

Pop Fans' Bite as Bad as Bark

BY IAIN MACDONALD

In Auckland today are two internationally recognised experts on the



Mr Murfet

habits and hunting-patterns of that extremely savage but valuable animal, the Pop Star Fan.

The arrival in Auckland on Saturday of American pop-star-extraordinary David Cassidy (alias Mr Platinum Disc) will, say these experts, bring out these fans in ravening hordes, ready and eager to sink their razor-sharp fangs into anything or anyone who dares stand between them and their quarry.

"I've had these kids sink their teeth in my arm — clean through a leather coat," says Mr Jerry Slater, who comes from London, has bulging biceps, and specialises in

protecting top showbiz folk from their fans and the fans from each other.

Believe it or not, Mr Slater was once a women's hairdresser. But he and his partner, Don Murfet, a former motor mechanic, have since become rich by selling safety to the stars.

To hear them tell it, the stars really need the services of Messrs Slater and Murfet.

"You can't just book top stars like David Cassidy or the Osmonds into a hotel in London or Paris — the hotels wouldn't take them, anyway," says Mr Slater. "I mean, these fans — just kids, most of 'em — are really organised and determined. They'd tear a hotel apart,

brick by brick, if they thought their boy was hiding in there."

Does all this mean that Messrs Slater and Murfet are expecting mini-bopper murder and mutilation when David Cassidy does his stint at Eden Park on Tuesday night?

Mr Slater looks piously shocked: "Oh no. Our main concern is that all the kids will get a chance to see and hear David properly, but without anyone getting hurt."

But suppose the maddened mini-boppers decide that — despite the presence of 50 locally hired security guards — they WILL maul darling Dave around a bit.

"Well, as a last resort,

you sometimes have to pick 'em up — very gently, mind — and carry 'em off," sighs Mr Slater.



Mr Slater