

READER

Vol. 4, No. 6

SAN DIEGO'S WEEKLY

February 13 — February 19, 1973

For our matchless friends

—Jacqueline Burn & Margo Woods—



Whatever happened to computer dating services? A few years ago they were the butt of all jokes, given an episode in every situation comedy, and eschewed by nearly everyone ("I would never stoop so low!")

The stigma attached to computer dating placed its patrons in a category along with the people who advertise for mates in the "personals" section of the classified ads. ("I'm young, rich, terrifically handsome, 6'2", smart, and witty... but I'm looking for the 'right girl'") and with those of us who always insisted on being "set up." ("Really, Harold, you'll love Martha.")

Victims of popular opinion ourselves, we tried out a computer dating service sure that we'd get a weirdo-flakey type, with Pointdexter looks, a Quasimodo physique, and Jack-the-Ripper motives.

We found four dating services covering San Diego County. Actually, only two of these services, Computability and Matchomatic, use a computer.

Computability, located in Beverly Hills but also serving San Diego County, sends you a "matching kit" complete with the history of Computability and computer matching; a dating guide with helpful hints for a healthy evening; a prepaid return envelope; and, of course, the questionnaire.

Like most of the questionnaires we ran across, most of the questions were concerned with education, occupation, personality, disposition, political opinions, race, age, height, marital status, religion, smoking habits, and financial status.

Claiming thousands of members, Computability will eternally send you the names of compatible matches for \$16, until you write and tell them you've met "the one."

For a slightly higher fee you can have only your name and phone number, omitting your address, sent to compatible matches. Or you can go completely undercover and have your name replaced with your membership number. ("Hey, Steve, you aren't gonna believe this. A friend of mine went to a computer dating service just for kicks and guess who they matched him to? MARY ELLEN ROGERSS! You know, the homecoming queen in '67.") Sometimes it's better not to reveal your name until you know who you are revealing it to.

The Introduction Agency was founded in 1973 and is located in San Diego. Their motto is "Dates for every SINGLE one." Their brochure guarantees that you will get exactly what you ask for, or they will replace your date.

Their questionnaire is shorter than the previous one: there are only 30 questions. But it asks basically the

same things about you and what you want in a date.

The Introduction Agency does not use a computer. They use what they call an "entirely new method." We could not find out what this method was. The charge is \$19.95 per year for receiving one to three compatible matches per month.

You receive an extra month of service free for every friend you talk into enrolling.

Intro-Mate, also located in San Diego, does not use a computer. The trained counselors do all of the "redious hand matches" for their membership of over 400. The membership is made up of men and women from 17 to 77. We asked about the large membership. "People get tired of the singles bar circuit," we were told.

We did not find out the fee for men, but we do know that the agency has a shortage of women between the ages of 18-25 and that they recently offered a special rate to women of this age group. There is also a special service men's rate. The owner of the agency

told us that "there is simply an overload of nice young men." Intro-Mate accepts MasterCard and BankAmericard.

The agency has you fill out a questionnaire and then gives you an interview with a counselor. For a year they send you approximately four matches per month printed on 2-1/2 cards stating your match's name, phone number, height, and weight.

Intro-Mate claims a higher number of successful marriages originally matched by the agency.

"We don't have weirdo-flakeys here," a spokesman for Intro-Mate said.

Matchomatic, in Tucson but serving all of the Southwest, was the agency we decided to try, mainly because of our overdrawn checking accounts and Matchomatic's \$7 fee for a year's membership.

Matchomatic is a lot like Computability, except that its membership is much smaller.

The questionnaire is typical. For the \$7 fee the computer matches you with about four people per month.

For our part, we invented a girl named Ellen Gardner, who was a combination of both of our looks, personalities, interest, political opinions, religions, and smoking habits (Yes, she was a bit "weirdo-flakey").

Approximately two weeks after "Ellen" sent in her questionnaire, we received her first match who we will henceforth call "Willie." "Ellen" set up a date to meet him in front of the Spreckles Theater the following Friday.

If he was surprised to see two "Ellen Gardners," he didn't show it. We were the surprised ones. This guy looked like Omar Sharif's kid brother.

"Who's she?" he said to one of us while pointing at the other.

"She's my sister. We go together."

"We all sat down on one of those benches they have in Horton Plaza. After talking for awhile, both "Ellens" became rather fond of Willie. He was really a smart, humorous type guy.

Willie got up to buy some cigarettes.

"Listen," one Ellen said to the

other. "I feel raunchy about lying to this guy. He's so damn nice."

"Me too. Let's tell him the truth and then take him out to dinner."

Willie returned.

"Willie, we've got something to say. We didn't want a date. We're just reporters doing a story on computer dating. You are our guinea pig..."

Surprisingly, old Willie took it pretty well. He didn't look crestfallen or angry — just amused.

"...so we're taking you for a steak dinner at Lubach's and picking up the tab."

At Lubach's, we continued talking and laughing, and as Willie swallowed the last crumb of merangue, we felt sad.

"Look, Willie, we're really sorry for coming you. But maybe next week Matchomatic will send you the girl of your dreams."

"Now, who cares?" he shrugged. "I didn't join Matchomatic for a date. Actually, I'm getting married this summer. I just needed some information on computer dating for my term project in Sociology 127B."

EVENTS

FILM

WHEN THE PEOPLE AWAKE AND CHILE, WITH POEMS AND GUNS, two films on Allende's Chile. Montezuma Hall, San Diego State, Thursday, February 13, 7 p.m. Free. 286-6551.

SUNDAY BLOODY SUNDAY, with Glenda Jackson. College Grove Shopping Center Community Hall, Tuesday, February 10, 1:30 and 7 p.m.; Fine Arts Recital Hall, Grossmont College, Wednesday, February 19, 8 p.m. Free. 465-1700, ext. 321.

THEATRE

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD, by Tom Stoppard. Zable Hall, USU, Thursday and Friday, February 13 and 14, 7 p.m. Free. 271-4300.

DON JUAN IN HELL, readers' Theatre. Patio Playhouse, 1511-23 E. Valley Parkway, Escondido, Thursday through Saturday, February 14 through March 2, 8 p.m. 745-8666.

THE HASTY HEART, by John Patrick. Presented by University High students. University High, 5961 Linda Vista Rd., Thursday through Sunday, February 13-16, 8 p.m. 298-8277.

MUSIC

SAN DIEGO SYMPHONY. Peter Eros will conduct the orchestra in Kodaly's "Hurry Janos" Suite and Mendelssohn's Fourth Symphony, soloist Jose Sivo, former concertmaster with the Vienna Philharmonic, will perform Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 1 in D Major; soloist Jerry Folom will play Strauss's First Horn Concerto. Civic Theatre, Thursday and Friday, February 13 and 14, 8 p.m. 236-6510.

L.A. PHILHARMONIC, with guest conductor Pierre Boulez, will perform the suite from Bartok's *The Miraculous Mandarin*, Ravel's complete ballet music for *Maître Arlequin*, and Beethoven's Symphony No. 4. Saturday, February 15, 8 p.m. 236-6510.

PIANO RECITAL of works by Beethoven, Bach, and Poulenc, by Holly Korman. Camino Theatre, U.S.O. Saturday, February 15, 8 p.m. Free. 291-6480, ext. 354.

OTTO FELD QUARTET, joined by organist L. Robert Slusser. La Jolla Presbyterian Church, Sunday, February 16, 4 p.m.

GOSEPEL CHOIR, a choral group, will sing at the Revelle Cafeteria, UCSD, Sunday, February 16, 8:30 p.m.

JOSHUA RIFKIN will play the ragtime piano of Scott Joplin. Civic Theatre, Sunday, February 16, 8 p.m. 236-6510.

MINI-CONCERT: The Deathridge Quartet (piano, violin, viola, and cello) presents Brahms' Piano Quartet in G minor, opus 25. Grand Salon, Community Concourses, Tuesday, February 18, 12 noon. Free. 459-5578.

TOKYO STRING QUARTET, students from Juillard School of Music, Montezuma Hall, San Diego State, Wednesday, February 19, 8 p.m. 286-6847.

SPORTS

ANDY WILLIAMS S.D. OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT. Torrey Pines Golf Course, Thursday, February 16. Call 291-5372 for more information.

BASKETBALL: Aztecs vs. San Jose State, Thursday, February 13, 8 p.m., vs. U. of Pacific, Saturday, February 15, 8 p.m. Peterson Gym. SDSU. 286-6547.

BASKETBALL: Conquistadors vs. N.Y. Nets, Friday, February 14, 8 p.m.; vs. Kentucky Colonels, Sunday, February 16, 7 p.m.; vs. Memphis, Wednesday, February 19, 8 p.m. Sports Arena. 224-4176.

8th ANNUAL S.D. INDOORS GAMES, invitational track meet. Sports Arena, Saturday, February 15, 7:30 p.m. 224-4176.

HOCKEY: Mariners vs. Phoenix Roadrunners. Sports Arena, Tuesday, February 18, 7:30 p.m. 224-4176.

VOLLEYBALL: Anaheim vs. Santa Monica-Long Beach, S.D. Wave vs. Santa Barbara. Golden Hall, Community Concourses, Tuesday, February 18, 7:30 p.m. 236-6510.

MICHAEL TENNIS CLASSIC, La Costa Country Club, Costa del Mar Rd., Carlsbad, Monday through Friday, February 17-21, 7-7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, February 22 and 23, 12 noon. 729-9111.

SPECIAL EVENTS

HIKING TRIP, to Borrego Desert area. Exploration of geologic formations, fossils, and desert life on Coyote Mountain. Sponsored by Natural History Museum, Saturday, February 15, 8:30 a.m. Call 232-3821 for reservations.

BASKETBALL TIPS, workshop conducted by Conquistadors, A-215, San Diego City College, Saturday, February 15, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. 238-1181.

The Events Calendar is compiled each week and sponsored alternately by Southern California First National Bank and Roots Natural Footwear. Please send any listings to READER EVENTS, Box 80803, San Diego 92158. They must reach us no later than the Saturday before the Thursday of publication.

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LETTERS

Dear Reader,

I was in town last week, and by chance I managed to obtain a copy of your relatively fine periodical. I must congratulate you on your prosperity. However, as in many cases, your affluence has turned to self-indulgence.

I am amazed by the article written about that ultimately hip "underground" rock group known as "Horse Feathers." Living up here in the land of "milk and honey," and being in a band myself, I have learned a few things.

My dear "Horsey," I hope you are most prepared to never make it, at least not in the real world. Oh, that's not to say you couldn't cut it musically, I'm sure you could set the world on fire. Attitude is what makes you or breaks you. There is no such thing as "integrity" in a business that would just as soon eat you for lunch as look at you.

It's very peachy-keen to want to have a "cult" following, making two or three albums a year like Zappa, but as an agnostic analogy goes, if a tree falls in a forest and no one is there to hear it, does it make a sound?

I don't mean to be condescending or bitter, but it disturbs me intensely that a group of men, on the average of five years older than me, can be so naive. I'm not attacking you musically. It's just your audacity! Man, I quit school (three years at State) and my job to put my head into music and seriously try and make it.

You even admit that San Diego is nowhere when it comes to music, but I guess you, like so many others down there want to pretend: one night you'll

be playing your tunes at the V.F.W. in Lakeside, and the president of M.C.A. will walk in and sign you up—right?

As soon as you cut the pretending, you're big time by having a phony, egocentric article written about you and your self-imposed "hard times," as a band, you'll dare I say it come around. You'll learn the dreaded top forty so you can play clubs, so you can make money, so you can live, so that you can become known, so that some day you can spend the time you want on playing and performing your own material.

Or perhaps you'd like to live the next five years pretending. Cordially,

The members of "Must,"
Los Angeles (formerly of San Diego)

Dear Editor:

I want to make two corrections to the "Chinatown" story in the Reader of February 10th. Woo Chee Chong does not belong to the family of Tom Hom, but rather to the family of Jennings and Mary Lou Hom. Also, the present director of the Chinese Social Service Center, Kathy Tsang, was not the lady interviewed in the story. Mrs. Ruby Tom. Mrs. Tom was the director until Monday, February 3. Carlos Boy

Dear Editor,
Although I find Duncan Shepherd's reviews pretentious and mis-guided, my concern about him is in another area.

As an Englishwoman, now living in San Diego, I am appalled by the dearth of good foreign films (including British ones) available in this city.

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— Duncan Shepherd —

Although the Unicorn and the Ken theatres have parachuted some unusually beguiling items into the doldrums — namely, Satyajit Ray's *Days and Nights in the Forest*, Judy Collins' and Jill Godmilow's *Antonia*, and Marco Ferreri's *La Grande Bouffe* —, we have been adrift in the annual post-Christmas lull for weeks on end. It is time now to take a deep breath and plunge in again, however, as

the calm is violated this week by an awesome swirl of new movies — Casavetes' *Woman Under the Influence*, Scorsese's *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, Mel Brooks' *Young Frankenstein*, Milton Karmel's *Report to the Commissioner*, and Sidney Lumet's *Murder on the Orient Express* — all of which look extremely prepossessing. During the recess, though, I have thrown together a few elementary and lusted thoughts on movies, correct me if I'm wrong, as usual.

1. Movies, in practical

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LECTURES & READINGS

FLORYNCE KENNEDY, founder of the Feminist Party, will speak on Gymnasium steps, UCSD, Thursday, February 13, 12 noon. Free. 452-4090.

HON. SAM ERVIN, JR. will speak at the Camino Theatre, USU, Thursday, February 13, 8 p.m. Free. 281-6480.

DICK GREGORY will speak at Southwestern College in Chula Vista, Friday, February 14, 11 a.m. 420-1080.

THE NEW U.S. WAR THREAT IN SE ASIA, talk by Mike Maloney, Military Forum, 4635 El Cajon Blvd., Friday, February 14. Call 280-1292 for time.

BLACK ECONOMIC SURVIVAL, lecture by Black Muslim spokesman, Lincoln High School, 150 S. 45th St., Friday, February 14, 7 p.m. Free. 234-6738.

POETRY READING by W.S. Mervin. Fine Arts Recital Hall, Grossmont College, Tuesday, February 18, 8:30 p.m. Free. 465-1700, ext. 321.

LIBERTARIAN LEGAL SYSTEMS, talk by Karl Bray, Libertarian Alternative meeting, Samsco, 4510 Pacific Highway, Tuesday, February 18, 8 p.m. 447-9747.

JOURNEY FROM MOSCOW TO JERUSALEM, talk by Efrain Sevela, presented by Union of Jewish Students, Humanities Library, 1205, UCSD, Wednesday, February 19, 8 p.m. 452-3160.

POETRY READING by Robert Meezy, editor of *Naked Poetry*, Education 60, San Diego State, Wednesday, February 19, 8 p.m. 286-6551.

MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

FABRICATIONS 1975, annual Creative Weavers' Guild Show, demonstrations included. Museum of Man, Balboa Park. Opens Saturday, February 23. 239-2001.

JOHN PAUL JONES, Richards Gallery, 704 Garnet (at Crystal Pier), Pacific Beach, through February 12. 485-2767.

LOU BROWN DE GIULIO, vegetable photo-painted sculpture. Founders Gallery, USU, through February 28. 291-6880, ext. 354.

JAPANESE PRINTS, Mai Gallery, 1113 Wall St., La Jolla. 459-8447.

ARTIFACTS OF PRIMITIVE NEW GUINEA, AMAZON BASIN, AFRICA, AND OCEANIA. Bozzarius Trading Company, 1401 Camino del Mar, Suite 102, through February 28. 755-2646 or 755-7087.

JOAN MOMENT, paintings, Wenger-Casati Gallery, 5721 La Jolla Blvd. through February 23. 454-8897.

HISTORICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ROMAN COINS, a show of 45 ancient Roman coins. Fine Arts Gallery, Balboa Park. 7931.

IVAR, Norwegian painter. The Humble Artist Gallery, 8363 Center Dr., La Mesa, through February. 460-4544.

JOHN STEARNS, collection of stone and pottery figurines of pre-columbian Middle America. Museum of Man, Balboa Park. 274-0313.

CAROL LEBECK, recent works in clay. Triad Gallery, 3701 India St. through February 23. 299-0543.

WOOD CONSTRUCTIONS, paintings, and sculpture, by Dennis Davis. Woodblock prints by Toshi Yoshida. Artists Co-operative Gallery, through February 23. 296-0200.

CONTEMPORARY GRAPHICS AND WATERCOLORS, works by Johnny Friedlander, Charles Bragg, J.B. Thompson, and others. Orr's Gallery, through February. 254-4765.

PEOPLE AND THIS PLACE, a photographic exhibit on San Diego Jewish Community Center. Fine Arts Gallery, Balboa Park. 7931.

ENGLISH GRAPHICS OF THE 18th CENTURY, Mandeville Art Center, UCSD, through February 21. 452-4090.

ESKIMO GRAPHIC ART, Inukshuk Ltd. 7807 Ivanhoe, La Jolla. 454-8708.

STRAIGHT FROM THE HIP

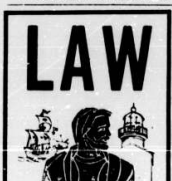


— MATTHEW ALICE —

Dear Matthew Alice,
It's hard to believe what friends of mine do with their dogs. No, it's not what you're thinking, but almost. They let them sleep in their beds at night; they hug and kiss them; they practically eat from the same plate. Tell me, Mr. Alice, is this healthy? Can't germs from domesticated animals be passed on to people?

N. Fischer
Ocean Beach
Indeed they can, though you're running a risk no matter who you take into your bed at night and hug and kiss, etc. Animals, and that includes our favorite pets, are quite capable of transmitting their diseases directly to us humans. The list is long, and if you have the stomach for it, read on.

We can start with salmonella.



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their fetuses. Who would have thought it of good old Tabby? And while we're on the subject of felines, there's also cat scratch fever to water out for, which might result from some of kitty's playful bites and scratches.

I will mention brucellosis only in passing, since few of my readers will be in close contact with cows, hogs and goats, or am I missing? This is primarily an occupational disease, occurring among slaughterers and meat packers. Raw milk drinkers run some risk, as do goat cheese eaters, especially if you get your goods from Mexico, though one of our own well publicized meat packers in Los Angeles has some cleaning up to do.

As for more exotic pets, if your taste runs to chimpanzees I suggest you watch out for hepatitis, and if African monkeys are your thing, then kindly keep your distance. Lassa fever is the last kind I'd want to catch, since it, very well might be.

Dear Matthew,
Would you be able to find out what our city officials get paid? I know that the city council members just got a well-deserved raise, but I'd like some dollars and cents details.
Ronald G.
Point Loma

There's nothing I like better than ringing up those dollar signs on my typewriter (I only wish it were a cash register), so here goes: The members of our City Council did indeed get a raise, from \$12,000 to \$12,000 annually. Our mayor's salary was raised proportionally, from \$12,000 to \$20,000.

The City Manager, whose job it is to direct the operations of all managerial departments in carrying out the ordinances and policies established by the Mayor and Council, and who is appointed by same, makes a healthy \$40,403. The chief fiscal officer of the City is the Auditor and Comptroller, also appointed by the City Council. He earns \$29,702, and is not to be confused with the Treasurer, who pulls in \$20,802 per year and functions as the City banker, collecting receivables due, safeguarding the City funds, and providing aggressive investment programs for the City's idle funds. The City Attorney receives \$39,400. He is the chief legal advisor to the City, and we have the honor of electing him every four years.

The Director of the Planning Department, whose unenviable job it is to formulate urban development plans, earns \$30,407. Our Police Chief earns \$32,328 as does our Fire Chief. We'll have no squabbling here. The City Librarian is running neck and neck with the Director of the Model Cities Program with \$22,603 to \$22,000. Coming up close behind is the Facility Manager of the City's Convention and Performing Arts Center, with a salary of \$21,492, whereas the Facility Manager of the San Diego Stadium Operation receives \$18,634.

Oddly enough, our Director of Environmental Quality, whose job it is to analyze the environmental impact of proposed projects, is employed on a half-time basis, with a salary of \$11,602. Well, half an environment is probably better than none at all. Our Golf and Lakes Superintendent earns \$17,760. Our Ocean Lifeguard Captain makes \$16,162. And last but not to be overlooked is our Mount Hemet Cemetery Manager, who operates and maintains the grounds where medium to low cost interment is available to the citizens of San Diego, who does it for \$15,039.

You didn't specify whether your friends bathe with their dogs. If so, I would discourage this practice. Dogs commonly carry a bacteria causing leptospirosis, a kidney disease for them and hepatitis, meningitis, and kidney infections for you. Infected urine from cats, cattle, and rats, as well as dogs, can infect people. So avoid midnight swims in lakes and rivers with the above companions. Salt water swims are fine.

Cats can also pass on a protozoan parasite causing toxoplasmosis, which can be a serious hazard to pregnant women, or more specifically, to

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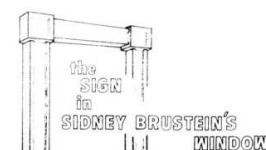
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Steve Esmedina

The party is jammed. It's a boxed-in, grid-framed fraternity house, and there is a wall-to-wall succession of fraternity brothers, sorority sisters, surfers, surfers, left-over hippies and hangers-on, all going through the motions of drunk dancing. La Dolce Vita and the Alpha Beta Kappa phone booth of the seventies all in one. Plugged into the center of the chaos, the rock band Tris is racing towards a savage ensemble crescendo. Mike Scheels, the lead guitarist fidgets erratically while breaking into an intense climax, and cacophony of cheers and guffaws greets the band at the conclusion of the number. Scheels flashes an astonished grin at drummer Steve Carlson and bassist John Sisson. The frat folks are actually digging them. Scheels, breathing heavily into his microphone, thanks his unlikely benefactors:

"I just gotta say that this is the most incredible living room we have ever played in. Thanks for listening to our music."

A wobbling, long-haired herculoid, dripping with sweat and rippling biceps, twangs his empty beer mug and yells in a garbled groan:

"PLAY SOME DOOBIE BROTHERS YOU FUCKERS!"

The band cracks up. Mike shakes his head, counts off the rhythm, and they explode into the blistering, breakneck riff that serves as the introduction to the band's best song, "Anglophile."

Meanwhile, the herculoid, slightly, drops his beer mug and heads for the bathroom. The band keeps playing...

What does it take to get a good, hard working rock band over the top? Or even onto the first rung of the ladder? Talent is an asset, so says the band's song, but it's far from everything, and sometimes it seems that it isn't much of anything. Who decided when the time was right for Jeff Beck to discover Rod Stewart singing for his booze, in an English pub? Or what accounts for the phenomenal success of Bachman-Turner Overdrive, Bad Company, and Electric Light Orchestra, and the relative failures of the groups that spawned them (Brave Belt, Free, and The Move), who, despite varying degrees of personal preference, were no all that different?

Is it luck? Persistence? Or Magic?

This question relentlessly plagues Tris guitarist, Mike Scheels. Tris is an excellent, hard-working rock band, which, on top of the usual obstacles, happens to live in San Diego. As we all know, San Diego is not a good catapult for the "big time." Throughout the year they've been together, Tris has played benefits and fraternity parties frequently.

"Yeah, we've played a lot of free gigs and now we're getting more offers for these frat parties, which is ok, I guess, for the practice, and for the fact that we get to play in front of a lot of people. Still, it isn't the kind of thing we want to get into. Right now, our main concern is remaining fresh."

So far, Tris has retained their desired freshness. Scheels is a burly, gregarious fellow with a cockatoo crop that gives him the look of an American Samurai. Scheels is always moving, jerky jerky, backwards and forwards, rocking with the neck of his axe pointing skyward. At twenty-four, he is a consummate showman.

Drummer Steve Carlson, twenty, is a handsome, cherub-faced young man with a coiffured beard and smooth, flowing hair. He exudes a spotlight personality behind his drums, and seems the most marketable "presence" in the band.

Bassist John Sisson, twenty-two, is the calm in this band's storm. With his short, curly, Los Reddis haircut, his sober stance, he is the archetypal bass player: cool, cerebral, and

unperturbed by any surrounding frenzy.

All three Tris members have played in dozens of local rock groups, serving the music apprenticeship. They have all played the endless "Sunshine of Your Love" requests. As far as Scheels is concerned, Tris is his most earnest, ambitious project:

"Tris has become my life, man. We haven't been able to prove it to very many people, but I honestly consider our material more fresh and exciting than most of the stuff that tries to pass for get-down rock today. Groups like Kiss, Nazareth, and Deep Purple, have no interest in their own music. You know, people have this misconception about the musical facility of hard rock musicians, which stems from a laziness on the part of the big bands. They're too dumb about their own lack of talent. This music, which has to be loud and frantic, needs that cutting edge of personal involvement or else it just sounds jaded, detached, like plain bullsh*t."

Scheels' unforgotten candor is supported by the flashy, adrenaline quality of the band's music. Quite simply, Tris is the finest hard rock band I've heard in San Diego. In fact, they are the best "heavy metal" band I've heard since Beck, Bogert and Appice. The fact that they are San Diegans only amplifies the notion that the natives here are neglecting a lot of tough, genuine "home grown" talent.

The song Tris performs, most of them originals, are all first rate rock pieces. Each is cryptic, honed, laced with enough dizzying hooks, riffs and harmonies to prod the most catatonic rock fan into dancing unashamedly.

One song, "Anglophile" has a sassy, miasmic riff which sucks you in from the first chord. Tris cleverly interprets The Kinks' "You Really Got Me" into the tune's framework, thus providing a second choice. Another song, "Mean Streets," has slick, misanthropic lyrics to match the harsh, volatile music.

A mean streak, a fancy for the knife

A very strange desire to whip away your life
It's my sublimation, I'm a sadist by vocation
if you like

Like Beck, Bogert & Appice, Mountain, Robin Trower, and a very few others, Tris is sensitive to the necessity of continual dynamic contrasts in the type of music. Each of their numbers builds, volume, peaks, levels off, and builds again, with sublime craftsmanship.

So, you might be saying, if these guys are so goddamned hot, why haven't they broken through the walls of their basement rehearsal hall and gone out into the arms of rock and roll stardom? In other words, why are they still playing fraternity parties? Scheels speculates:

"It's the same old bar band dilemma. We do originals. We're a loud, power rock group. The club owners here don't want to serve as band testers."

Carlson joins in briefly:

"We don't do any BTO or Doobie or Steve Wonder."

Scheels laughs and takes over again:

"Yeah, that's it. They want dance music."

He pauses and qualifies himself:

"I mean they want fast, fast dance music. It may seem ridiculous but the situation here in San Diego is worse than it used to be. Jobs for bands seem to come less by how well you play than by what you play. Hell, look at some of the local groups. Take Longways, for example. Ed Cooke, the guitarist can play circles around me. Mike Thompson, our keyboardist, he's superb. And yet the only way they can keep their gigs is to play big hits. It's a shame. And there are other good bands and musicians

around like Horsefeathers. Foreplay and other all do deserve attention too. Look at me, I mean, our music is not exotic. There isn't the vaguest hint of jazz here. We shouldn't scare anybody. We're a physical group, a dance group if you like. But we're also confident musicians. We want to play our own stuff. I mean, it's bad enough having to cope with the fact that while we can't play a club here, a hackneyed juggernaut like BTO is packing houses. It unnerves us. Go to the clubs and see. Bands in San Diego are struggling to be juke box substitutes."

John Sisson, forming the chord changes of King Crimson's "Red" and Chick Corea's "After The Cosmic Rain" on an acoustic guitar and loop, up in the most laconic bass player fashion opines:

"I'm not worried. People can always see through you if you aren't interested in what you're playing or if you're excessively nervous. Confidence is essential, and so I'm at interested in playing well and being as confident and comfortable with my music as I can."

Steve Carlson laughs:

"What a stoic."

They all laugh.

Sisson mentions the difference between Los Angeles and San Diego in the usual hushed tones of "I should move there." Fred Christena, a guitarist from Culver City and house guest of Scheels' attempts to debunk the LA mystique:

"You can't make it in LA as a local group. The place is wonderful for groups that have already made waves elsewhere. I mean, Rosy Music could make it there. The Move too. But the place isn't jumping to cultivate local talent. Look at the best LA band, Little Feat. Shit, it's like the town disown them or something. They sure haven't established much."

Scheels agrees, with the lack of alternatives. He lights a cigarette and plops down onto his couch.

"So where does that leave us?"

The time I last spoke to Tris they were preparing for an audition with an Atlantic Records talent scout, as well as a concert, February 15, at Balboa Bowl with Horsefeathers. Besides that, the possibility of a concert in Artec Bowl with Jackson Browne and R.E.O. Speedwagon was thrown about surreptitiously. How these tossed dice roll is yet to be seen.

MA
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