

# CLASH CITY BUSKERS

Joe Strummer and his band go acoustic with a buskman's holiday in the North of England. Report and photo by Paul Syrysko.

**A**FTER A break of over a year, The Clash are back — and busking. Over the recent Bank Holiday weekend, The Clash started a tour of the north, playing short acoustic sets outside and in pubs and clubs, culminating in an impromptu set to 700 Alarm fans outside the Leeds University Refectory on the Tuesday. The Alarm played inside later that evening. The Clash say they are doing it for enjoyment and for something different. They intend to keep busking until too many people "catch on", although as last week wore on, the word seemed to be out all over northern cities. Their appearances were lowkey, and

supported by collections (in trad busking style) and fans willing to put them up overnight. The "tour" started in Nottingham outside the Garage club, and then in the Old Market Square. The band had intended to move on to York, but ended up on the last coach to Leeds. There, they busked in the Merrion Shopping Centre late on Sunday and around pubs and clubs the next day. No roadies were needed — the tour equipment was three acoustic guitars and a pair of drumsticks (applied to walls, floors, or boxes). The sets were rock'n'roll and Clash faves, including 'Twist And Shout', 'Stepping Stone', 'I Fought The Law', 'Garageland', 'Police On My Back', 'Pressure Drop' and 'Be-Bop-A-Lula'. Outside the trendy Leeds niterie Le Phonographique, the men in blue turned up, but not to move them on. A young constable laid a hand on Strummer's shoulder and barked, "Oi! How about 'London Calling', then?" The climax of the Leeds visit was the pre-Alarm set

(a fine irony — NME staff). The Clash extended their stay by a day to play for Alarm fans queuing for their tickets. The crowd was swelled by announcements on local radio and BBC2's *Old Grey*. Some of The Alarm even listened in. But the show stopped after three numbers when an anti-apartheid demonstrator, in protest at CBS's involvement in South Africa, flung a red-paint-filled balloon at them. Despite being splattered in red, Clash kept cool and, after calming the irate demonstrator, headed for a local pub, The Faversham, for a half-hour show in the bar. There, at least, all the audience could hear them without microphones. After last orders, they left for York, where they played outside York Minister on VE Day — to 600 people! Strummer's only comment — "if anyone from the NME talks to you, just tell 'em we've gone absolutely raving mad..." The Clash have only one official show lined up so far this year. It's in Denmark next month. They are also still recording an LP.

**T**HE THREAT of imprisonment now hangs over anyone attempting to organise a Stonehenge Free Festival this year, as well as those who participate in — or even attend — such an event. The National Trust, Wiltshire County Council and English Heritage have officially banned the proposed 1985 festival but, to give the ruling greater validity, they and 20 local landowners have now obtained High Court injunctions against trespass on land around Stonehenge and against obstructing the highway in the area. Three weeks ago, NME reported that Wayne Marriot of the Stonehenge Festival Committee was insisting the event would go ahead and urging people to turn up as usual. Now the above organisations have, through their solicitors, issued a statement saying that breach of an injunction is a contempt of court "which can be



Strummer-time blues! Clash earn 31p on a cloudy day in Leeds. This is absolute reality???

**Z**Z TOP have been confirmed as the headliners of this year's open-air concert at Castle Donington on Saturday, 17 August, as forecast by NME ten weeks ago. It will be the band's first UK appearance since 1983, and they'll top a six-band show which the promoters claim will be the strongest rock bill of the year — the other acts will be announced soon. ZZ Top are finishing a new album, which may be ready for release in time for their visit. The event has now dropped the "Monster Of Rock" label with which it's previously been tagged, and is billed simply as "Donington '85". Tickets cost £13 and at present are only available by post, adding 30p booking fee per ticket — from Aimcarve Ltd (to whom cheques and POs should be made payable), PO Box 123, Aldridge, Walsall, West Midlands W29 8XY, enclosing SAE. The credit card hot-line is 01 741 8989.

punishable by imprisonment", and that anyone aiding and abetting a breach of an injunction is also liable to be found in contempt of court. Another festival committee member, Andrew Pratt, said that the authorities are determined to kill off the event because 1985 marks the twelfth year of the festival which, by Charter Law, would make it legal! And despite the latest legal developments, he reiterated this week that the festival will proceed. So it seems it's up to the public to make up their own minds whether it's still on!

**B**RUCE SPRINGSTEEN is to play a third concert at London's Wembley Stadium on Saturday, 6 July, due to the enormous ticket demand for his shows at that venue. But there's no point in trying to book at this late stage because, with his 3 and 4 July dates sold out, there are still more than enough applications in hand to fill the stadium a third time. In fact, even though 216,000

people will now be able to see him at Wembley, it's likely that money will have to be refunded to some of the original applicants. Surprisingly, Springsteen's show at Newcastle St James Park (4 and 5 June) and Leeds Roundhay Park (7 July) have not yet sold out, and tickets are now available to personal applicants at several outlets. For Newcastle, they're on sale at the venue itself, Preston Guildhall, Edinburgh Playhouse, Glasgow Apollo, Virgin of Durham and HMV shops in Stockton, Middlesbrough

and Sunderland. Leeds tickets can be bought at Way Ahead (Nottingham and Derby), HMV (Sheffield and Hull), Odeon and Cyclops (Birmingham), Piccadilly (Manchester) and Cavendish Travel and the Tourist Information Centre at Central Library (Leeds). Tickets at all these points cost £14.50 including booking fee — alternatively, booking by phone on the Keith Prowse hot line (01 741 8989) costs £15.50, including a charge for credit card handling. Bookings may be made by post as per details listed two weeks ago.

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