frank Harvey. Recent West End success based on a story by Thomas Hardy. Aug 4-28: SLEUTH by Anthony Shaffer. After five years in London, the first Liverpool production of this exciting spoof of classic thrillers.

GATEWAY Chester 40393 Until Sept 4: Three plays in repertoire: OLD TIMES by Harold Pinter. One of the most recent plays from the author of 'The Caretaker' and 'The Birthday Party'. THE HOLLOW CROWN by John Barton. Words and music about the kings and queens of England. PRIVATE LIVES. Noel Coward's sparkling comedy of marriage and re-marriage.

SOUTHPORT ARTS CENTRE Southport 40011 Aug 4-6 and 24-26 SLEUTH by Anthony Shaffer. A Theatre North presentation.

EVERYMAN 709 4776 The Everyman company will be resuming touring plays and shows in September. For autumn bookings, enquiries should be made now.

SMALL ADS

Rate: 3p per word

THIRD PERSON for house off Lawrence Road, Liverpool 15.-Stephanie Clark, 263 3421 (work);

WANTED: Third person to share flat -727 2938.

WANTED: Flat for two in Liverpool 8. Tel: 489 8078.

RADIO FREEDOM disco like to do work in colleges and youth clubs all over Liverpool. Tel: 498 4248.

LENIN Sweeps the World (V. Denl). Large 3-colour litho. Printed and published by CPB(M-L). Only 30p each from October Books, 4b Temple Court, Liverpool 2.

FREE YOGA classes. Tues: relaxation Yoga postures. Wed: open spiritual conference (introduction to meditation). Thurs: philosophy (theory of Yoga). All at 7.30. Ananda Marga, 8 Ullet Road, Liverpool 8. (708 7335).

THE WORKER. Fortnightly newspaper of CPB(M-L). Obtainable from October Books, 4b Temple Court, Liverpool 2.

ONE-TON van and 11-stone driver for hire. Very reasonable. Distance no object. Andy: 708 0860 or 708 7174. SILK-SCREEN printing. Pretty cheap. Especially for community and left groups. Posters, banners, T-shirts, cards. Anything unusual considered. Billy, Andy, Rick 708 7174; 708 0860.

PHOTO-COPYING. A4 and foolscap. 10 copies 30p; 25 copies 75p; 60 copies £1.20; 100 copies £1.60.- Impact Resource Centre, Waterloo Building, Cases Street, Liverpool 1. (051-708 7172)

ARTWORK from China. Posters, bookmarks, handcrafts, greetings cards. Obtainable only at October Books, 4b Temple Court, Liverpool 2.