

Shirley's New Challenge

By BOB FOSTER

When the "Partridge Family" one of the top rated shows on television moves to its Saturday night spot in the fall it may be starting the final season for the show. This would be denied by the people at ABC and Screen Gems the producers, but Shirley Jones, who stars in the series told me last summer that David Cassidy, her stepson, will not be on the show after this season. "He is determined to go on to other things," Shirley said, "and he should."

Later I talked with David and he confirmed that he would be leaving the show. "I have to grow," he admitted, "and there are other things for me to do."

Shirley agreed that if he sets his mind to it, David can become a top actor, like his father, "the sky is the limit" she said.

When asked if David's leaving would hurt the show Shirley was frank. "I think it might, but it shouldn't be a serious blow. It might be that the studio will decide against continuing the show," she said. Then Shirley did express her desire to do another series. "I enjoy doing television, and if the show should be cancelled, I'd be very interested in taking on something else."

Because of the new time slot, the series has added two new characters. Rickey Stevens (Ricky Segall), a four-year old singer, becomes the family's new neighbor and a regular on the series. He will join the comedy antics each week and also sing a song or two on his own.

Also scheduled to join the series as a guest star in several segments is 18-year-old nightclub comedian Alan Bursky who will be playing Dave Madden's nephew.

In talking about her role as Mother Partridge Shirley said, "I have always insisted that 'Mother Partridge' remain fallible but also remain a strong parent, and that as Mother Partridge I have a life of my own, away from the children, just as one does in real life."

Like all shows which feature young children "The Partridge Family" faces the problem of the kids growing up. This year Keith played by David will be attending college. Laurie, played by lovely Susen Day, will be a senior in high school, and romance will be very much part of her life. Danny, played by Danny Bonaduce, will tone down his smart alec role, and discover girls.



Young Ricky Segall, who was discovered singing in a Nashville, Tenn., coffee house with his parents, will portray a next-door neighbor and will sing a song each week on the series.

There were reports that Dave Madden, who plays the agent for the Partridge Family was reported to be fed up with the role. I asked him about this at a party given by Screen Gems for the cast, and he said, "Sure I'd like to go on to other things, but I don't dislike the part that much. It has been good for me and it has given me a chance for other things. I'd just like to try some of those things."

This week Shirley and the whole gang are aboard the TSS Fairsea, a Sitar Cruises luxury liner, filming an entire episode aboard the ship. Last season they did an episode from Kings Island complex in Cincinnati.

Most of the music on the show is pre-recorded for each segment. The voices of course, with the exception of Shirley and David, are dubbed in.



Starts Fourth Season — "The Partridge Family," the ABC-TV comedy series produced by Screen Gems, begins its fourth season Saturday, Sept. 15, 8 p.m., with a new character added (see inset) in the person of four-year-old Ricky Segall, who will play a next-door neighbor and sing a song each week. The returning Partridges are, from left (back row) Dave Madden, Susan Day, David Cassidy and Danny Bonaduce and (in front) Suzanne Crough, Brian Forster, and Shirley Jones.



Man-to-Man Talk — Four-year-old Rick Segall (right) and 13-year-old Brian Forster, who plays Chris Partridge, have a serious discussion about their favorite topic, baseball.