

FROLIC IN THE PARK
Devonport Domain, Feb 28.

It's been quiet of late. Not that there has been a glut of gigs, discounting the Stylee Crew who are everywhere and anywhere. 'New' bands have been thin on the ground. Frolic In The Park offered three newer bands in the small print. Peoplehood and Braintree have been round the traps, not so Shovel-fingers. This, their debut gig, saw a standard band with standard lineup i.e. one guitar, bass, drums, vocals. They tried to excite the mounting crowd that was gathering in the Devonport Domain. They didn't achieve this aim, presenting a motley selection of originals and Morrissey's 'Interesting Drug'. Interesting would be the strongest word to use here. Not all their fault. They were well-rehearsed and very together for a debut outing.

Unfair to lump them together, but if there hadn't been a short vocal interlude in between, you might not have noticed the difference. Braintree and Peoplehood are young. Hell, half of them are probably still at High School. They both play what can only be called rock. Rock? Electric guitars, epic vocals, lead breaks, drums and bass together, emphasis on the backbeat. They both play it tight, with some reticence, not due in any way to enthusiasm, their technical ability is still developing. So are their song-writing skills. Braintree opted for the original approach. Peoplehood turned in a set dotted

with trash covers, though not trashy enough.

Dead Flowers decided to get the crowd — whose numbers were beginning to mount — off their asses and on their feet. This they did. With the wind blowing in strong off the sea, and the liquor starting to take the edge off the working week, the crowd were ready to bust loose. This band did it for them. They lined up big. A guitar either side of the vocalist. The wind whipping their hair into a frenzy, better than a video. They fell into a heavy guitar groove, masses of licks and lead breaks. Nothing over the top, nothing to break the land speed record, just plain, steady, well executed. Right down to the last number, a note for note cover of "Sympathy For The Devil." How could they go wrong.

Sweet voiced MC Lisa Van implored the crowd not to drink on the reserve. This was now a lost cause. The Nixons after the onslaught were heavy and ponderous. For a three-piece they are by turns tuneful and melodic, haunting and dense. It's much better to spend time with the Nixons and their complex song structures and tortured delivery. Here, in what was shaping into a rock fest, they were too sombre, too serious. Still, the crowd grooved a little. One John Baker did take exception and proceeded to make an omelette with the Nixons as fork and bowl. The Nixons took offence alright, cut short their set and left in a huff.

The show went on. Mayhem was

RUMBLE IN THE DARK



Everyman and his dog. The crowd gather before the storm?

about to break and Rumblefish provided the perfect soundtrack. I couldn't believe it when, as Rumblefish picked up their instruments, girls, maybe the odd male, started shrieking their enthusiasm and welcome. Rumblefish weren't about to disappoint. The most physical band

of the night, they had presence and a certain precision. Rumblefish have never been the tightest band around but pull off their funky numbers as well as the rockier originals. Simon's bass and Colin's guitar could be glued to their loins, they move and groove. Don't ask me what the drummer was doing. The stage was

covered in dancers of all descriptions, the skinheads getting on to boogie during "Turn It Loose" threatening to knock something over. Singer Dave wasn't phased. He took on the crowd as the barrier collapsed. By the time of big hit "Pull Up" neither the crowd nor the band had lost their energy. Shame that a

few songs later and only 11 pm everything came to a climax. City-siders headed for the last ferry home and locals back to middle-class comfort.

BARBIE

Photos by Tim White



1982? No 1992! Auckland skinheads can still get it up. Braintree's Glen, winner of the Frolic's Woodstock look-a-like competition. What's up Tosh? (Semi Lemon Kola). "Well son, this is the gratuitous baby shot."



Bangs to the breeze. Dead Flowers: Damon, Bryan and Rick. Shaun "egg on my face" Sturm. Not yet. Nixons try 'Song To...' John. Rumblefish: "Hey Dave." "Yeah Si." "Is this the right pose?" "Funk off Si."