

Selling Job On David Cassidy Big One

"Be With David 24 Hours a Day!" "Can You Marry David?" "Scoop! David Answers 101 Intimates!" are some of the banner lines on the teen-age fan magazine *Tiger Beat*. "David" is David Cassidy of ABC's *The Partridge Family*, as any little girl, teen-age or younger, will tell you.

Between the covers are articles giving David's dimensions (5 feet, 8 inches tall, 125 pounds, shoulder width 17 inches, inseam 31 inches, ring size 6 — pinkie); descriptions of David's stand-in (she's a girl who's almost as pretty as he is) and a double-page centerfold portrait of David wearing his "luv" bead choker which you can duplicate by sending in only \$1. There's even advice on how "You Can Meet David!" with "actual photos and exact addresses for many of the places David spends his time!"

LOOMING OUT IN photos are the Laurel Canyon Cleaners — "David takes his cleaning and laundry here every couple of weeks!" — and the Canyon Country Store "where David often stops on his way home to pick up something quick for dinner!"

Boppers and teenyboppers, just don't you count on that. "I don't get mobbed really," says the 21-year-old object of all those junior affections, "because there are places I just don't go. If I were to go to Disneyland or the zoo — and the supermarket would be insane." To save his sanity, David has a roommate, a former film editor, Sam Hyman, who does those chores: It is Sam who goes to the cleaners and market.

SAM ALSO HANDLES a lot of merchandising for David; when David does a concert, Hyman sends pamphlets ahead to the cities. There's one called "David's Private Photo Album" with 87 shots of young Cassidy (88 if you count the reflection of Cassidy in the mirror). Another is "David's Concert Tour," with 50 photos. A third is "Dynamic David Cassidy," with a teenybop text ("David's Deepest Personal Secrets") but only a meager 24 poses.

Two *Partridge Family* LPs have sold more than a million copies apiece, and a Christmas album has prerelease orders totalling more than 500,000. A single, "I Think I Love You," has sold more than 5 million records; and when David was playing a concert date in Chicago, his first solo single, "Cherish," was selling the way Dr. Henry Kissinger sold Chou En-lai.

THERE ARE PARTRIDGE Family tie-ins like bubble gum, coloring books, lunch boxes, comic books, postcards, dolls — in fact, anything and everything that happens into the minds of master merchandizers. There are bootleg magazines with stories purportedly written by David: Screen Gems recently brought suit against a publisher in Chicago, although its Hollywood executives couldn't find a copy. The issue was immediately sold out.

Behind the closely-guarded gates of the Columbia ranch, where both *The Partridge Family* and the new Bobby Sherman show are filmed, I came upon David Cassidy talking to a reporter and photographer for a brand-new teen-age magazine that will appear the first week in January. Called *Star*, it's the latest brainchild of millionaire publisher Bob Peterson (*Hot Rod*). Each issue will feature a Superstar Superstar — and the

Joyce Haber



Superstars start with David.

CASSIDY, WITH HIS baby face, slight build and long silken brown hair, looks more like a Superpuppy. He's the current pet of the fickle set of kids who last year worshipped Bobby Sherman and Monkee Davy Jones. The day of my interview, the director who was shooting the *Partridge* segment was seven days behind schedule. Everyone on the set was uptight, most notably star Shirley Jones, who's David's normally cool stepmother in real life, and Cassidy himself.

They rehearsed and shot a minute-long scene over and over, with Shirley telling the director "It feels easier the other way" about a simple crossing. The next day David left for concerts in Miami and Tampa, returning Monday at 3:30 a.m.: His studio call was 7:30 on Monday. He's planning to visit Europe in December for a five-week vacation: "I can't wait. I'm just so tired," he said. Then added, "I haven't had time to get my passport. I gotta get a haircut, too."

We drove to the Yankee Peddler, a nearby Burbank restaurant, for lunch. Like many such studio-hangouts, its distinguishing feature is darkness. The maitre d' came forward: "Hi, Bobby," he greeted David, mistaking him for teen-age idol-competitor Bobby Sherman. Cassidy grunted. His thick brown eyebrows knitted together.

DAVID'S FATHER, JACK Cassidy, and his mother, actress-singer Evelyn Ward, were divorced when David was 5. Born in New York, an only child, David was raised in West Orange, N. J. When he was 10, his mother moved to California. He played basketball in high school and says: "That's the only sport I get into very much. I love the Lakers and UCLA. I go incognito down to the Inglewood Forum to see them. I've got this goatee they're making for me. Then I can put that on and my Panama hat and my dark glasses and no one knows who I am."

Cassidy always wanted to act: "My parents didn't discourage me or encourage me," he says. "They just told me to wait until I graduated from high school. I was thrown out of two schools. In the 10th grade, I used to cut classes. I couldn't stand it." He gestures, the family crest ring on his pinkie, a gift from his father, flashing.

"I heard about this private school, Rexford, that had five kids in a class. And I thought maybe they'd really teach something. I was behind because I'd failed, but I made it up. They'd deal with you like an individual. They'd say, 'What's wrong?'"

At school, David says, "I was into writing a lot and music. I was always into that. I mean all my life I've been singing and playing." He plays the electric guitar and the drums, and has written some songs with producer Wes Farrell of *Partridge*.