

Executives are all business

By JEANNIE REYNOLDS

These Executives don't wear suits and they don't worry much about corporate finance, but they do mean business. Tony Sharpe, Henry Hutton, Steve Worrell and Rudy Mullins, all students at UNC or N.C. State, got together this past summer to form the rock band The Executives; and they have been busy ever since.

"We always play for a full crowd," said Hutton, a junior materials engineer major at NCSU who handles bass guitar and vocals. "We play late nights a lot, 11-12:00 to 5:00. It's rough on us but we love it. We get along with the frats real well."

The band has been together since last July. It has played at a number of fraternities and dorms at UNC and NCSU, as well as P.C. Goodtimes in Raleigh and Great Hall on the UNC campus. Their first public performance was Tony Sharpe's birthday party.

"I threw myself a birthday party and decided that instead of playing tapes that we would play," said Sharpe, a junior RTVMP major at UNC, who takes care of rhythm guitar and vocals for the band.

"We started getting paid in August. Before that, everytime we'd play it was 'the last time we're going to play free,'" he said.

They started out, said Sharpe, with rented amplifiers and a guitar and bass that cost thirty dollars apiece.

Both Hutton and Sharpe said that Mullins and Worrell are the ladies' men of the group.

"Some girl asked Steve for his drumsticks not long ago," Sharpe said. "But usually Rudy gets all the girls. He's quiet and they like that."

Worrell, a junior accounting major at UNC, plays drums and sings for the group. Mullins, an electrical engineering major at NCSU, plays lead guitar.

In spite of the female fans, Hutton said that they do not do many slow, romantic songs. He called what they play dancible rock, fun music.

"We rock and roll the whole time," Sharpe said. "The audience keeps us going. It's a joint effort. We're not like most rock and roll bands."

"Most bands try to be really cool. But a band is only as good as its fans, and we get a lot of people who come back every time to have fun with us."

Hutton said that they liked to get personal with the crowd, to stop for breaks and talk with people.

They also believe in keeping on good terms with the people who hire them to play. They manage themselves, because they prefer being a hassle-free band.

"We don't give people we play for a hassle and they don't give us a hassle," Sharpe said. "If we had a manager, he'd want us to play at the beach one night, the mountains the next. We can't travel like that. But we've never gotten a raw deal anywhere that we've played."

Part of their secret to success is keeping a clear head while they are performing.

"We don't drink before (playing) and not much during," Hutton said. "Only then it's just to clear our throats and most of the time we drink water anyway."

Sharpe stressed that none of the band members uses drugs or drink very much. He said that they were just an all-American, clean-cut band.



Steve Worrell
... drummer for the New Wave band, The Executives

"You're on a natural high when you quit," he said. "Sometimes we get tired after 5 hours (of playing). Everybody's partying and you want to be partying too or with your girlfriend."

"But then you look at the crowd and they're clapping and partying and it picks you up. You really get a sense of accomplishment when they clap for your own stuff (original lyrics and music). I feel sorry for bands who don't do any of their own songs."

Sharpe said that the band was a great outlet for his poetry and songs. Sharpe and Hutton write songs together, while Mullins and Worrell make up the real musical talent of the group.

"We (Sharpe and Hutton) write all of the

original stuff," Sharpe said. "Henry writes the slow, love ballads and we write the rock and roll songs together."

The big challenge, he said, is putting the original songs in front of an audience for the first time.

"You find out what it's really worth. It's like putting out your painting or your book," Sharpe said. "It's really scary to do your own stuff."

"At first everyone sits there. Then their heads move, then feet, and if they like it they smile, you smile and everyone gets off. If they don't like it you are scared the whole time you are doing it, nobody claps and you go on to the next song really quick."

They said that a lot of their songs reflected their own experiences, and that they write about life, in general.

"Mostly girl stuff," Sharpe said. "Like Love is Just a Game, that I wrote during Christmas when I was between girls."

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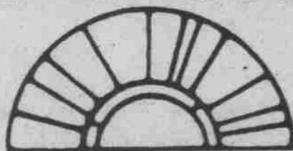
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