



Sound hits in waves

"My turn to hit you tonight, there's nothing like a six-pack and a fight," wins the award for "new wave" lyrics after a two-day, two-club examination of the latest musical fad.

It wasn't punk rock or disco — what new wave appeared to be one Tuesday night at Slick Willy's and on a Monday night at the Great Northern was plain loud rock 'n' roll. TOO LOUD.

That's not easy to admit when you were teethered on raucous Rolling Stones and chastised constantly as a teen-ager to "turn that music down."

But new wave, the latest recording industry hype — since punk rockers literally fell on painted faces — didn't leave fingers snappin', it left ears hurtin'.

At Slick Willy's several weeks ago, two out-of-town groups seemed less interested in entertaining than piercing eardrums. While Ozzie gave a more polished performance at The Great Northern, with music characterized by witty lyrics, its singers were reduced to shouting over thundering drums.

At Slick Willy's entrance on Cottage Way, doorman Paul Trumpower was asked about these new wave folks. Did they smash equipment and spit on the audience?

No, chuckled Trumpower. He wasn't sure what new wave was all about, "but if we get a well-known

band, we even draw from 'Frisco.

"There are about 200-300 people locally who are following this thing," he continued. "It's growing slowly; but mostly we just have our regulars."

Before the band started, new wavers stood out with their crew-cut, razor-cut hairstyles, styled velour sports jackets or tight pink slacks.

Then there were the men. One group, wearing leather with long

Music

by Mike Faucett

black hair combed in a greasy front flip and duck-tail finish, stood in sharp contrast to the frail, pale David Bowie-types.

The Young Canadians took the stage first, about an hour late. Their (original) music was a la Led Zepplin. But all the songs sounded alike. Only scattered words, such as "pain" and "hey man" and one bit of verse, "You're a taker, just a taker, so take off" were discernable above the din and clatter of drums and ear-splitting electric guitar.

Feast, the second band, was less palatable. They, it turned out, were the leather-bound edition grouped

earlier in the dark, cavernous room. They were from "back East" and several in the audience gave them a slightly twisted version of Horace Greeley's "Go West, young man."

Feast tried the early '60s tune "Sweet Little Sheila" as a tough, hard-driving rocker. Just as the music peaked, some people in the crowd began sticking napkins or fingers into their ears and grimacing.

"It's not me; it's the band," said a crewman behind the control board. "The band sets the volume and it's what people want on new wave night."

Ozzie, an area band, was a bit spastic. Their commotion buried the fine lead-guitar riffs of Robert Jolly. Still, the sound was organized.

Great Northern hostess Maureen Reider said the group had a dedicated following and agreed new wave is truly rock 'n' roll — "but with strange lyrics."

"It's big in San Francisco; there's even a band called the 'Dead Kennedys.' Mostly, the lyrics are the difference," said Reider, just before Ozzie broke into "She's a Lady of Scattered Values."

"Monday nights leave my ears numb," shouted cocktail waitress Becky Smith.

Maybe that's the idea.