



JUNE 1981

R.A.F.

R.A.F. is a six-piece band from Scotland that draws on the wealth of traditional American rock and roll and expands on it with modern synthesizer technology. "We model ourselves after the classic American rock and roll sounds of bands like Boston, Foreigner and Steely Dan," says Doug Bogie, one of the founders of R.A.F.

Bogie is originally from southern England. He had been in many bands before moving behind the boards in the early '70's, a decision that eventually took him to Edinburgh to assume the controls at a 16-track studio. While there he met David Valentine, an aspiring singer/songwriter who was writing radio jingles while singing in pubs.

The two musicians formed the nucleus of R.A.F. in early 1978, and made the rounds of London record companies with no luck. They saved their money to fly to California, where one of their first stops was A&M. A&M Vice-President David Kershenbaum (producer of such artists as Joe Jackson, Peter Frampton and Cat Stevens) signed and placed them in a London studio within weeks, with himself at the helm as producer.

Their first album, *R.A.F.*, featured Bogie and Valentine on all instruments, with drummer Tom Annan sitting in on several cuts. Producer Kershenbaum described it as "melodic with a hard edge based around keyboards." After the album was completed, R.A.F.'s line-up was expanded to include Annan, Billy McGhee on bass and vocals, and Peter-John Vettese on keyboards and vocals. The three musicians had been playing in bar bands for years: in their native Scotland, in front of traditionally finicky audiences, where only exact covers of popular songs are accepted—and their precision and skill were exactly what Bogie and Valentine needed. Another Scottish musician, Rab Howatt, recently joined R.A.F. as a guitarist and vocalist. This will enable Bogie to concentrate on honing R.A.F.'s live and studio sound to their exact wishes.

As a result of Bogie and Valentine's years of combined studio experience, and their definite ideas as to the kind of sound they wanted from R.A.F., it was decided to let them produce *The Heat's On*, their second album. *The Heat's On*, which was recorded over a period of five weeks in Surrey, England and in Scotland, continues R.A.F.'s exploration into a synthesizer-based traditional rock and roll sound. "Ours is not a token keyboard," asserts Bogie. "We want to make it as exciting as possible." And the songs, written by Valentine and arranged by the band, offer full proof of that.

The Heat's On is filled with songs like "Stop Her On Sight," "I Can't Get Started" and "Easy Come Is Easy Go"—catchy pop melodies dominated, but not overpowered by full, intricate synthesizer sounds. They're familiar enough to be immediately accepted by rock fans, yet different enough to stand out.

