

Oh, Wow! Look! It's David Cassidy

'Bubblegum Brigade' Will Scream and Cry When Singing Star Bounds Onstage Saturday

By JOHN HUDDY
Herald Entertainment Editor

Don't whimper, ladies. young David Cassidy may not be your very own — but he isn't anyone else's either.

"Strangely, I really don't have much of a social life, I don't have any social life," the idol of several million sighing, screaming, squealing young teenagers admits.

"I have to be at the studio at 7:30 in the morning for the television show, and I'm working on the show until 6:30 p.m. in the evening. Then, in the evening, I go straight to the recording studio where I record until 12 or one in the morning. On the weekends, that's when I go on

DAVID CASSIDY: The hysteria can be frightening,' but Partridge Family' star says he really enjoys playing his teen idol part.

the road to do concerts, like the one in Miami this Saturday . . ."

cassiby relaxes in a Los Angeles studio of the American Broadcasting Company and momentarily he fades away because of a faulty telephone connection. There is a shuffle, a few awkward moments, and then Cassidy, extraordinarily polite and agonizingly soft-spoken, is back on the line.

". . . not that I'm complaining, although it's sorta hard. I really enjoy what I'm doing, everything that I'm doing. I've never even thought of doing anything else. But it's going to slow down, it has to."

Cassidy, 21, is what the pros call a Bubblegum idol. For reasons that even the shrewdest of agents and producers have never been quite able to pinpoint, the young actor with the young boy looks (he could easily pass for 15; his character on "The Partridge Family" is 17) does to young girls under 17 what the Beatles did to all of young America in the early 1960s.

ARRIVING AT Cassidy's sellout concerts by the thousands, the bubble-gum masses (so called for obvious reasons) spend most of their time on their feet screaming, bursting into tears, hugging and grabbing each other — and screaming some more.

A stranger from another land would think the young girls refugees from some terrible disaster. In fact, they are deliriously happy.

"The hysteria can frighten me," Cassidy says. "There have been times it really has. But then, you also know that they're not out to kill you. It's just emotion. Emotion at its peak."

Cassidy agrees that fortunately the howling hordes of young girls aren't in the same bag as are the cultural rip-off kids, the ones who are a few years older and who break down gates, assault ushers, and make a shambles of underground rock and even pop-jazz concerts.'

THERE WON'T be any Hell's Angels episodes at a David Cassidy concert, the singer says. Thank heavens!

"These kids aren't like adults," Cassidy says with more than a trace of affection. "Adults are much more hung up on their problems. They are more sober, more uptight. If they like you they are less likely to express their appreciation than do the kids, who become totally involved in a concert."

Cassidy is now 21 years old. How long can his sudden fame last — will Cassidy join the ranks of Fabian, Ricki Nelson and Frankie Avalon who found themselves out of work and trying to make comebacks — at the tender age of 25?

"I WILL OUTGROW the part on the television show," Cassidy says. "However, my character will grow with me. He's not going to be in high school forever. You can only play it down to a certain extent. But remember: The little kids who like me now will grow up, right with me."

Near the end of our conversation, Cassidy asks how the weather is in Miami. He's told it couldn't be more beautiful and I describe the Biscayne Bay scene from the Herald city room.

"Hey, that's great. I sure hope it stays that way by the time I get there," Cassidy says.

For an estimated 7,000 little ladies who'll pack the Miami Beach Convention Hall at 8 p.m. Saturday, one suspects it'll be a beautiful day even if there's a raging hurricane blowing up outside.