'Partridge Show' Bends Reality But Still Has Some Charm

By JULIA INMAN

"I CAN SEE the headline in Variety now," said Shirley Jones, "Partridge Family

Lays an Egg!"

Well, not quite! But with a name like Partridge, the new show is laying itself open for a lot of puns. Partridge Family is a rare bird of a show, is one weak example.

Billed as a "musical" situation comedy, the series has set out to accomplish several things for its producers. One of them is to give ABC-TV another pre-fab rock group like NBC's the Monkees. Another is to build David Cassidy into another teen idol much in the manner the web promoted Bobby Sherman, starting two years ago.

Apart from some typical Hollywood weaknesses, last night's opener had a considerable amount of harm for the viewer.

Roughly following the career of the singing Cowsills, the initial half-hour showed how a fatherless family in California sought fame and fortune going the show business road in a psychedelic-painted bus.

Fresh-faced Shirley Jones is a strong asset as the mother, and the five youngsters are attractive.

Most of the laughs last night | came from a new 'smart widdle quiz kid" Danny Bonaduce, the group's 10-year-old manager who engineers its discovery by pursuing a record company agent even into the men's room --- does this mean a new "frankness" on TV? -- in order to make him hear the family's first rock record.

As frequently happens in sitcoms, this show bends reality to the breaking point but there were honest some The group is paralyzed with stage fright at their first audience, for instance.