

David Wins a Goliath Scream

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The house lights dimmed in the Dane County Coliseum Thursday night and an announcer's voice boomed . . . "and now, heere's . . ."

The aisles flooded with ecstatic, hysterically screeching female fans of the bubble gum set, screaming "DAVID . . . DAVID . . ." and moving toward the stage as at least one burly usher, abject terror in his eyes, stood like Horatio at the bridge, armed only with a flashlight but controlling the descending horde, almost all with Instamatics popping flashbulbs while they

danced ahead on tiptoes.

IT WAS A most usual welcome for the slight, 5-foot 8-inch, 130-pound bundle of sweet-faced wholesomeness named David Cassidy, whom most in that crowd of 4,000 welcomes weekly in their living rooms in the role of 16-year-old guitar-strumming Keith Partridge of ABC-TV's "The Partridge Family."

Let not the impression remain that all 4,000 in the Coliseum were little girls between the ages of 5 and 15 — only about 3,500 were.

A few green-eyed boys, a few older teens were sprinkled about, and every so often — much like candles on a

birthday cake — a parent sitting ramrod-stiff, unable to conceal the pique that comes from being pressured into buying a \$5.50 seat just so daughter and friends have a driver. They were seeing in person the voice that blares night and day from those millions of records.

WEARING street clothes, tight bucksin flares, white open shirt, and western jacket, because his costumes were filched in Scranton, Pa., Cassidy sang an hour-long show that was almost entirely popular singles from his and Partridge Family albums.

They included "Blind Hope," "My First Night Alone

Without You," "Brown Eyes," "Cherish," and the record that has sold 5 million times in the U.S., Japan, England, and Australia — "I Think I Love You."

The ritual is not to be tampered with.

Cassidy's birthday is next week (he'll be 22), so fans here did one impromptu number from the floor — "Happy Birthday, Dear DAVID."

It's that kind of teenie attention that helped him earn an estimated \$250,000 last year and possibly \$1 million this year.

Maybe those mothers with eligible daughters weren't just driving the car?