



Let There Be Brian, and

LIKE AC/DC? As in, a whole lotta AC/DC? If so, check out this massive 41 track/2-DVD set. Hardcore Angus-phile will dig that the first disc is devoted to the Bon Scott era, ca. 1975-'80 (Scott

The Spencer Davis Group *Gimme Some Lovin': Live 1966* Music Video Distributors

In hindsight, maybe naming the band The Spencer Davis Group wasn't the greatest idea. This issue is raised, rather indelicately, in an interview from the 1966 Finnish television performance that occupies the first third of this DVD. While the band is on lunch break, a young interviewer asks the bandleader, "Every group has a face; don't you think that Stevie is the face of the Spencer Davis Group?"

Winwood sits quietly across the table while Davis tries to be diplomatic and keep his dignity intact. But the point is brought into sharper focus during the performance segments, which reveal Winwood, all of 18 and still struggling with acne, already a quadruple threat – lead guitarist, keyboardist, vocalist extraordinaire, and burgeoning song-

Photo courtesy Kicking Mule.

the developed the massive wall-of-Marshall tone for which they'd become famous. Tracks on the Bon Scott era are "It's a Long Way to the Top (If You Wanna Rock 'n' Roll)" from 1976, taped the back of a flatbed truck zipping through downtown Melbourne, Australia (with pipers, to boot!), and the classic "Whole Lotta Rosie" from a 1978 BBC program. You've never seen Scott in action, it's a revelation – the man was an incredibly charismatic front man, perhaps more than Johnson. Nevertheless, you also get the famed AC/DC anthems from both eras in promotional form: "Hell's Bells," "You Shook Me All Night Long," and one of the great concert tracks of all time, "For Those About to Rock" (replete with cannons). The only track I missed was the barn-burner, "Shoot to Thrill."

Other than that, *Family Jewels* contains enough SGs, Gretsches, and walls of Marshalls to satisfy your shameless gear lust. Whether you need 40 full-length video clips to quench your AC/DC fever is between you and

DVD

writer. Clearly, his destiny was not to be the front man in a group bearing someone else's name, and in fact he split to form Traffic the following year.

Even today, the aspect of Winwood's multi-pronged attack that comes as a surprise to people is his guitar playing. But the same player who would provide the lead work on "Dear Mr. Fantasy" and spar with Clapton on *Blind Faith* was a startlingly authentic, passionate blues player early on, as he displays here. Much like his almost inexplicably mature vocals, his guitar (a Strat in the middle position, played with a thumppick, through a Marshall) transcends the folky, clip-clop country

feel of "Mean Woman Blues." And when he switches to Hammond, his playing is equally impeccable, on a killer rendition of "Georgia" and the group's two Top 10 hits from that year, "Gimme Some Lovin'" and "I'm A Man," both co-written by Winwood.

The strengths of the other three-fourths of the group shouldn't be minimized. Older brother Muff Winwood's Harmony bass provided massive low-end; Peter York was a superb, jazz-influenced drummer; and Davis, seven years Stevie's senior, was a more-than-capable vocalist (as illustrated here on "Dust My Blues") and obviously a great talent scout. But with the younger Winwood being such an

overwhelming presence, and growing by leaps and bounds, the handwriting was on the wall.

The remainder of the DVD consists of an hour-long documentary for German television, on Davis and the 1967 edition of the group – with York still onboard, Phil Sawyer on lead, and Eddie Hardin on organ. It's a bit anticlimactic and difficult to watch in spots if you don't understand the German narrator, but the studio scene of the band transforming "I'm A Man" into a jingle for Great Shakes (hey, so did the Who and Yardbirds) is a hoot.

But it's the eight live songs by the original lineup that are worth the admission price. – **DF**

of his original trio, but the players make this special. They play Monk's "Bolivar Blues" and Steve Swallow's "Charlie Chan." The latter is bop heaven, at a pace not designed for the normal human heart or normal guitarist's fingers. Scofield navigates the changes with the nerves of a thief. It's chorus after chorus of brilliant soloing. Afterward, Pullen blows the lid off before Smith runs through rolls and fills that leave you hooting at their speed and preci-

what this music is about, and both players really shine in this segment.

The last five cuts are his quartet at the time; Joe Lovano on tenor, Anthony Cox on bass, and John Reilly on drums. They do four Scofield originals and as you'd expect, they're pretty complex, harmonically. But all of the players nail their parts. This DVD, although 15 years old, is a rare treat. Sco will love it. If you haven't joined the club, check it out. – **JH**

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