

HOT-LINE FROM HOLLYWOOD!

DAVE MADDEN TALKING

I was jolted out of my beauty sleep with a horrible sinking feeling . . . The 'phone was ringing! That meant I must have overslept again!! But a hurried glance at my watch told me it was only a bright and early 7.30. I was puzzled, because few of my friends are even aware that there is such a time in the morning! But I realised what was going on the minute I lifted the receiver and heard: "International here. Call for Miss Wallace."

I knew then that it would be one of the Partridge Family stars giving me what was—at their end of the line—a late night call! Sure enough, it was an American voice that came through:

DAVE: Hi there, lazybones! Sorry if I woke you up. It's your favourite star of the Partridge show . . . David here.

Now, even in my most bleary-eyed state, I know David Cassidy's voice . . . and this was not it! Which meant that it could only be one other person . . .

ME: Why, hello, Mr. Madden! What can I do for you?

DAVE: Hey! Right first time! Didn't I always say I was the true star of that show? It's nice to find somebody at last who thinks the same way about it! I've been telling young Cassidy for years that it's all some crazy mistake—the way folks reckon he's the big draw. They just got hold of the wrong surname somehow. (Pause) Hey, you don't think I'm serious, do you? You've gone mighty quiet at your end!

ME: If I thought you really meant that, Dave, I'd have hung up on you by now! Of course I know you're not serious. Besides, I'm quite certain you get your fair share of the fan mail!

DAVE: Mmm, now you come to mention it, I have had one or two letters recently. And you know what? Somebody actually asked for my autograph the other day, which just goes to show how desperate they must have been! But I must admit I wouldn't like the idea of reading all those letters that come David's way! Just a few would be great, but—with the thousands he gets each week—I'm surprised he hasn't developed a permanent squint by now!

Some of the girls who send him letters write the most lovely things—if you can decipher them! But an awful lot of them are really tough cookies to work out. David's constantly coming up to me on set to ask for some help in decoding!

ME: Well, in a way it's nice to know he cares.

DAVE: Yeah, I guess so. And he sure does care, really deeply, about the things his fans say to him. In fact, he's a great guy, our David. He's got a real sense of humour, too, that can spice up the set a bit—I keep on trying to get it across to him that I'M supposed to be the comedian in this outfit!!! We've had some good times this season . . . In a way it's a shame that we're breaking again.

ME: Have you got any plans till the Partridge Family starts shooting next spring, Dave?

DAVE: Well, for the next couple of weeks, after we strike the set here, I'll be pretty busy—in fact, we all will be! You see, the Partridge Family are sponsoring a special fund-raising drive for the Cancer Society in the hope that we'll be able to raise a lot of money in the weeks coming up to Christmas. Somehow folks always seem to be that bit more generous than . . . a little more thoughtful for people who aren't quite so lucky as they are. But it means quite a lot of work for us, because we'll be travelling around the country making personal appearances. I know I'm scheduled for Salt Lake City and Cleveland pretty soon and I guess they'll be followed up by a whole lot of other far-flung places. But we all enjoy it—especially the kids.

ME: Will Brian and Suzanne be touring round as well, then?

DAVE: Yes, sure . . . and Danny and Susan. The only pity is that David and Shirley simply can't fit it in, but, then, they've got such tight schedules without worrying about extra commitments like this. They were a bit disappointed about missing out on it I reckon, but they just couldn't take on any more.

ME: So this will take you right up till Christmas, I suppose?

DAVE: Maybe . . . I don't know. But I do know one thing: and that's that, if I keep you here talking any longer, you're gonna be late into the office. So I'd best say goodbye right now.