

Winter Wonderland



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Fame Can Be Fleeting; Oblivion Or Super Stardom Awaiting David?

(First of Two Columns)

Heat, a disappointingly small crowd, a blaring microphone and a not-yet-matured stage manner handicapped television star David Cassidy in his 1972 Mississippi River Festival appearance.

But he is well ahead of the pack in gaining national recognition at the tender age of 22.

If he works hard at perfecting his skills as he did in trying to please his local audience, he may yet achieve top status as a singer and actor — rather than falling into the oblivion that engulfs so many whose pre-teenage fans prove fickle when they grow up.

Son of actor Jack Cassidy and stepson of singer-actress Shirley Jones, the "teenage" singing idol is small enough to retain that image for several more years, as did singer Bobby Sherman long after he was closer to age 30 than 20.

Although Cassidy may break through to "super stardom"

where many others have failed, he has not yet acquired Sherman's graceful stage movements and ingratiating personality, we concluded after viewing his performance here.

Sherman relates quickly to specific members of his audience, exchanging smiles and "peace" signs.

Cassidy seemed awkward, almost tortured, as he tried to—by necessity or whim—lead or prod the orchestra while simultaneously singing. Some unkind critics accused him of "mincing and prancing."

Much of his time was spent looking toward the band or leaning over so far forward that some fans said he appeared to be "singing to the floor."

At certain times he closed his eyes, and one member of the audience was driven to call out, "Why don't you look at us?"

None could accuse him of not working hard. He stomped his feet in an effort to assert the changing

rhythms, and injected a few dance steps on occasion.

At the end of several songs he leaped high into the air and descended into a modified split.

Although it contributed to a loss of momentum between each selection, he found it necessary to stop for considerable periods to mop his perspiring brow with a towel.

He was constantly so out of breath that it was hard to understand some of the words as he made brief comments to introduce the next songs.

Dave Ellingson and blonde Miss Kim Carnes had begun the evening with "Only You Know and I Know" and an Ellingson song, "Didn't We Have Ourselves Some Kind of Summer?"

The latter is one of the numbers Cassidy has recorded in his new album for release in the early fall.

The talented young duo teamed well together and later moved to the wings to provide "Partridge Family" type vocal accompaniment for the star of the evening.

Guitar-playing Ellingson showed a bit of geographical confusion by saying "Hello, St. Louis" and then referring to "CIU" instead of SIU.

David Cassidy made his appearance amid popping flashbulbs and shrieks of adulation.

He began with "I can feel your heartbeat. But you didn't even say a word.

"Oh, I know, pretty woman, that your love can be heard. You can feel my heartbeat, too..."

After several stand-up numbers, he donned a guitar to help accompany himself and later moved to the piano keyboard.

He included selections from his upcoming album; among them, "Rock Me" sounded like a potential hit.

Soon he was into "Brown Eyes" from the Partridge's third album.

"Don't say that you don't want me. Don't make me run away.

"... 'Cause you must know by now I wrote this song for you."

By this time, most young misses in the audience who did not already have brown eyes wished sincerely that they did.