

Cassidy gets the teen fans

NEW YORK

Nine-year-olds in pigtails paste his picture up on their bedroom walls and tenderly kiss him goodnight.

The fan hysteria goes back to early Sinatra ... sobbing Johnny Ray ... through to the Beatles. Now the hysteria is for David Cassidy and his fans are not long out of kindergarten. David who is all of 22, pushing 23, is preparing for his first ever concert tour of Britain.

"You know," confessed the current darling of pre-bra girls all over the world: "I feel like an oldman."

He did the tourist bit last year and brought out the screamers who invaded his yacht on the Thames.

Today the young multi-millionaire lives in a comfortable and a half acre ranch style house with pool and orange groves — high in the hills of the San Fernando Valley.

Cassidy's hideaway is a comfortable place, certainly not any lavish showplace.

When friends heard I was having an audience with David Cassidy they pleaded for photographs for their offspring. I haven't experienced that since early Betelmania.

So at noon I climbed the driveway as the gates slid open. At

going wild



DAVID CASSIDY

lunchtime, Cassidy looked as though he'd just climbed out of bed. He was pale and a little tired.

But he bounded into the living room in embroidered blue jeans and a short-sleeved vest, complained that he felt chilly and started a log fire.

He still looks a good five years

younger than his age and that, say his fans, is one of the big attractions.

He says life as the country's number one teen idol is still a strain. "I was driving down Hollywood Boulevard recently when I made a turn and these two girls took one look and started screaming hysterically."

He shrugged, almost sounding embarrassed by the whole scene. Maybe he is. But he quickly points out: "My fans are changing all the time. When I started, my concerts were like those for Donny Osmond ... he has a lot of little girls. There's fewer for me. Mine start at seven and go up to 17 or more ... especially in Europe."

Ruth Aarons, David's personal manager, pinpoints the Cassidy attraction rather well.

"He's certainly no superman," she admits. "But he represents masculine sex appeal as opposed to bizarre performers like Alice Cooper."

Soon Britain will get a chance to see, if David is more than just a comparatively "butch" figure in the often effeminate world of pop today. "It'll be different to anything I've ever done," he promises. "more of a one-man-show but with me, still doing my big hits."

"Look", he said, "the fan magazines have been writing about me for three years and I won-

der when it's going to stop. Now they seem to be doing stories about the Osmond Brothers or the Jackson Five ... and I'm beginning to feel like an old man.

I'm sure Presley felt the way I do after he had it for a couple of years."

A multi-million dollar empire has grown up around David. He will be trailed by an army of salesmen peddling everything from David Cassidy dresses to posters.

Cassidy says — and the bitterness comes through — that he doesn't make much money from the merchandising paraphernalia: "I have no control of that."

The studio (Screen Gems Productions) make all the money out of me... the artist rarely gets anything out of it."

Yet he's not quite a candidate for the poorhouse either. Last year his phenomenal earning power was close to half a million dollars.

Cassidy is obviously peeved that a big chunk of his audience is still so young. But while the cash registers continue jangling he'll tolerate the overwhelming affection of little girls who wear braces on their teeth and still suck lollipops.