

## THE SMALL FACES: UNDER REVIEW (Limited Collector's Edition)

Reviewed by Winslow Leach



**THE REVIEW:** The Small Faces are one of the most legendary British pop groups of the 1960s. The group hailed from London and were led by Steve Marriott. The band represented the "Mod" scene along with bands like The Who. This new DVD looks at the bands progression from the bright beginnings to the bitter end.

After meeting in a music store in the early 60s, Steve Marriott and Ronnie Lane began playing together and the core of the group was formed. Soon after, Steve and Ronnie brought in their friends Kenny Jones and Jimmy Winston and they began rehearsing together moving from small East End pubs to more elite clubs. The band were certainly not well tuned but they continued to play and get more tight. One important thing Steve Marriot had going for him was his great voice which definitely had a raw soulful sound. The

band was soon discovered by a singer named Elkie Brooks who was impressed by Steve's voice and put them in touch with a club owner, Maurice King. Soon after, Jimmy Winston was let go from the group and another Mod on the scene, Ian McLagan was brought on.

The first gig they played in Sheffield went sour and they were kicked out, but they then entered a Mod club down the road called the Mojo Club, they performed for free, put on a really explosive set and wound up causing a huge buzz with the local kids. During this time, they were also supported by none other than Sonny & Cher who were living in London at that time and had heard about their popularity. The band quickly became to the attention of Don Arden and were signed to the Decca Records label. They went on to release a bunch of real bubblegum pop-soul songs. Their debut single "Whatcha Gonna Do About It" was a small hit and the follow up single "I Got Mine" didnt do too well either. The next single "Sha La La La Lee" was their first really big hit. They then released their first album The Small Faces and continued touring clubs and performing on TV. Their biggest hit from the debut LP was "All Or Nothing" a really solid anthemic song which shot to #1 on the charts in the UK. After a falling out with Don Arden, The Small Faces left Decca and were immediately signed to the Immediate label which was started by ex-Rolling Stones manager Andrew Loog Oldham. The band continued to make great soulful R&B fused rock music.

The single "Here Comes The Nice" signaled a change in sound & direction for the

group. Now they were moving into a more psychedelic arena with songs commenting on drug use and flower power. Their single "Itchykoo Park" was a big hit and even became a popular song on the US charts, this was another psychedelic themed song which was followed by the wild single "Tin Soldier", which is regarded as one of the best recordings of their career. The finale of the band's time together as an outfit was the 1968 album "Nut Gone Flake" (featuring a round cover design patterned after a tobacco tin). The album was a far-out concept album featuring five original songs on Side A and a psychedelic musical tale on Side B. The album was a hit with critics and fans alike but it was nearly impossible to duplicate the LP onstage when the band was to go on tour. Another single from this album was "Lazy Sunday". The last official single released during The Small Faces' run as a band was "The Universal", a song that Steve Marriott recorded live in his backyard on a tape recorder complete with natural noises like dogs barking. The single did very poorly.

In 1969, Steve Marriott decided to quit the band and he started a new band called Humble Pie with a young guitar prodigy named Peter Frampton. The remaining Faces (Ronnie Lane, Kenny Jones and Ian McLagan) didn't do very much until they decided to join up with ex-Yardbirds, ex-Jeff Beck Group guitarist Jeff Beck, Rod Stewart and Ron Wood. They went on to release one more album as The Small Faces before becoming The Faces and then Rod Stewart & The Faces. The group broke up in 1975, but came back together once again to film some music videos for Lazy Sunday and Itchykoo Park which both made it into the Top 40.

## **THE DVD**

**REGION: 0**

**STUDIO: Chrome Dreams UK**

**FILM SPECS: Presented in (4:3) Fullscreen. Color/Black and White.**

**EXTRAS: Small Faces Trivia Quiz - Discography - Steve Marriott Concert Info.**

**AUDIO: Stereo Sound Mix.**

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