

DAVID CASSIDY is coming to Melbourne.

Screeeeech.

He'll be here about March.

And this young American superstar — not of the teenage set, not even of the teenybopper set, but of the so-called weenyboppers — will perform during Melbourne's Moomba celebrations.

Scree . . . ! No. If you please, no more wailing. You can spare the hysteria for the big arrival, for it seems this bloke enjoys so much adulation around the world that only a wholehearted effort will do when he sets his dainty foot upon Australian soil.

Now don't get me wrong. He's very big time by anyone's standards and he may even deserve the many dollars he has made as his reward for entertaining the world's 12-year-olds.

But he is also quite disturbing in many ways.

Pretty

For instance, it has been suggested that his style has been geared to appeal to both boys and girls. The boys think he is pretty and the girls think he is handsome and an irreverent reporter even noticed that he sometimes wears pants without a zipper in the front.

David Cassidy smiles a lot in public, looks like he could never hurt anyone — an admirable quality in this age of violence — and he has yet another trick up his sleeve: even the parents of the weenyboppers like him.

In his long-running TV series, "The Partridge Family," he made it a family affair because his real stepmother, Shirley Jones, played the part of his mother.

He makes the Beatles look like a pack of louts and Tom Jones positively indecent. Come to think of it, his public image is probably enough to make Minnie Mouse feel like a loose woman.

But it's all very different when this star — dubbed the lollipop millionaire — goes into action before his fans.

Mouth

They all scream. Often they faint. And at a London appearance, several leapt into the Thames because he was out in the middle on a boat.

In fact, a police chief at London airport blamed Cassidy for starting a riot — just because he stuck his head out of a car.

It can't be easy being a singer of 23 who has made so much money from his profession that he probably doesn't really feel like coming to Australia at all.

Said one a couple of years ago: "David Cassidy is a male Marilyn Monroe. He uses his green eyes in the half-closed position that made Marilyn irresistible. He uses his generous mouth, wide and inviting, to breathe much the same as Marilyn."

Yet another critic, who insisted that Cassidy was really four or five years older than his public age, said: "His appeal has been described as

a combination of the sweet-faced charm of the young Paul McCartney and that of an untarnished Mick Jagger."

Still, the critics get theirs. That first one, who likened Cassidy to Marilyn Monroe and later added that he tossed his bronze-colored hair around like Rita Hayworth, received letters so abusive they would have made a Pentridge warder blush.

Should Cassidy care? No, I suppose not.

He is going to appear here in that shrine called the MCG — where else could you fit all Melbourne's pre-teenagers — and one can easily imagine scenes reminiscent of the arrival in Australia of the Beatles with their Mersey beat and their version of long hair which, compared with

our David, now seems more like a crewcut.

Pity the poor police. Every time Cassidy wiggles they will probably have to turn back a stampede, and while they are nursing their bruises, the superstar will be jetting his way home.

This fellow who plays the teenager in "The Partridge Family" has worked hard, though.

Strain

The strain has been telling of late, according to one writer, and the young Cassidy has been ageing rapidly, it is claimed.

They said he would never last to become another Pres-

ley, but that hardly worries him. He plans to retire soon.

There may have been some exaggeration, but there have been estimates that in one recent six-month period alone he earned a million dollars from concerts.

That sort of strain many could take.

He has a lot of investments, he owns land in Hawaii and he will probably build his dream retirement home there.

And what about this bit of information to shock all the victims of Cassidy weenymania around the world. All this celebrated and adored and exciting superstar wants to do is breed horses and — wait for it — grow tomatoes.

Screeee . . . ! Oh, never mind.

