

A

RUSH

OF SOUND!

By Cliff Lorimer

Rush is a young, dynamic hard driving rock and roll trio from Toronto. They have been together for over six years, but have only recently come to the forefront of the North American music scene. They selected the name Rush as it clearly represented the high energy rock sound which they were performing. Occasionally the name becomes confusing to many American audiences since there are a number of small rather unsuccessful bar bands playing the U.S. who are also named Rush, and are trios. Similarly, Mahogany Rush of Montreal are occasionally confused with Toronto's Rush among people who are totally unfamiliar with either group. The point is that both groups are Canadian, and both are extremely successful in their own right at what they do.

During the Summer of 1974 Rush underwent a personnel change. Drummer John Rutsey, who appeared on their first album and singles was replaced by Neil Peart.

Neil, the newest member of Rush had some formal musical training as a child, but is basically a self-taught musician. At twenty-two years of age Neil is hoping to add that extra dimension to the future sound and development of Rush.

Seven and a half years of guitar playing by twenty-one-year-old Alex Lifeson is now paying off with the success of Rush. When you begin to examine a rock band in depth today, you will likely find a musician within the group who has had some classical music and formal training.

The third member of the group, and the focal point of Rush, twenty-one-year-old lead vocalist and bass player Geddy Lee began playing around the same time as Alex. He was originally a singer, and began playing bass later in his career. Geddy decided to combine these two talents into the culmination of Rush's full sound.

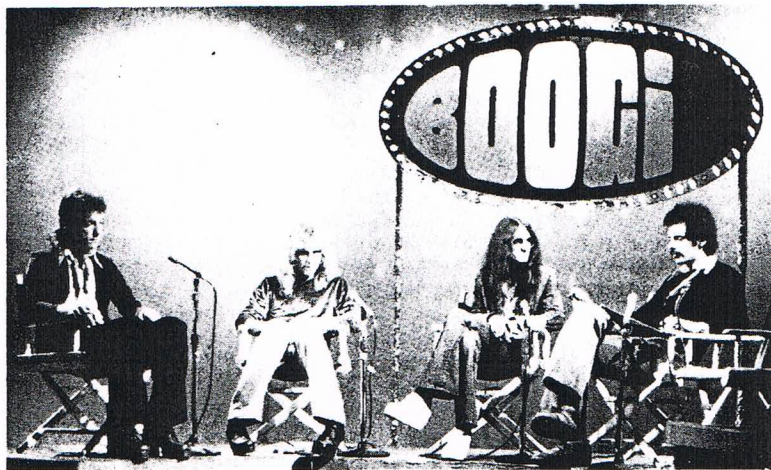
Neil has spent most of his life in the St. Catharines, Ontario area, spending two years in London, Ontario, and now living on a farm near the small town of Beamsville. Geddy and Alex are Torontonians. Educationally, Geddy found that school tended to be boring, and occupied too much of his time, taking away from his musical interest. Finally at Grade Eleven he decided to leave school and join Rush as a full time career, little knowing the group

would achieve the success they have to date. His only regret is that he didn't continue his studies of English and History, two subjects in which he was most interested. Alex was a Grade Twelve honour graduate. Neil like Geddy, left school around the same time prior to graduation for much the same reasons. He has since become "self educated". While in school he found he was not paying attention to anything around him and instead was writing the names of his favorite bands, artists and songs rather than his school work. His entire life was surrounded by a world of music.

Rush are a rather young group to have attained the recognition and success they now hold. The road has not been an easy one for them and they, like any successful group, have had to pay their dues in dingy bars and night clubs.

Geddy recalled his first recording session as a member of Rush. At the time the group were performing the nightclub circuit in downtown Toronto, and following their last set of one such performance, they rushed over to a Toronto recording studio where they were to work all night on their first single "Not Fade Away". This, unfortunately, does not appear on their first album as they felt it was poorly produced. The tapes of these sessions were taken to the renowned recording engineer, Terry Brown, of Toronto Sound Studios, and were arranged and mixed by him. He was able to achieve the sound they were looking for. They were extremely pleased with Terry's work. As Geddy put it "he's a marvelous engineer."

"Not Fade Away" and "You Can't Fight It," were simple boogie tunes. The band were uncertain of their musical direction at this point in their career, and merely wanted to make a single of the loudest rock possible. When I asked the group whether or not the single's failure to climb the charts in Canada was a disappointment to them Alex replied, "not at all," but Geddy took a different viewpoint. He was rather disappointed as he had been led to believe that this was a top selling single, and he felt that the music and arrangements were good but the production was not up to scratch. They also credit its failure to their lack of recording experience at that time. Now that Neil has joined the band, Rush have no plans of ever recording these tunes



Appearing on a new television show on CITY-TV in Toronto, members of Rush returned from a US tour to be interviewed by CHUM-FM personality Brian Master (right). From left to right are Rush members Neil Peart, with composer-musicians Alex Lifeson and Geddy Lee.

again, so for Rush fans this original single will become a collector's item in the years ahead. The group noted that the style of their music is definitely changing and developing since those early days, with all three members contributing to the writing and arranging of new material. Most of their writing is done here in Toronto although ideas are formulated on the road in hotel rooms. It is almost impossible to write loud metallic rock music using acoustic guitars in a hotel room.

The group's first album simply entitled *Rush*, first came out in Canada in the early part of 1974, but up until over six months ago the album was not released in the U.S. At this point the group, along with manager Vic Wilson signed a contract for American distribution with Mercury Records. Now all future Rush albums will be distributed in Canada through Polydor Records, although they will still appear on their own Moon Record label.

When the album and singles were first released, many people felt that Rush, and especially lead vocalist Geddy Lee, was simply emulating the style and sound of Robert Plant lead vocalist with England's Led Zeppelin. Geddy explained this situation, and attempted to clear it up once and for all. "It seems when anybody has a voice that is high, or can sing in a high range, using a screaming style, people automatically compare you to Robert Plant." Geddy regards his style of music as being his own, and not a direct copy of Zeppelin. It upsets him to hear people say that he is trying to copy these British groups when he is merely attempting to sing good rock and roll in the Geddy Lee style. When the members of Rush were young and getting into the writing of music, Led Zeppelin were one of the top bands in that style of music during the mid-sixties, and obviously some of this influence was bound to rub off on Rush. Geddy believes that these influences will become less obvious when you hear the music contained in their second album which they hope will be available sometime in March.

The group are surprising and overwhelming audiences throughout the U.S. as they appear as an opening act giving them a musical rush of sound which they had not expected from this rather unknown Canadian trio. During their young career

[continued on next page]