

# Days of rage: Los Angeles musicians talk back to the critics

By Mikal Gilmore

LOS ANGELES

**I**N SOME WAYS, THE ROLLING STONE vs. the Eagles pregame activities were chancier than the game itself. A rabid, jet-lagged RS contingent, immediately after its arrival in Los Angeles three days before the game, made a postmidnight excursion to guitarist Glenn Frey's

and drummer Don Henley's canyon homes. Finding neither there (they were in the studio, completing tracks for an upcoming album), the drunken party left notes designating the Eagles as "beach bums" and "sissies," and threatened Frey's prized cat.

Another time, a ROLLING

STONE scouting expedition, led by publisher-editor Jann Wenner, visited an Eagles practice session and discovered the team drilling in metal-cleated shoes. Incensed, Wenner ordered cleats for his entire team and led a lengthy debate the night before the game over the merits of wearing them on

the field. Associate editor Dave Marsh remained unconvinced of any threat. "Nobody who listened to the Hollies as much as Glenn Frey could really be a slugger," he said.

The Eagles wore black-and-gold caps, and ROLLING STONE sported red-and-white T-shirts



Softball cheerleaders?

displaying a Hunter S. Thompson design: the emblem GONZOS and a fist emerging from a dagger. Eagles manager Irving Azoff patrolled the field in a jersey inscribed with the gussy query, IS JANN WENNER TRAGICALLY HIP? and made periodic calls on his portable telephone to Jimmy Buffett in Florida, who had been slated to play with the Eagles until he broke his leg a week earlier.

"The first thing you'll ask yourselves about these teams," said announcer Joe Smith (chairman of the board of Elektra/Asylum), while delivering the lineups, "is how either side could possibly win. Chuck Young incriminated himself by predicting that the Sex Pistols would be the year's hottest act; Joe Walsh is a veteran of too many bands, and Jann Wenner and Irving Azoff are undersized egomaniacs." That said, Smith introduced "our national [Cont. on 35]



The champs (from left): Schmit, Walsb, Henley, Cetera and Felder; (below) Walsb at bat, Young behind the plate; (above right) Clacy's Babrenburg covers as Frey edges off first.



## A glimpse of the fast lane

By Charles M. Young

NEW YORK

**W**HEN THE crowd rose for the national anthem, "Life in the Fast Lane" came over the stadium speakers. It was a successful joke, but in an odd way more significant than a momentary laugh. All of us—rock stars and other royalty included—spend most of our lives in the slow lane. Most of us like it that way, opting for the "lives of quiet desperation" that Thoreau talked about.

Me, I like loud desperation, and that is what both teams were feeling in the weeks before the game as insults flew back and forth between the coasts. Though some of it was calculated for psych-out, it did have a basis in genuine emotion: the Eagles were not fond of our reviews, nor of Random Notes casting aspersions on their masculinity, and we could not get them to take our criticisms, or even agree

are famous people. No, for all the publicity hype that surrounded the event, we wanted the Eagles to pay for their insolence. We wanted to teach them a lesson that would make musicians everywhere quake in terror if they had thoughts of back-sassing our reviews.

We got demolished: 15-8. But it was intense while it lasted, and I have the Eagles to thank for a glimpse of the fast lane. That game in front of all those people was as close as any of us at ROLLING STONE will come to the World Series.

I was happy to shake Glenn Frey's hand after the game (it turns out he and the Eagles are nice guys). I am, however, still dreaming about rearranging his mustache with the bottom of my shoe from that time he slid safely past me into home plate.

PS. To Joe Smith, board chairman of Elektra/Asylum and smartass announcer: the only performance I have seen in recent years to rival ours for sheer mediocrity was your acting in *FM*.



Rev. Young before the fall

to an interview. So the game was much more than some hoked-up "celebrity challenge of the sexes" where famous people get to run obstacle courses with other famous people solely because they

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[Cont. from 31] anthem," an abridged version of "Life in the Fast Lane," and a surprisingly genial and professional—albeit one-sided—ball game began.

At the top of the third inning, in that one delicious moment when the score was tied 3-3, Governor Jerry Brown and an entourage of advisers entered the field, stopping first at the Eagles' dugout before visiting the Gonzos. Asked whom he favored to win, Brown told a sportscaster, "The Eagles are going to win, of course." Brown watched Gonzo Joe Klein take his place at bat. "He'll foul or strike out," predicted Brown. Maybe he was recalling Klein's profile of the governor during his 1976 presidential sprint. Instead, Klein walked, Brown left, and ROLLING STONE lost.

But we had our moments, most notably in the eighth inning, when ace relief pitcher Lucie Gilburg put out three Eagles in a row. "That was worth every penny of \$5000," Wenner yelled across the field to Azoff as a startled Glenn Frey popped up to first baseman Claeys Bahrenburg. Later, Frey was drolly miffed. "What was it?" he asked. "Do I symbolize something girls need to put out? Am I in some way a sexist symbol? She did

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**Frey:  
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fine. Too bad she didn't pitch more."

Speaking later at a victory celebration thrown by Elektra/Asylum at Dan Tana's Italian restaurant, Frey openly praised his chagrined rivals. "ROLLING STONE didn't lay down," he said. "We realized that we were in a ball game and that we weren't going to walk away with it unless we hit. I know that you guys are going back to your typewriters and we're going back to our twenty-four track, but in spite of how Chuck Young and I may differ in our musical opinions, when the game

was over we were standing next to each other and he said, 'Hey, you guys aren't really sissies.'"

Frey paused, then said, smiling, "I think it would be easier for ROLLING STONE to get a rematch with us than to get an interview."

But Azoff and Henley were less laudatory. "The Eagles were capable of playing a lot better," said Azoff, "but all that mattered was the number of runs on the scoreboard. Really, though, I didn't want the game to be any more humiliating for ROLLING STONE than it already was. I didn't want to win by thirty points, which would've easily happened." Henley, speaking to a reporter from the



*A jubilant Glenn Frey*

*Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, listed the magazine's writers he most despised: "Probably Peter Herbst. No, Dave Marsh. Maybe Chuck Young. Oh, I know... Greil Marcus: he's the one. Marcus, who's too chicken to come out and play."

"Henley can drum and swing," replied Marsh, "but he ought to take his foot out of his mouth. Greil wrote the most favorable review of *Hotel California* that ever appeared, so naturally he hates him. Maybe they'd like to try typewriters at twenty paces. You know, the Beatles didn't have to play cricket to justify their music."

In the end, though, the final comment belonged to a nearly silent observer, Joni Mitchell, who spent part of the day in the Eagles' dugout. (Speaking to a reporter before the game, she said, "I'm here as an enemy of ROLLING STONE. I have a personal grudge against Mr. Jann Wenner.") Turning to Stephen Bishop, seated next to her, as Howard Kohn popped the Gonzos' last out and Joe Smith announced, "That's the game!" Joni smiled a sun-reddened smile and peered blithely at the baby-blue sky above.

"Oh," she sighed. "It's been a lovely day."