

Success In Stride

Probably no one ever became a top teenage idol as fast as David Cassidy. Within a few weeks after the debut of "The Partridge Family" on the ABC Television Network he had two top selling single records plus a gold album, "The Partridge Family." Magazines with teen and sub-teen readership quickly started the still-honored custom of running David Cassidy covers and stories with every issue. His weekend concert dates were sell-outs. His popularity contributed to making "The Partridge Family" one of the hits of the season. He moved from a cottage furnished largely with apple crates and a bare mattress to a luxury hilltop home.

Naturally, there has been a price to pay. The taken-for-granted niceties of privacy and leisure have practically been banished from his life.

A normal date — dinner and a movie — are out of the question. "The last time I went to a movie, kids — and their mothers — were crawling over their seats trying to get at me." After a few mob scenes at supermarkets, he no longer does his own grocery shopping. Last summer, while filming a "Partridge Family" episode at Marineland, he was forced to run from a horde of screaming girls and found there was no place to hide — not even in the men's room.

David says he has time for one meal a day. In addition to the 10- or 12-hour days spent filming the series, and doing weekend concerts around the country, there are myriad business details — dealing with record producers, filmmakers (he has considered many scripts, but hasn't had time to

make a movie yet), investment advisors, and interviews, interviews, interviews.

What has been the effect of this phenomenon upon a young man just turned 21? Has he gone on an "ego trip," or has he, on the other hand, become calloused by a world populated largely by skillful men determined to help him — and themselves?

Neither, in the opinion of

those who know him. He's a very likable young man, considerate, receptive, with self-composure tinged with just a hint of shyness:

"I never dreamed of this sort of thing happening to me," he said. "Who does? Two years ago I was just another working actor trying to improve at my trade."

Although he has been singing since childhood, plays the

drums and guitar, and co-starred on Broadway in the Allen Sherman musical, "The Fig Leaves Are Falling," he had worked principally in dramatic roles before the skies opened up. He played leading guest roles in 10 series, including "Marcus Welby, M.D.," "The FBI," "The Mod Squad," "The Survivors," "Medical Center" and "Adam-12."