

FIST

"This band's a foundry; it's fiery and everyone's metal is tested to the limit. There's no pulling back, the basements are filled with young, hungry rock bands ready to take you out. Nobody takes FIST out"...RON CHENIER.

Fighting words from one who looks fully capable of backing them up. Ron is the lead guitar player with FIST, a power-punching rock quartet out of suburban West End Ottawa, "We play loud, but not hurtin' loud", says the husky Chenier, "and we pay a lot of attention to sound quality."

"We relate to the audience on a personal level. We get very direct" says JEFF NYSTROM, the other side of the rock-myth coin. "Just the fact of being onstage means you're dealing with people's expectations; the band has to appear larger than life". Nystrom is blond, with pop-star good looks and boyish charm. He's the one the little girls understand..."among ourselves it's a joke; we call it FIST fever.

These two very different men, their styles and how they merge is the nexus of FIST. Both sing lead vocals, both write and the diversity inherent in having two singer-songwriters gives FIST a wide field of approach. The range runs from NYSTROM's soft-pop workouts to CHENIER's heavy rock thrashers. Somewhere in the centre of these two cyclones is FIST music; an assertive brand of melodic hard-rock, like the new trends in British heavy metal.

..."We're sure of our music, we're sure of our direction", says Nystrom, "but the bottom line is putting out our music on stage flawlessly. We aim for a live sound that's as close to our recorded sound as we can get. We keep all the individual parts simple but they're pieced together carefully so the end result is a layered, intricate sound. We're a very dynamic band; keeping the parts simple means more attention can be paid to performing."

Indeed, this outfit shows a commitment to producing a distinctive, high-quality sound that's exceptional for such a young band. "We've got well-crafted tunes and we do 'em strong and solid", says Chenier. "If we start bending, we'll never be identified, we'll lose our strength. You're performing for 100 minutes a night so you owe it to the audiences to put out 100% for that time. If

you can't handle that you should get off the stage".

Last winter word of FIST's high-energy, wired up live performances began spreading into wider circles and confident older men in satin jackets started turning up at their shows, the air was thick with promises and demos; "We'll make you this, we'll make you that..." FIST stuck uncompromisingly to their dukes and eventually connected with A&M.

Five sizzling week in the studio with producer GEORGE SEMKIW and FIST had their first lp, titled HOT SPIKES. Commenting on their lightning fast recording pace, Chenier shrugs like mountain and offers that "it comes from knowing what you want and having a producer that believes in you".

Coincidental with the album release, the band, (Ron, lead guitar; Jeff, bass; John Chenier, drums; and Ed Eagan, keyboards) will play a series of dates in Ontario. It'll be the first exposure for area audiences to the band's unique blend of soft-pop melodies built around a rock-hard centre.

