

'Angels' best of Bad Co.

By ED WILLIAMS

I was driving down the road with one hand on the wheel and one hand on the FM tuner, in search of some good, heavy rock 'n' roll.

Suddenly the guitar riffs I sought appeared. The song was already kicking out full force by the time I caught up with it.

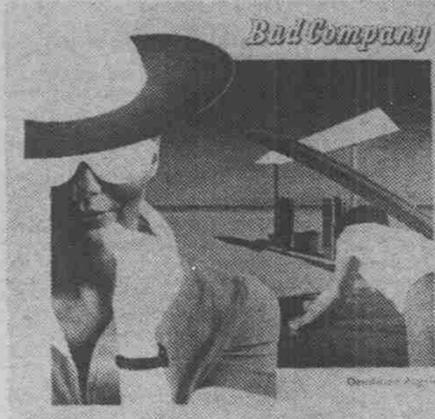
The fuzz-toned guitar I thought I'd heard a million times had a fresher sound, but when the vocalist intoned, "It's all part of my rock 'n' roll fantasy," I knew I was indeed listening to Paul Rogers and Bad Company.

But hadn't all of the group died of an overdose of commercialism and complacency? Weren't they too old for rock 'n' roll? Couldn't Mick Ralphs only learn three chords, starving the band of material?

All of my fears were put to rest as the disc jockey announced Bad Company has bounced back with a new album, "Desolation Angels."

Desolation Angels is possibly the best album Bad Company has produced. The mixture of heavyweight rock and standard easy-electric ballads that always accompany a Bad Company album are present and are as ear-catching and melodic as ever.

Paul Rogers now plays guitar as well as handling the vocals, performing superbly in both roles. Rogers has kept his tendency to ooh and aah throughout his numbers, but now he sticks to hitting the right notes at the right time, as evidenced by the songs



"Crazy Circles" and "Early in the Morning."

Rogers also wails out a top-notch scream vocal on the hard-driving "Lonely For Your Love" with an urgency that assures the reader he has been lonely for a long time.

Desolation Angels is interesting and varied. "Crazy Circles" is an acoustic song with a flamenco-style guitar solo and a flighty, foot-tapping beat. "Oh, Atlanta" begins with a harmonica blast, interspersed with guitar riff cuts.

"Lonely for Your Love" immediately struck me as a close cousin to "Can't Get Enough," the group's first single hit. It's pure rock, no frills.

The most interesting cut is "Take the Time," basically an acoustic tune that flows for the first few bars, then turns abruptly to a staccato rhythm chorus, tied together by slide guitar.

I'm glad I sneaked some money out of my book budget to purchase *Desolation Angels*. I may end up a couple of books short this summer session, but at least I'll have a great album to enjoy long after I check out my grades, no matter how depressing they might be.

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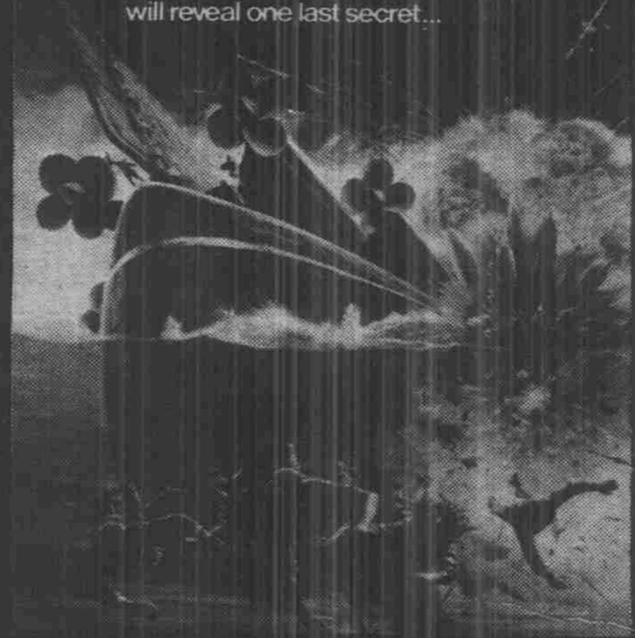
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