SURETY DILEMMA FOR CLUB WHICH BANNED PUNK ROCK

Punk rock fans spill over onto the stage during Monday's performance at the North Staffordshire Polytechnic in Stafford by The Damned who were banned from appearing at the town's Top of the World ballroom.

TOP of the World ballroom manager Dave Edwards has been offered a £1,000 surety to let punk rock group The Clash perform in Stafford on Monday.

The surety has been offered by the group's promoters to cover any damage that might be caused by the fans of The Clash, who hit the headlines after a near riot at London's Rainbow Club last week.

The promotors have also promised to provide security men to keep fans away from the stage as an added precaution against any trouble.

The offer comes only days after Dave Edwards banned another punk group, The Damned, from appearing at the Top of the World.

The Damned switched their concert to the North Staffordshire Polytechnic after being told they could not perform in the town centre night spot. Hundreds attended the Poly and there was no trouble.

RISK

Mr Edwards said he had decided to ban The Damned from the Mecca ballroom after reading reports about the groups performance at the Rainbow when they appeared with The Clash.

He said: "If it was your property you were putting at risk what would you have done? I am in the business of providing good entertainment for the customers. It seems to me that this group is just out to cause damage and I don't see why Mecca should take that risk.

"When a group gets the kind of newspaper coverage this one has then it is a clear advert for troublemakers. It only takes about ten people to start trouble and then it spreads. We don't want this sort of scene here."

Mr Edwards added that he was still considering whether to let The Clash perform on Monday, although their promotors say the gig is definitely on.

The promotors for The Damned said they were disappointed with the Top of the World decision but pleased they could find somewhere else to play.