

Performer Don Cooper: On Record as a Success

By Randy Mink
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During spring break in his senior year, Don Cooper, Ed '69, left Columbia for New York and decided if he was offered a good recording contract, he wouldn't return to the University for his degree.

In January Cooper came back to Columbia for a vacation from a heavy schedule of concerts in which he sings on bills with such performers as James Taylor and Joni Mitchell and the Chicago and Guess Who rock groups. His third album was released January 15.

While an English education student here, he took "any little job" he could get, playing at places like the Ivanhoe (now Romano's) and the Chez.

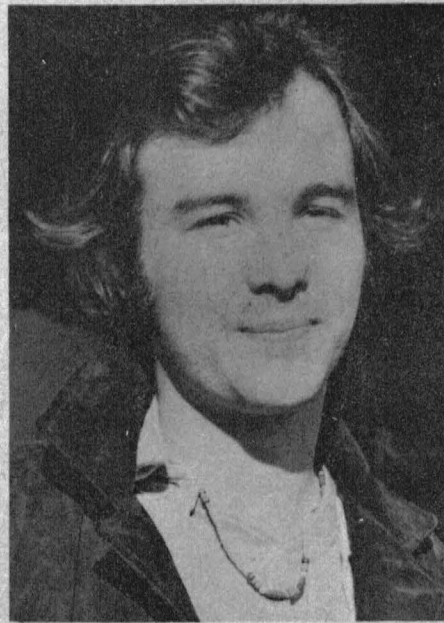
Recently, he just completed a year and a half touring the United States and Europe as the opening act with the Blood Sweat and Tears.

Every concert is memorable for him in some way, but the one last year in Brewer Fieldhouse with the BS&T was a special kick, he said.

A difference he noted between American and European audiences is that "European audiences are much more appreciative. They're more attentive and there to listen."

In America, on the other hand, "a name will draw them more than the music. Many are there to see who it is they've heard on the radio."

In almost every U.S. city where



he performs, Cooper said he meets old friends from somewhere who have come to see his show. Often, however, he and his old acquaintances have gone in different directions and can no longer relate to each other.

He doesn't feel, however, his relationship with the friends he visited in Columbia has been affected by his success. But with success, Cooper said he is "getting spoiled" because of certain living comforts he can take for granted.

"Like I can get a new pair of jeans when I need a pair of jeans," he said.

The first time he left for New York he said he went with confidence but admitted "sometimes I

had to talk myself into the confidence."

As a boy, Cooper said he always made up songs, and in eighth grade he got a ukulele for "something to do, a little escape." Then he went on to guitar and played with rock bands as he moved from school to school in St. Paul, Milwaukee, and Kansas City.

Among the musicians he looked up to were Bob Dylan, the Beatles, and Fred Neal, an obscure folk-blues artist, "a musician's musician," he said.

Cooper's new album, "Ballad of C. P. Jones," was named after his grandfather and most of the songs are written by Cooper himself. The title song tells of Jones and how he got a job grading roads in Minnesota.

Then after the roads got paved, he lost his job. From this story, Cooper said, he tries to make a point about change.

Other songs on the album are all different and Cooper said they have no common theme. And Cooper said he neither wants to be classified as a folk, rock, or blues singer — just contemporary."

His first two albums were called simply "Don Cooper" and "Bless the Children," named after a popular single of his.

Cooper said his name is better known on the East Coast, but "it will only be a matter of time and more air play" before he catches on in the Midwest. □

HOMER C. THAYER, MS, has been appointed administrative assistant in the Juvenile Court of Boone and Callaway Counties.

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THOMAS BISHOP, EdD, has been named an assistant professor of mathematics at Arkansas State University, Jonesboro.

DONALD L. DAY, AB, BJ, is assigned to the U.S. Army Intelligence School, Fort Holabird, Md. He also writes for a local suburban weekly, *The Dundalk Eagle*.

RITA ECKELKAMP, AB, is a Pan American stewardess, based in New York.

LYNN P. FAIVRE, BJ, has been made county courthouse reporter for the *San Antonio (Tex.) Express and News*.

JACK W. FRIEZE, JD, is with the tax, insurance and claims department of Phillips Petroleum Company, Midland, Tex.

LARRY E. HARRELSON, AM, is information services librarian, with the rank of assistant professor, at Bizzell Memorial Library, University of Oklahoma, Norman. He has administrative responsibility for a lower division library, the information desk, inter-library loan, and the circulation department.

JOHN C. HOCKEMEIER, BJ, has accepted a position with General Electric Com-

pany in the advertising and public relations department. He has begun his duties in Schenectady, N.Y.

DALE KLEIN, BS ME, a graduate student in mechanical and aerospace engineering on the Columbia campus, viewed the launching of Apollo 14 by invitation of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

ROSE MARY RUDD, BS Ed, is teaching art at Sumner High School, St. Louis.

GARY A. WALLING, BS ME, has been named an associate performance engineer in the nuclear equipment department at Babcock and Wilcox Company's power generation division headquarters in Barberton, O.