



# LIVE

EDITED BY HELEN MEAD

## DOING IT FOR THE KIDS LONDON, TOWN & COUNTRY CLUB

THE FULL horror of my predicament doesn't hit me until I am inside. The queue to get in had been gory enough. Close, hot, claustrophobic, a 20 minute wait in the boiling sun. But inside is where it's at. Inside sits the conclusive proof that God hates me.

Everywhere I look I see hairy, sweaty 'alternative' types supping flat lemonade, puffing on sly spliffs, loving their neighbours, groping their crotches, goosing Alan McGee for that all-important first 'break'. By the time I look towards the stage I am a slab of unidentifiable misery. I am the Aunt Sally. The chip that fell into the fat, and now I must stay here and fry, and burn and shrivel until hell freezes over.

**Heidi Berry** shuffles across the stage. She is plump. She wears earrings made of Viking Shields, clothes of old velvet. When she opens her mouth a Clannad boxed set falls out. I begin to weep. I shall ring my editor, tell her I'm dead. At my funeral *they* shall not play a **Jasmine Minks** tape. This band might boast Little Jimmy Osmond on synth but their threadbare student noise might just wake the dead. Anybody who has ever listened in any depth to The Jam's 'Sound Affects' album need not bother with The Jasmine Minks. The singer wears a black polo neck, inbetween numbers he looks pained and meaningful. Bits of his hair fall out. That's show business.

I join a mile long queue for an orangeade. Everybody is sweating and gasping. Queue jumpers are executed without mercy. On my return I am delighted to learn that I have missed two acts. **Nikki Sudden** is not one of them. He is Nick Cave sitting an O level, his is mood music without personality.

**The Jazz Butcher** are a welcome arrival. They sport clean, casual clothes and the first melodic, modern set of the day. This is despite the fact that the singer's shirt is hanging out, the drummer's beret has fallen off and the guitarist has a skull shaped like a lightbulb. In certain lights it even glows through his hair. Refreshing jazz, rap and pop breeze throughout exuding a most acceptable sax emphasis. They just might be *NME* coverstars in my lifetime.

Now it is time for **Carrots McGee** and his dad to perform a song of their own. Not even Richard Branson has done anything this embarrassing. I watch through my fingers, keeping them there as **Primal Scream** take the stage. Confetti is thrown. The sullen, inch thin singer undulates in the red light surrounded by his hairy, growling band. All have *Blackadder* hairstyles. The sound is third-rate *Mary Chain*. The singer grunts "F— off!" The audience kiss the place his dick should be. He has the crotch of a five-year-old and the talent.

**Felt** are much better, but it's like watching a light streaming out from under a door. You know it's bright in there and that something might be happening but you can only play with the specks you have. Nice vocals; soft, purring, menacing. But visually, they're a chore. Nearly as deathly as New Order.

**House Of Love** appear at last. **Momus** and **My Bloody Valentine** appear afterwards but — please readers — don't expect me to review them after this. For those who are interested Momus is one man, one maniac and My Bloody Valentine are Primal Scream with laryngitis. House Of Love, however, are rising stars. They will have to learn to stand up to this. This sudden blast of audience first love. Tonight it knocked them over. For a while they looked like unpaid bills. What price this sweating, luminous connection?

Forced to stand in the confetti debris of Primal Scream, their first song sounds like Suicide. The second is sobbing and violent, the crowd acts likewise. A voice rings in my ears, it speaks of backlash frenzy. A voice sounds from the stage, big and stirring; Matt Johnson *before* he puts his brain in every morning and, *somehow* it's an improvement. Five songs pass. They make an unearthly row. This is better than good. It is excellent. This is partial dark, the place where Iggy, Cohen and dead punks stalk. Don't you dare switch the light off.

Barbara Ellen