

DATELINE: AUSTRALIA & N.Z.

NEAR DISASTER

Sydney, March 2nd—Disaster was narrowly averted this afternoon at Sydney's Randwick Racecourse, during a performance by the American pop star David Cassidy.

About half-way through Cassidy's concert, the specially erected stage began to collapse, owing to pressure from hundreds of fans at the front.

While workmen struggled frantically to shore up the stage, Cassidy urged his audience to withdraw from the front and to remain calm.

When asked afterwards if he was worried, Cassidy replied, "Yes, but then this isn't the first time something like this has happened. During my tour of England last year, a balcony nearly collapsed on to the stage at Manchester.

"Fortunately, no one was hurt. That's one of the things that worries me the most about these large concerts—the chance that someone will be seriously injured."

CONFUSION AT SYDNEY AIRPORT

Sydney, Australia, March 1—Sydney airport was a mass of confusion today with the arrival of David Cassidy. Cassidy, 23, one of America's leading pop stars, landed this morning to the cheers of hundreds of his Australian fans.

The roads leading to the airport were choked with Cassidy fans, displaying homemade banners, signs and a variety of clothing modified to demonstrate their devotion to the pop star.

Badges, T-shirts, and rosettes everywhere reflected the strong feelings held by Cassidy's Sydney fans.

One of them, 15-year-old Mary Kelly, said: "This is David's first visit to Australia, and we all want to show him our gratitude. We see so few of the top stars that we just wanted to thank David for his thoughtfulness."

Airport officials, alarmed at first, were amazed at the politeness of Cassidy's fans, some of whom queued for hours to gain a glimpse of their idol.

One of the airport porters said, "I've



worked here for ten years and I've never seen anything like it! We've had Beatles' and the Rolling Stones' fans, but they were nothing like these Cassidy fans. They're a real credit to Cassidy, and the best lot we've had here."

Cassidy is scheduled to play a concert at the Randwick Racecourse tomorrow.

SPEECHLESS

Sydney, March 2nd—Hundreds of David Cassidy fans' deepest fears were allayed this morning with an announcement by Harry M. Miller Attractions.

The spokesman assured fans and critics alike that, despite reports in the New Zealand press, Cassidy's voice would be more than up to the scheduled dates in our major cities.

After massive doses of tonic water and applications of ice, the American superstar's voice was responding well to the treatment.

Cassidy is scheduled to play to a crowd of 20,000 today at the Randwick Racecourse.

AMERICAN POP STAR MEETS SYDNEY PRESS

Sydney, Australia, March 2nd—American singing sensation David Cassidy spoke to members of the Australian press today at a press conference held in the lobby of his hotel in Sydney's fashionable King's Cross.

Despite a hoarse voice, the result of an impromptu rock and roll performance with fellow-star Elton John in Auckland last week, Cassidy was at ease, chatting amiably about his career.

When asked how he felt about the legions of screaming fans that greeted him at the airport yesterday, Cassidy replied, "They're really great! I know a lot of people are frightened by their fans, but I'm always glad to see more of them."

Crowds are nothing new to the 23-year-old star. When he arrived in London

last May, he was followed everywhere by his loyal supporters.

But their loyalty doesn't just begin and end with Cassidy's visits: record sales, both singles and albums, have firmly established the young American talent as one of the most popular singers in the world.

The situation is equally true here. Cassidy's latest album, *Dreams Are Nuthin' More Than Wishes* has firmly established him among the top names in the Australian entertainment world.

After his concert today, Cassidy will fly to Brisbane for a concert at the Milton Tennis Court.

