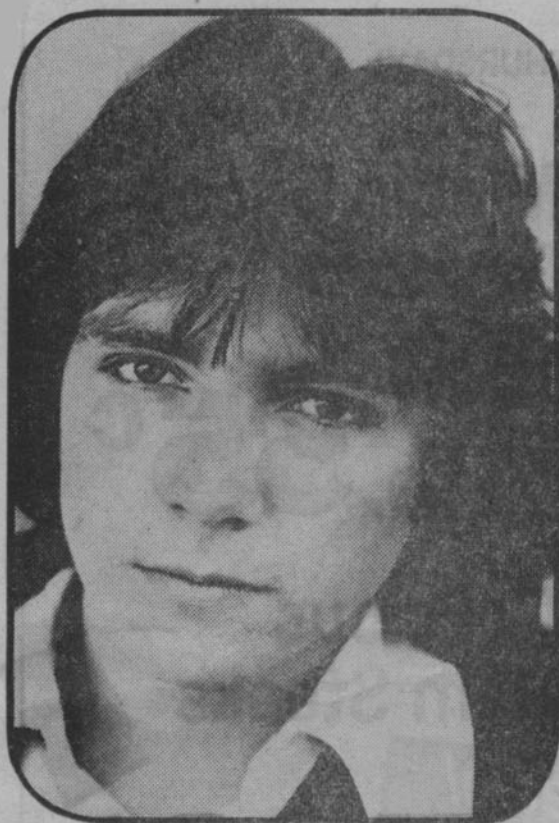


Cassidy countdown



David Cassidy

BLAST off is two o'clock on the afternoon of March 10.

The launching pad is the turf of the Melbourne Cricket Ground and the pilot for the trip is American pop idol David Cassidy.

If the Cassidy concert is what promoters promise, everyone from the 11-year-olds to the grannies will be sent into orbit.

The 23-year-old millionaire of "The Partridge Family" billing will be in Melbourne as part of the 1974 Moomba festivities.

Entrepreneur Harry M. Miller today described security arrangements for the Cassidy tour as "maximum."

Cassidy and his crew of 22 will arrive at Sydney airport from New Zealand on February 27 and will touch down at Tullamarine airport on Friday, March 8, by commercial jet after concerts in Sydney and Brisbane.

David Cassidy normally travels by private jets and helicopters.

"Security certainly won't be Gestapo-like, but it will be a strictly look-but-don't touch affair," Mr Miller said.

He described the number of people involved in security arrangements as "a lot."

He said that Cassidy would be staying in a major Melbourne hotel, but declined to name the hotel... "for security reasons."

The deputy chairman of the Moomba Festival Committee, Cr Ian Rice said the Cassidy concert was the main attraction of Moomba 1974.

He said that more than 4½ million people would either view or participate in this year's Moomba celebrations.

Mr Miller said provision would be made for 65,000 people at Cassidy's only Melbourne concert.

The promoters have not spared the expense... although according to Mr Miller and Cr Rice: "there should be a substantial profit involved in the tour."

As evidence, Cassidy will use a \$108,000 sound system, the largest ever used outdoors in Australia.

"This should carry David Cassidy's voice deep into all parts of the ground. But that does not mean the sound system will make the most noise," Mr Miller said.

■ ■ ■
The concert is being billed as a family affair. Tickets are \$3.20 a head, regardless of age.

Cassidy was born in New York on April 12, 1950, the son of actor Jack Cassidy and actress Evelyn Ward, who divorced five years later.

He lived with his mother and grandparents in West Orange, New Jersey, but when 10, moved to Hollywood with his mother.

Cassidy worked with the Los Angeles Theatre Group, but at 17, went to New York to stay with his father and step-mother, Shirley Jones.

Shirley Jones is now cast as Cassidy's real mother in the TV show, "The Partridge Family."