

horror of horrors – a few zits because he was understandably out of sorts after all the travelling.

Not the greatest disaster to befall the career of a teen pop idol. But it could be if you blurt it out to every hack in the notoriously vicious British press! I couldn't believe it! Of course they reported this little nugget – but someone had to do something about this before they got hold of something really damaging so, the first chance I got, I tackled David about it on the plane.

'Look David, you've got to start cooperating with these guys. Talk to them – otherwise all you'll get is bad press. Don't worry about photos. Leave it with us. If we say they can't take any shots of you, they won't do it.'

Of course this was naughty of us – we were taking advantage of the close proximity to the star that security work afforded us to go behind the back of his real manager and her assistants. But after all, it was for his own good! Once we explained the total inadequacy of the people he'd surrounded himself with, David took everything we had to say on board and the atmosphere of the tour was transformed. From that moment on he was happy to sit down and chat with the press at almost any time they liked – and since he was undoubtedly an extremely charming person, he put them completely at ease and he soon had them eating out of his hand.

The remainder of the tour went off without another hitch and as soon as the show arrived back for the English leg, David called a meeting with Ruth Aarons and almost immediately the entire original crew and tour management staff was gone. On David's recommendation and with the cooperation of Bell Records, Ruth put David's entire world tour in the hands of Gerry and me. I never saw Teri Geckler again – or her two sidekicks. Hardly surprising when you consider that their utter lack of experience nearly caused one of the biggest PR disasters in pop history. From day one it was evident that none of them had ever been on a rock 'n' roll tour before –

they were running things the way they ran their office in LA – and it just doesn't work like that!

Gerry and I became very close to David during the course of that tour and became his confidants as well as his security and tour management advisers. The world tour, and by extension his career, went from strength to strength, helped in no small part, I'm proud to say, by our company's guidance and careful management. Of course the guy's a major talent – but he was no ingénue. On the contrary that baby faced young star had a very old and wise head firmly on his shoulders; one of the people that manage to combine being a 'personality' with real strength of character. Because he'd first achieved fame in the Partridge Family, it was easy to be misled into thinking of him as a kid – but you have to remember that he was already in his mid-to-late-twenties when he was playing the sixteen-year-old Keith Partridge! An essential part of David's character was his unfailing ability and willingness to turn on the charm when it was called for – and that talent and cooperative attitude came to our rescue on many occasions when the shit was about to hit the PR fan.

The next great test of our security prowess was a set of four concerts, two of which were matinee shows, over two days at Wembley in March 1973. Since matinees are, by definition, in the afternoon, the kids were able to turn out in force – so as well as all the thousands on the inside, we had thousands upon thousands more milling about outside the venue, which made getting David safely in and out a complete nightmare. And this was where, though I say it myself, my unique skills came to the fore: the kind of ability to plan a quick getaway you don't tend to develop in completely legitimate careers, shall we say! Call it escapology, if you will (I will!) – I know that I was the best man in Britain, maybe even the world, for spiring famous faces in and out of places undetected by the thousands of fans or the press. I could put anyone –