



BEST NEW BAND

BLIND MELON

GROOVIN' W

All hail BLIND MELON! They're the five-piece who woke up America with their hippy, trippy Folk Metal overtures, and who scooped our Best New Band category! HUGH HACKETT talks bumble bees and philosophy with vocalist SHANNON HOON ...

CRACKLING DOWN the line from Vancouver ("the city that loves me"—Hoon was arrested there for performing the bulk of a concert in the buff!), vocalist Shannon Hoon is way too tired to be overwhelmed with the news that his group, Blind Melon, have been voted Best New Band in the RAW Readers' Poll.

"Well, that's pretty cool," he drawls before revealing that such accolades don't really

interest him. "I don't care too much about polls and things like that, but anything that lets you know you have support from people is cool I guess. I'm very flattered and I'm very surprised."

"I've been in a bubble for about the last year and a half, and you hear things like, 'Wow, you guys are doing really well', but my daily routine hasn't really changed, and everything else is just words ..." he tails off, before perking up with the cheery announcement, "I finally get my own hotel room, that's kind of

nice! I can get away from the guys for a while, I'm ready to kill them!"

Nineteen ninety-three has been something of a momentous year for Blind Melon, with the outrageous Stateside success of their 'No Rain' single (from the band's eponymously titled debut album) garnering the five-piece massive exposure.

"It all caught on the last corner. We're ready to record a new record, and I think now we'll be maturing in the public eye. It seems like there's this invisible

man watching over us; everybody's trying to find something wrong with us now. But the people who listen to our music know where we're coming from ... so if a bee girl floats down the middle of a shopping mall somewhere I think the people who know what we're about will know we didn't have anything to do with that!

"You just have to laugh and not let it affect you. I've always believed the more you have, the more you have to lose. It's kind of a sketchy thing and you just learn to keep it at arms length. We're still a young band, and if people don't expect too much out of us, they won't be disappointed!"

Hoon, in case you haven't guessed, is one of life's laid back individuals. He is loathe to set

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any definite goals for the next 12 months, preferring to take each moment as it comes.

"Well, I didn't really expect anything that happened last year. 'No Rain' was the last single we released from the record, and then we were gonna go make a new record, and we had no idea 'No Rain' was gonna take off like it did. We never try to organise anything. It seems like the most f**ked-up things that have happened to us have been when we tried to organise stuff. When we just left it alone, just let something happen spontaneously, that's when things were the most fruitful."

THE BAND'S only definite plan right now is one more round of American shows over the next few months.

After that they'll be knuckling down to album number two, with Hoon's reckoning that "in four or five months hopefully we'll be finishing it up."

Not surprisingly, they've already made some inroads for the as-yet-untitled album:

"We have probably five or six songs," says Hoon, "but there's a lot of things we haven't had a chance to work out; there's a lot of parts. We're going off in different directions, I don't know where it's going to happen ..."

Once the album has been signed, sealed and delivered, Britain seems finally to be in line for some Blind Melon headlining dates.

"You know the one thing we haven't had the chance to do that we really wanna do is a

club tour of Europe," acknowledges Hoon. "Do a smaller-level tour. The last couple of times we went over there we played on big tours. Now we really want to play more intimate settings."

Which would be a far cry from the band's major UK exposure last May, opening for Guns N' Roses at Milton Keynes ...

"Those shows were so huge. I get sketched out in a room with more than 30 people in it. When there's 65,000 people looking at me, I subconsciously build a big wall. You feel like you're supposed to be the song and dance man to make everybody smile - which is not how it is."

Most recently, the Melons briefly tripped round this Isle on Lenny Kravitz's furry coat-tails.

"The tour was great, I had no

idea how huge Lenny is in Europe. I had a really good time on that tour. Lenny is really cool.

"The crowd were mad for Lenny. They even chanted for him when we were playing!" laughs Hoon with no trace of bitterness. "It only happened a couple of times, but when it did we played longer just to spite them!"

Now, having received such a major thumbs-up from that most discerning of sources, the RAW reader, Hoon need have little fear of such catcalls permeating his performances again. Indeed, he can look forward to seeing Britain in 1994 going much the same way as America did in '93. Meantime, watch out for low-flying bumble bees and naked young men gracing the UK stages! ■