

A JACKIE SPECIAL ON
DAVID CASSIDY IN EUROPE. PART THREE

THE PLANE IN SPAIN

THE time was half past six in the morning when the phone rang in Suite 225 at the Hotel Amigo in Brussels. It was David Cassidy's alarm call to wake him up so that he could catch his private jet plane to Madrid. Being a star certainly isn't all lying in bed in the morning and doing what you like!

David yawned gently and started to get up. Back home in Los Angeles he has to get up at six o'clock for seven months of the year while he's filming *The Partridge Family*, and on his European tour it was much the same routine. Not having time even for a cup of coffee, preferring, like most of us, those extra few minutes in bed, he packed his clothes carefully in his specially-marked bags (taped with yellow so they wouldn't get muddled up with anyone else's).

After dressing, he took the lift down the two floors to the foyer and the short walk outside, still bleary eyed, to his waiting limousine. One advantage David has over other people is that when he gets into a car on a cold morning it is already warm, because the chauffeur heats it up for 45 minutes before David is supposed to leave.

David's specially hired green and silver Caravelle jet was due to take off from Brussels airport at 8.30 a.m., but when David and the rest of us arrived at the airport we were told that our plane had been "lost"!

"How on earth do you lose a plane?" asked David. But it seems that the pilot hadn't parked it properly and the airport authorities had forgotten where it was, so it wasn't in place when we arrived.

With a two-hour delay facing him, David went round his sleepy-eyed party trying to wake us up. He did several imitations of American television commercials and had a long talk with his two singers and songwriters, Kim and Bob. He also smoked an early morning cigar and looked at the papers.

He had been suffering from stomach trouble but now, he said, he was totally recovered and looking forward to singing a couple of songs on TV in Madrid. He was to sing them to pre-recorded backing tracks but had decided to take his whole backing band down to Madrid.

"In case I lose them," he joked. "Well, they've already lost the plane, so I wouldn't want to lose my musicians!"

Then he suggested we go and have breakfast, but just as we settled down to coffee and sandwiches it was announced that our plane was ready.

The Dutch charter plane was attractively upholstered in bright green hop-sack with orange headrests and the three stewardesses were also dressed in green.

David sat in the small first class compartment at the front, although it soon became obvious that he didn't intend to keep away from the rest of the group for long.

As soon as we had taken off and the "Fasten seat belts" and "No smoking" lights were switched off, he came back to join the rest of us, smiling and joking although it was still quite early in the morning.

First of all he tucked eagerly into the typically Dutch breakfast served to us of ham, cheese, fresh rolls and coffee. Then he settled down to play cards with members of the band. He's very fond of playing poker and it soon became clear that he was good at card playing as well as singing because there was soon a large pile of half matches in front of him!

"It's really an amazing place, Europe," he said as he looked out of the window 30,000 feet above Spain, and gazed longingly at the snow-capped mountains beneath us. His favourite relaxation is skiing and he added, "It would be great to ski down there. It looks really good snow."

Then he decided to have a look at the cockpit and see how a plane is flown. With him was his personal photographer American Guy Webster, who lives in Italy and is preparing a book with David. Guy later explained to me, "David is always interested in the way everything works."

And to prove it David often came down the gangway during our flight pretending to take photos of us.

David proved then what a generous person he is. In Brussels the previous night he'd been given a large bottle of the best champagne crated up in a wooden box, so that he could take it back to California with him, but on the plane he asked the stewardesses to open it and give everyone a glass.

He was now more relaxed than I've ever seen him, be it on the set of *The Partridge Family* in Hollywood, or on the yacht he stayed on in London the last time he'd been there. He was laughing and making jokes and being much more himself than the tense star that the public often see.

The flight was extremely smooth and lasted three hours. We landed at Madrid Airport so gently that we all felt that we were still in the air, so David led a round of applause for the pilot! When the aircraft began to brake and slow down we could see a large group of photographers and television men outside on the tarmac.

It had been cold in Brussels but in Spain it was sunny and warm. We all left the plane—David came off last, but not before giving us another laugh by peeping round the exit door before actually walking down the gangway!

It doesn't matter who you are when you land at an airport, you have to fill in your own forms and hand over your own passport, so David queued up just like everyone else as we waited for the Spanish passport authorities. Again there were more requests for autographs and lots of people pointed David out. Then he was rushed towards the main exit doors ready to go to the television studios, but instead of going down the exit stairs David, by mistake, headed right for the place that you exchange your currency.

"Oh dear," he laughed, as he corrected his mistake and marched off in a mock imitation of Charlie Chaplin in the right direction!

Travelling with David it is his sense of humour that strikes you more than anything else. He so obviously thinks life is a laugh, that his humour is infectious. It's only when he's actually on stage that he takes himself seriously and works to the best of his ability. He realises his duty to his fans and does his best for them.



David arriving at Madrid Airport.