'Partridge Family' Mob Scene At Park

By Norman Mark

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MASON, O.

SHERIFF'S POLICE to the right of us, to the left of us and in front of us.

All around us the crowd is staring at our station wagon, and now the mob forms a narrow corridor, a gantlet held back by still more guards and police. It is the abnormal world of teen idol David Cassidy, star of ABC-TV's "The Partridge Family," and it is an uncomfortable place to be.

David and his TV family are filming an episode at King's Island, a new, sprawling $30,000,000 amusement center in Ohio, near several major highways and home of the country's largest animated fountains and Coney Island's original carousel.

David Cassidy

Just now about 25,000 persons have paid $6 for unlimited rides and the chance to see David when he walks!

There is a sea of cameras, and the teeny-boppers are dissolving into puddles of pure emotion. Moving David from the carousel to the watery log ride to film another scene has become a major logistical operation.

Inside the car, David toys with a bull horn. A woman in the front seat reminds him that his fans expect him to strike a heroic pose and look at them. He scowls at the suggestion; 1,000,000 girls under 24 would melt if they were personal recipients of a Cassidy frown. When she adds that it is a privilege to bring happiness to so many, David waves and smiles at the crowd, and enjoys the moment. Obviously he is a young (22) man who has come to grips with mass adulation.

Once the cars approach the trailers that will house the stars until they are needed for filming, everything stops. I cannot dash out of the car. We simply cannot walk anywhere. I must wait for the police to declare everything is safe, and for another cordon of police to form.

We can laugh at Danny Bonaduce, who plays David's brother, as he takes helium from a balloon and talks with an Elmer Fudd voice for a few moments.

A 50-man crew from Screen Gems, which produces "The Partridge Family," has been brought to this amusement park, about 40 minutes from Cincinnati.

"The Partridge Family" is now in its third year and needs refreshing if it is going to last another few years. So the program will travel, and Cassidy's TV mother, (and real stepmother) Shirley Jones, will get a semi-permanent love interest. Love usually increases the ratings.

In this episode, Cassidy falls in love with the amusement park's public relations girl, played by Mary Ann Mobley. After taking several rides in the park, she rejects him and a younger Partridge is smitten by her charms.

In the opening scene, David sings ("Woah, Girl, You Made My Day"). A select group of extras sits immediately in front of him as he sings — the sons and daughters of employes. The Partridges try nearly every ride in the park, going on the 61 mile-an-hour roller coaster and the carousel at least 10 times.