

condition by the time the band came on. For one thing we'd arranged the barriers outside in a sort of zigzagged chicane, which meant that they couldn't charge straight through. Inside the hall, that measure was backed up my guys, whom I'd briefed very carefully. They lined the entrances to slow the fans down; if anyone tried to run through, they were stopped and told to slow down. That way, those who'd waited all night got the prime positions they deserved without a stampede and once the first thousand or two were safely in place the fans that followed were easier to keep calm because they knew the best places had already been taken. With no pressure, they just ambled in, in a civilised fashion with no trouble at all. You see it's all about recognising where the crisis points occur – and we knew that the riskiest of the lot is the moment the doors open. That's why, on many occasions, we'd get the doors opened quite a while before the advertised time.

DAVID AT THE RACES

When the chance came up to play a huge outdoor show at the Sydney racetrack, David jumped at the chance, being an avid racehorse aficionado and breeder and David, Gerry and I all went for an enjoyable day out combining a pre-gig recce with a bit of a flutter a couple of days before the day of the show.

Since it was a daytime gig in the height of the Australian Summer, there was no need (or any point) for the vast (and hugely expensive) banks of high-tech lighting you see at concerts these days. So the stage was a lot less elaborate than the purpose-designed show stages you see at places like Glastonbury these days. Come to that it was a lot less elaborate than the kind of thing you'd get at Wembley or White City in those days. Basically, it was just scaffolding – and I'm damn sure it wouldn't have met the safety requirements for a London gig. But I was still gobsmacked

when, halfway through David's show, the stage seemed to join in the frenzied dancing and the whole thing began, visibly, to move as the sheer weight of the crowd pressed against it. Swaying sickeningly backwards and sideways like a building in an earthquake, it was downright bloody terrifying. But of course the fans were oblivious to the peril they were in, surging and crashing against the front in rolling waves that threatened to sweep the whole ramshackle construction off its shaky foundations. Heroically – but stupidly – some of the security guys were trying to get under the stage, trying pointlessly to prop it up. Suddenly envisioning another rock 'n' roll tragedy, I tried to stop them. 'If it's gonna go, let it go,' I roared, while at the same time wondering how the hell I could get David, his band and the full-on orchestra off the thing before it fell apart...But maybe there was another way. Stop the cause of the problem!! I rapidly gathered together as many guys as I could get hold of and positioned them in front – a human dam, to hold back the teenage tide. Somehow, they succeeded and we got through the show and the accident that had been waiting to happen wasn't allowed to happen.

David's Adelaide Stadium show proved to be just as hairy. It wasn't looking too good from the start – we arrived to find that the whole area had been severely flooded and the waters were still receding, leaving the entire ground floor of our hotel about a foot deep in water so that we had to wade through Reception to reach dry land at the stairs! But we'd obviously missed the worst of it because when we got to the stadium for the dress rehearsal, we found a massive tidemark right the way round – and it was a full eighteen feet up from where we stood. Now that's one hell of a flood! Otherwise, though, everything seemed OK and the show went ahead as planned...for a while.