

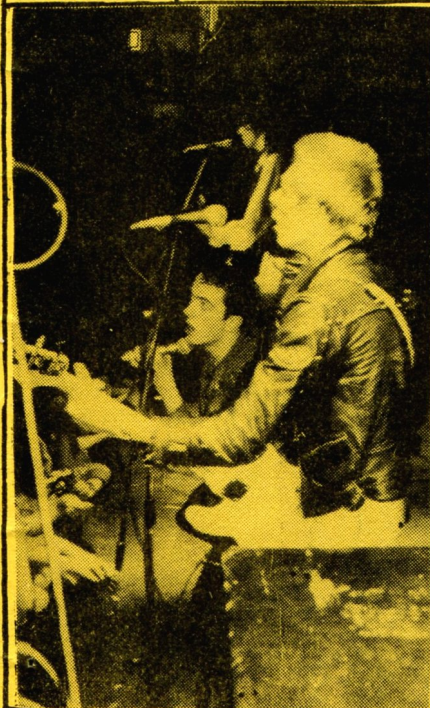
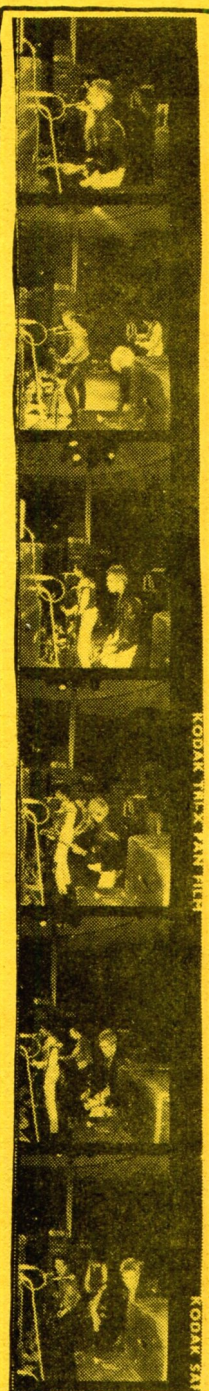
THE CLASH

AT THE

MUSIC MACHINE

By Clare + Cathy(?)

After several confrontations with a large unpleasant bouncer I manage to get to the backstage bar. The first band are already on. I have no idea what they were called or what they were playing, but they were mostly female. I get a drink and watch the stars go by; Paul Simonon is at one end of the bar with a crowd of fans while Mick Jones is at the other standing alone. Soon they both retire to the dressing room leaving only Nicky Headon in the bar. The only time I see Joe ~~MM~~ is when he arrives, a lot later, barely recognisable, shoulders hunched in a large jacket, face half hidden by a hat. He is not seen again 'til The Clash take the stage at about 12.30. Next on are The Specials a punk/reggae band from Coventry. Their set is good, the best numbers being 'New Era' and 'Everyones Special' at the beginning and end. When they're finished I get talking to a bouncer who tells me Suicide are "bad news". I'm prepared for the worst. I'm sure they don't intend to be funny but Alan-the vocalist's-Max Wall walk while singing about desperate factory workers who kill their whole family before committing suicide make me laugh hysterically throughout their short set. After $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour of rockabilly records The Clash are suddenly on. The first few minutes of their set is a shambles. We get two versions of 'Complete Control' the first drums/guitar/harmonies not joined 'til half way through by Joe's vocals; somehow they reach the end while Paul Simonon and numerous roadies struggle to fix the silent bass. When everything is O.K. From there it's 'Tommy Guns' which with 'When Johnny Comes Marching Home' is the most IMMEDIATELY impressing of the new material live. The pace is furious, as soon as they finish one number it's "I-2-3-4 I-2-3" and straight into the next. From the first album they do 'I'M So Bored With The U.S.A.' 'Londons Burning' 'Police and Thieves' and 'Garageland'. Mick Jones is the most active on the far side of the stage dancing and running on the spot while delivering great(stoned)guitar. Strummer either sings from the extreme front of the stage, while the audience reach out to touch him, or crouched on the drum rostrum shielding his eyes from the spotlight. After what seems like only a few minutes but what I discover was an hour they're finished. A second drumkit is set up. The Clash return joined by Paul Cook(drums) and Steve Jones(guitar hero, poses). Strummer says "Do'nt call this a supergroup it's a fucking awful group". With that they do "Janie Jones". The second drumkit makes the already small stage minute but Jones and Jones still find room to leap about while Joe stands flattened against the side of the stage. -It's chaotic. Suddenly, and from nowhere, Jimmy Pursey springs into action and the gig ends with a confused "White Riot". I've heard The Clash dismissed as just-another-punk-band but on the evidence of this gig and what I've heard of the new stuff they rise above any 'wave'.



By
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(pics 'n all!!)