



FLEETWOOD MAC



The Fleetwood Mac Success Story

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wood Mac's quest for blues legitimacy. This band, Peter Green in particular, would soon show that it was much more than "just another bunch of British bloozers."

When it came out in late '68, the single "Albatross" left a great many narrow minded purists mighty shocked and dismayed. But not only was Green's graceful, Santo-and-Johnny-tinged instrumental not such an abrupt departure for them, it also typified the lack of boundaries Fleetwood Mac has applied to their music ever since. With this song they established themselves as a music band, not just a blues band. There was no difficulty convincing most of the public: "Albatross" was a #1 hit in the U.K., not only in early '69 but when re-released in '73.

A third guitarist was added af-

ter "Albatross" was recorded. Like the others, 18 year old Danny Kirwan had begun playing the blues, but his wistful voice, lithe and lyrical guitar playing and influences like Django Reinhardt indicated that he had another creative dimension. Early Kirwan contributions, including "One Sunny Day," saw that dimension realized.

'Oh Well'

"Albatross" was followed within the next 18 months or so by three more big single hits, all of them written and sung by Green and all of them among Fleetwood Mac's most enduring work. "Man of the World" was a yearning, introspective ballad; "Oh Well" was Green's magnum opus, a nine minute two-part featuring on the one hand some bruising, dog-fight jams and tongue-in-cheek lyrics ("Can't help it 'bout the shape I'm in/I can't sing, I ain't

pretty, and my legs are thin . . .") and on the other hand a romantic classical guitar passage; and "The Green Manalishi," which proved to be Green's last recording with Fleetwood Mac, was a powerful, almost primeval item driven by Mick Fleetwood's relentless drumming and some possessed guitar.

In the meantime a third album (the first for Warner/Reprise), "Then Play On," had been issued about the time of "Oh Well." Green and Kirwan shared the composing chores, and the result was a wide range of material including some bone-crunching rock ("Rattlesnake Shake"), a nod to basic blues ("Show Biz Blues"), two more tortured ballads and some superb instrumental cuts.

All in all, the first three years of Fleetwood Mac music comprised an exceptional body of work. It was the great potential

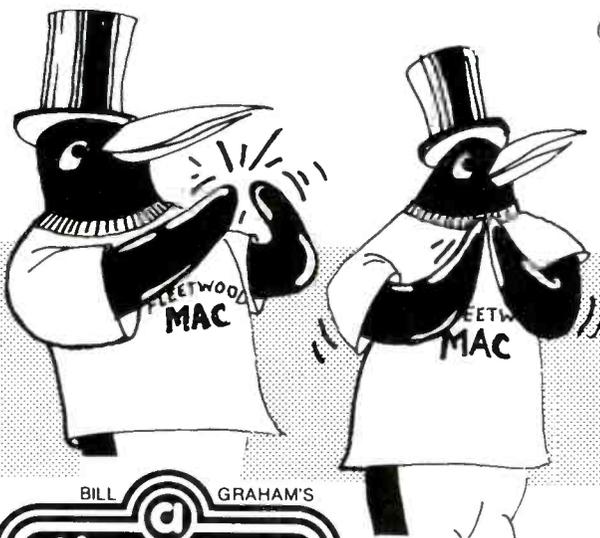
exhibited by this music, and the fact that Peter Green had played so vital a part in its success, that made his departure in 1970 seem like little short of a major national tragedy.

Green had never been completely comfortable with all the attention lavished on him as the band's popularity grew; his attitude was apparent not only in his comments to the press but in his songs ("Show Biz Blues": "Tell me anybody, now do you really give a damn for me?"). Clifford Davis, former Fleetwood Mac manager, has said that Green also "felt it was wrong that . . . Fleetwood Mac should earn such vast sums of money when, in fact, other people in the world didn't have enough to eat."

There have been other explanations for Green's disaffection, not to mention many exaggerated (Continued on page 34)

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