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Produced by PHILIP SPENGLER Directed by RICHARD LESTER for ALEXANDER and GUY SALIKIND Production

Original Soundtrack Available on Warner Bros. Records & Video

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# ARTS

## 'The Fox' finds 'Fantastic form' as Elton proves somebody wins

By CLIFTON BARNES

Elton John's new album *The Fox* is a pleasant combination of mature rock 'n' roll and easy listening. Surely John's best work since 1975's *Captain Fantastic*, *The Fox* features Brown Dirt Cowboy Bernie Taupin, who wrote four of the songs, including the title cut.

And for mile after mile you'll  
never see me tire  
You'll never see me slow down,  
for a while  
'Cause I am the fox, like it  
or not  
I'm always gonna be there  
running over the rock  
Yes I am the fox, a fascinating cross  
Of sharp as a whip and tough as an ox  
Yes I am the fox

The album takes on almost self-applauding, maybe even conceited proportions as John sings "The Fox" and "Elton's Song." Although Tom Robinson wrote the words to "Elton's Song," with both songs on the same album and back-to-back, it seems a little much. Still, "Elton's Song" is beautiful music to sleep by.

The London Symphony joins in on two instrumentals on the album. "Carla/Etude," a la "Funeral for A Friend," features John's piano and the violin section. "Fanfare" is a short synthesizer-dominated song by James Newton Howard.

Two mid-tempo songs "Heart in the Right Place" and "Fascist Faces" are the biggest disappointments on the album, especially the latter. "Faces" is an eerie, mechanical song with unimpressive words by Taupin while the bluesy "Heart in the Right Place" drags on.

"Just like Belgium" and "Chloe" could be the two sleepers on the album. Belgium is a fast-paced selection which would have fit right in on *Captain Fantastic*. "Chloe" is a typically beautiful Elton John love song.

## Records

Oddly enough, the only song that John or Taupin did not write is the AM hit "Nobody Wins." Gary Osborne, who wrote John's last smash song "Little Jeannie," provides the lyrics while Jean-Paul Dreau handles the music. But what makes the song popular is John's forceful, emotional singing. By another singer the song probably would not be the huge money-maker it has become.

Another John-Osborne combination tune "Breaking Down Barriers" has been selected by Geffen Records, John's new label, as the next hit. The song is upbeat as is "Nobody Wins," but it sounds more like John's old rock 'n' roll. Former band members Nigel Olsson and Dee Murray sit in on this and two other songs — "Heels of the Wind" and "The Fox."

"Heels of the Wind" is typical John-Taupin pop rock, but it is slightly over-instrumentalized as the music drowns out the singing in parts. But "The Fox" is just the opposite — John's singing and Taupin's words dominate. Taupin wrote the song about and for John:

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