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DISC

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EVERY THURSDAY

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STONES

Jagger slams
solo single

Christmas single and
New Year tour see P. 6



Hit group with hit writer Joni Mitchell, Matthews' Southern Comfort (left to right) Gordon Huntley, Ray Duffy, Andy Lee, Mark Griffiths, Carl Barnwell and Ian Matthews

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your own! in Disc's exclusive

Pop Opinion Poll

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THE BEATLE WHO DIED!

Mrs Millie Sutcliffe concludes
her story of a Beatle son to
whom fame never came
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The Taylor-made star who quit Savile Row...

JAMES TAYLOR was in London last week, a much bigger star than he was as a resident in this country a year ago and a member of the now much-depleted Apple stable at London's Savile Row. He returned in style—gave two great shows at London's Palladium, and did two TV appearances, including "Top Of The Pops" and recorded a Disco 2! Yet he isn't really of the disposition to be a big star. He's introvert, nervous and shy and that ultra-cool impression he gives when he comes on stage is just a way of getting over his stage-fright.

He doesn't really like talking about himself, certainly not to reporters, and notebooks seem to scare the living daylight out of him.

But when you get to know him a bit you get through to an intensely interesting person.

Apart from being a fine songwriter, individual performer and exceptional guitarist, he's going to become a film star, which again, doesn't really fit his personality somehow.

He's made a film called "Two Lane Black Top" which is a sort of "Easy Rider," but not quite. In it he drives across America—he actually did drive across the States for the film!—and the story is based on the tiredness and fatigue of such a ride.

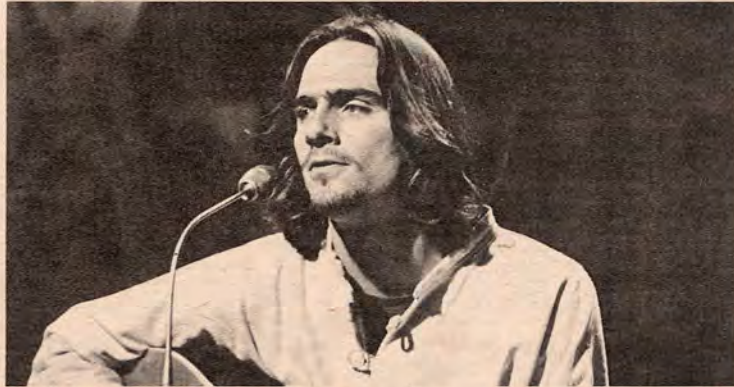
"I didn't want to be an actor. I see my future as a musician, and I've never had any training to be an actor. I didn't really act in this film; I just acted myself. The

hardest part was doing a scene over and over again and making it seem as though it was the first time, every time; that's half of what film acting is about and it's very hard.

"I quite enjoyed making the film but I don't know whether I'll do any more. I've been asked to do another one—they want to make a factual film of the life of Billy the Kid, which is interesting because his life was nothing like the Hollywood version. I've read the script and it seems to be very authentic but I'd like to wait and see the rushes of 'Two Lane Black Top' before I decide, and that won't be until May."

If you are already imagining Taylor as the gun-slinging Billy dressed in black and robbing trains and banks, stop. If he does accept the offer, he won't even be playing the part of The Kid, but that of Pat Garrett, the sheriff who "got him in the end."

Right now there are more important things in Taylor's life than making films. For one, he wants to take a long break. "I've just got to take time off because, if I don't, I'm just going to dry up.



JAMES TAYLOR . . . more at home like him!

I just want to go on living and write about it. If you are just a song-writer you don't have anything to write about.

"I want to come back to Britain in the spring, not to appear anywhere, but just to stay for a while. I'd really like to go to Scotland and get away from everything in the Highlands, which I

hear are very beautiful. There's also a village near Aberdeen I'd like to visit as my family comes from there originally.

"And I also want to get to Tunisia and Ethiopia if I can find the time, because they are really interesting places. There are so many places I want to visit. It's all experience and I have to have

experiences to be able to write songs. The record company wants me to record another album but if there aren't any songs there I won't be able to do it.

"I'm not the sort who can sit down and force songs out. I admire people who can do that but I just have to wait for songs to appear."

James, who seems and looks older than his 22 years, will be back next summer to perform and he wants to do a full European tour, and not just play in London but in the North and Scotland as well. "The thing is that I don't want to do a strenuous tour, it would have to be easy, just two or three concerts a week."

When he returned to America at the weekend, James had a few appearances to do but he was mainly looking forward to getting his house "sealed-up" for the winter. He has had a place built at Martha's Vineyard, an island off Massachusetts, which "needs a few doors and a flue." The fact that he lives on an island is a clue to his apparent preference for isolation.

He stayed in Knightsbridge during his stay with girl friend Joni Mitchell, on whose forthcoming album he "plays a bit of guitar." He isn't too forthcoming about the possibility of their appearing together, but it seems that they're considering it. From the things both of them have said it appears that they are very close and have a lot in common.

About his association with Apple he doesn't seem bitter or resentful.

"That's where it all started. It's all developed since then. You have to have an album out to do anything and the first one sold 50,000 which wasn't bad." The second has now topped the million mark.

So the money is starting to roll in and James admits he doesn't really know what to do with it. Apart from his house, which he says isn't very big, a 1953 Chevrolet, and a two-year-old Ford Cortina, he doesn't have anything that you could call a luxury.

James does have some idea of what he is going to do with money. He intends to buy a lot of land—another interest he shares with Joni. But don't jump to the conclusion that he intends to become a property tycoon and build supermarkets on every piece of land he can get his hands on. "I want to buy land and just leave it as it is so that, in effect, it will become public. I feel that the bit of land I bought to build my house on was a bit of a selfish act, really."

One of this tall, gangling "Jesus-like" figure's greatest fears is that the tax he pays on the money he is earning will be used by the American Government towards defence costs. "I will feel really guilty if I earn money that helps to buy missiles and planes. I've got a lawyer back in the States trying to see if there is a way round that."

At Top Of The Pops last week James admitted in his dressing room that he is getting a bit tired of "Fire And Rain." He said: "I've sung it a lot of times, and it's OK if I feel like singing it, but, unfortunately, the times I do feel like it and the times that I have to do it don't often coincide."

During rehearsals for the show he was told "the next run-through will be a dress rehearsal" to which he replied, standing there in his faded jeans and smock-shirt, "Well, do you want me to take something off? Because this is all I've got!"

THE BEE GEES are back together as a group—two years older and a little wiser. And last week they spoke to Disc about the much publicised break up—and how it was magnified to make it look as if there had been a big quarrel!

Said Maurice: "It was a family argument and was exaggerated in the Press. They did a good job of it. We weren't allowed to forget it. Every time we picked up a paper there was something else someone else was supposed to have said."

But they all feel that they have learned something from the separation.

"Being married made a personal difference," said Robin. "It makes you more adult and responsible and more mature. We just thought it was silly not to go back together again when we all want the same thing."

The brothers blame the split partly on their own success—"Our achievements became our enemy."

And on their egos. "We got confused with and about each other," explained Robin. "And I thought that decisions were being made behind my back. Like when we recorded 'Lamp-light' we thought it was going to be an A side, but they used 'First Of May' instead."

Added Barry: "Decisions are still being made behind our backs, but now we realise they are for our own good. We all agree on what we're putting out. It was inevitable that after 13 years together we'd split up."

"We didn't have a holiday in two years and were with each other day and night."

"But we've always been the Bee Gees," said Robin. "From the moment we stepped off the boat with a hundred pounds between the family."

Strangely, all three sing lead on their new single "Lonely Days," but they say it wasn't planned that way, especially for the comeback. The B side, "A Man For All Seasons," was originally recorded as the A side.

"Lonely Days" is a slight deviation from the usual hall-marked Bee Gee style. There's not a trace of a waver, with three strong voices belting out the song, but the big orchestra sound is still there.

"There are actually less instruments than usual on that song," said Maurice. "It sounds louder with the three voices singing



Together again the brothers Gibb take it easy.

lead. The album, out on the 27th, sounds more like the Bee Gees. I didn't even have to put a bass on the single because we double tracked our voices."

The big sound is characteristic of their "classical pop" style and Maurice says that they used the same formula as on all their previous numbers.

Their decision to get together again wasn't sudden. Just as the split happened, they feel that it was inevitable that they should come together again.

"It has brought us closer together," said Maurice. "We get on better with each other and understand our music more. We've learnt to be more level headed. And it's lonely being solo."

The orchestra will be touring with the group when they leave for the States in the spring, going to South America, Japan and Europe. A British tour is also scheduled, taking in all the major cities.

Despite America's leanings to heavier music, the Bee Gees expect a big welcome there.

"We're regarded as much as songwriters as singers in the States," explained Maurice. "Underground groups record our songs. Ritchie Havens has done songs by us and Janis Joplin and Nina Simone recorded 'To Love Somebody.' Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra and Andy Williams have also done our numbers."

Added Barry: "We've had hippies waiting on our doorsteps in America and they wouldn't do that if they didn't like us."

Filming is another Bee Gee pursuit. Their "Cucumber Castle," which they worked on for over two years, will be screened on BBC TV before Christmas. Robin won't be in it because it was done while he had his solo single "Saved By The Bell" as number two in the charts.

The first show will be the pilot and if it goes down well it will

be run to a series.

If that happens, Robin will be written into the story and they will start filming again with him. Also appearing are Frankie Howard as their dying father, and Spike Milligan as a jester.

Robin is enthusiastic about filming, but the memory of getting up at six in the morning dies hard in the minds of Barry and Maurice.

"I'd like the three of us to write a feature film," said Robin. "Ideally within the next three years. There's a multitude of things to do. The Bee Gees have scarcely begun."

Their next film would most probably be another comedy, in which they could dress up in period costume and enjoy themselves making it.

Although they are determined to stay together for at least the next 10 years as a group, they will still do things on their own. This is where they feel they have learned to be more responsible

—in being prepared to have some give and take.

Robin and Barry will shortly be bringing out a hard backed book of short stories.

"It started in Australia," said Barry. "It's a collection of short stories called 'On The Other Hand.'"

"They sometimes sit up until four in the morning writing stories," said Maurice. "When we're at a hotel they share a room and sit and scribble until all hours."

Besides that, they all have solo albums, and Maurice is writing the film score for Richard Harris's next film, "Bloomfield."

When they write their songs they find it easier to concentrate if they are in a darkened room—or on Polydor's back stairs, which is where they thought of "New York Mining Disaster."

Now they are writing for a different audience than they were two years ago.

"Our fans will have grown up, like us," said Robin. "Pop music has gone. Pop is Bill Haley and his mates. And it's not as if we've been in the dark for two years."

They will be giving everyone an opportunity to see them on the TV dates lined up and on their tour.

"I used to love touring," said Maurice. "I never used to worry about the money, but now we're getting most efficient. It costs a lot to tour with an orchestra. It was usually 16-piece, but we've had up to 25."

On one trip to the States, they stayed in one of the most expensive areas of Beverly Hills.

"It cost a fortune. Bacon and eggs cost 25 dollars. But I suppose it was good publicity—with the Press coming there and seeing it all."

Rosalind Russell

Roy Shipston

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