

FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD



A Rainmakers Fanzine

September 1988 Issue No. 1

FACSIMILE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NEWS: BFB INFORMATION.....The latest tour information plus news on the upcoming album. Plus, fatherhood strikes again for Rich Ruth.....page 3

MEET THE RAINMAKERS: Steve Phillips, page 4; Rich Ruth, page 6; Pat Tomek, page 10; Bob Walkenhorst, page 12

WHEN THEY WERE THREE: A look back at Steve, Bob & Rich.....page 8

A MESSAGE FROM THE BAND.....page 14



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NEWS: BFB INFORMATION

The Rainmakers wrapped up their European tour in early August playing to audiences in England, Norway and Switzerland. The highlight of the tour came in July when the band played an outdoor festival of 30,000 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

"It was neat and really exciting, but it was kind of strange all at the same time," Rich Ruth explained. "They had a big barrier to keep the crowd off the stage, but the closest people to the stage were still twenty feet away. So, it was really wild to look out and see people as far as you could see. But at the same time it was kinda strange because there wasn't anybody right up close."

Also on the bill at the festival were Sting and John Cougar Mellencamp.

In the States, the band continued touring this summer playing mostly in the Midwest. Some more dates have been set for September and October. Catch the Rainmakers in the following cities:

Sept. 4, Little Rock, Ark.; Sept. 16, Kansas City, Mo., at the Spirit Festival; Sept. 17, Wichita, Kan., at the Coyote Club; Sept. 24, Switzerland (tentative).

Oct. 1, Green Bay, Wis.; Oct. 7 and 8, Columbia, Mo., at the Blue Note; Oct. 14, Topeka, Kan., at Washburn University.

The band is also working on a new album tentatively titled "Purify."

"It's gonna be more basic," Bob Walkenhorst said. "That's the key word. As a writer, I've just been in a

strip-it-all-away-and-get-down-to-the-meat-of-the-matter mood. And as a band, we've been playing together better than we ever have."

Steve Phillips added that the music would be more like the first album while the lyrics would be more like the second album.

"I'll definitely be Rainmakers," he said. "One hundred percent Rainmakers."

Recording is set to begin this fall. The album is due out later this year or early next year.

On June 30, Rich and Carol Ruth welcomed a new addition to their family. The couple's second daughter, Rozalind, was born while Rich was in Europe with the Rainmakers.

Send any correspondence to the band: The Rainmakers, P.O. Box 9923, Minneapolis, Mn. 55458-9923.

We're looking for questions for the band to feature in the new Mailbag column. If you have some questions you want answered, send them to: FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD, 429 NE Bristol, Lee's Summit, Mo. 64063. If we don't know the answer ourselves, we'll find somebody around here to answer it for you. Remember, no question is a dumb question.

Meet the Rainmakers

Steve Phillips thought about the question. You could hear the gears turning on the other end of the telephone.

"I think it's real important to sing about stuff that a lot of people just kind of ignore," he said. "In rock and roll, most people don't talk about those type of things."

Those things include questioning fate as on "Nobody Knows," or the feeling of helplessness on "Makes No Sense."

Steve sees rock and roll as a way to reach people who otherwise might not care about world issues.

"For one thing, it (singing about an issue) gets it off our chest," he explained. "It's one way to do your part to help . . . Rock and roll can change the world. Everybody looks at rock and roll—or music in general—as being able to escape from the problems of the world."

Steve, whose influences include Creedence Clearwater Revival and Buffalo Springfield, has been in bands for the last ten years. He's played everything from country to bluegrass. There was the country-rock / bluegrass band called Fields, which played locally in the Kansas City area. Before the Steve, Bob & Rich explosion, Steve was in Lunch Money for about a year.

*Steve and Rich
at the Ranch
Bowl, 5/21/88,
Omaha, Neb.*



He grew up in Kansas City, graduating from Oak Park High School. In between bands, Steve married Becky. They have a two-year-old son, Zachary.

Like his bandmate Bob, Steve also draws and paints. Most of his drawings these days, he said, are for his family's stained-glass company. Other hobbies include gardening and windsurfing in his spare time.

"I generally like bands that are guitar-oriented, and that have good lyrics," Steve, 28, said. Groups like the Beach Boys and The Who are some of his favorites. On the other hand, the Rainmakers are guitar-and-good-lyrics-oriented, too.

"That's why I like the band I'm in so much is because we're guitar-oriented and we have good lyrics," he said. "It's a band I would have listened to if I weren't in this band."

He draws his writing mostly from personal experiences such as on "Rockin' Around" and "Roll On," which are about life in an up-and-coming band. A few of his songs are among the demos being recorded for the new album.

"This song I'm working on is called 'Knock on Wood,'" Steve said. "It's kind of a Stones-ish/Creedence style rock and roll song." * MGM *



*Steve at Worlds of Fun, 6/10/88,
Kansas City, Mo.*

Meet the Rainmakers

June 30th, 1988, began as anything but a normal day for Rich Ruth. At 5:30 a.m. he became a Daddy for the second time. And he wasn't even there. He was in Copenhagen, Denmark, getting ready to perform in front of 30,000 people.

Rich, 32, was born and raised in Kansas City and attended Longview

College and Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville. In 1984 he married Carol. They now have two children, Emily, 3, and Rozalind Elizabeth, 2 months.

Rich started his musical career by playing in a band called Colt 45, which later became the Kansas City Blues Band. Then along came Steve and Bob.

*Rich at The Regency,
6/4/88,
Springfield, Mo.*



"Steve and Bob were working together in a band called Steve, Bob and Dave," Rich said. "That band broke up and I was kind of thinking about doing something new. I was playing in a blues band, and I wanted to play in a rock and roll band again. So I was looking around for players. Carol talked to Bob's wife, Tedi. Bob didn't have a band so I got hold of him to see if maybe we could put a band together. So, then we got a hold of Steve, and the rest is history, I guess."

In his free time Rich likes to work on cars and watch bad monster movies. He also does a little bit of writing of his own.

"I've written a few little things—not really good enough to send in and get on a record since Bob is a pretty good songwriter," he explained. "Maybe sometime in the future."

He bases his songs on personal experience because he says he likes to personalize everything.

"That's the only way I would know how to do it," he said.

Lately he's been listening to a lot of AC/DC.

"Just 'cause I figure if you're gonna rock and roll, you rock and roll, and those guys pretty much do it," Rich said.

Like Pat, Rich also enjoys having the audience close to the stage.

"I can't see how you could not want it that way," he said. "If you didn't want people to be close when you're playing, then I can't understand how you could be a musician. That's kinda what it is, trying to make people happy, trying to get through to people, and it's difficult when you can't see if anybody cares."

Of course, he was excited at the prospect of playing several tour dates with Rush.

"I felt great about playing at Kemper and the larger arenas," he added. "I thought it was a pretty cool deal. It seemed a little funny to be playing with Rush there because our bands are so different, and I wasn't sure how people who liked Rush would feel about a band like The Rainmakers."

"It went great. To play in a room that size with that many people is really a thrill. The thrill of a lifetime." * KKM *



Rich at Parody Hall, 4/9/88, Kansas City, Mo.

Before that umbrella and top hat, before the When they

It didn't matter where you went in 1983. You could always find them. If it wasn't Blayney's, it was Parody Hall. Sometimes it was the Uptown, or Stage Door. But they were always there.

They started out as Steve (Phillips), Bob (Walkenhorst) & Dave (Nauman), and gained local attention by playing oldies in and around the Midwest. The line-up changed when Dave left and Rich Ruth was added on bass. The attention continued to grow as SBR continued to play their famous three-hour sets of oldies. Singing everything from Elvis Presley's "Hound Dog" to Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire," SBR infected their audience with an insatiable need to dance.

"We'd have musicians come up to us the next day and say, 'Hey, I heard about what you did last night. Now, you knock it off because it's making us look bad,'" Bob said. "It made us realize there isn't a set way of doing things."

Their three-man line-up with Bob on drums proved to be an unusual sight for audiences and bar owners, who told the band the formula would never work. Fortunately, the band didn't listen to the doubters. SBR continued burning up the dance floors in the Midwest by adding their own tunes to the set.

"We didn't introduce the originals," Steve said then. "Otherwise people would stop dancing, so we just slip them in between the covers and hope no one minds the difference."

Those original tunes led to the release of "Balls" on the record label, Bat Music. The album (and tape) sold well at their bar concerts. With songs written by Steve and Bob, the album was an appropriate introduction to the rock and roll world they hoped to be a bigger part of.

"I figured it was a matter of outlasting everybody," Rich said. "The longer we stuck with it, the greater our chances were of breaking through."

And break through they did.

In 1986, SBR signed with Polygram/Mercury Records, and added drummer Pat Tomek to the line-up. Their self-titled debut album gained publicity for the group, including a *Rolling Stone* fashion layout. (Who would've believed that a group from the Midwest singing about welfare, suicide, and disaster would give a hoot about a designer jacket from New York?)

Staying true to a theme of adventure and danger, The Rainmakers continued their climb with the release

"Downstream" video, and before Pat . . . were three

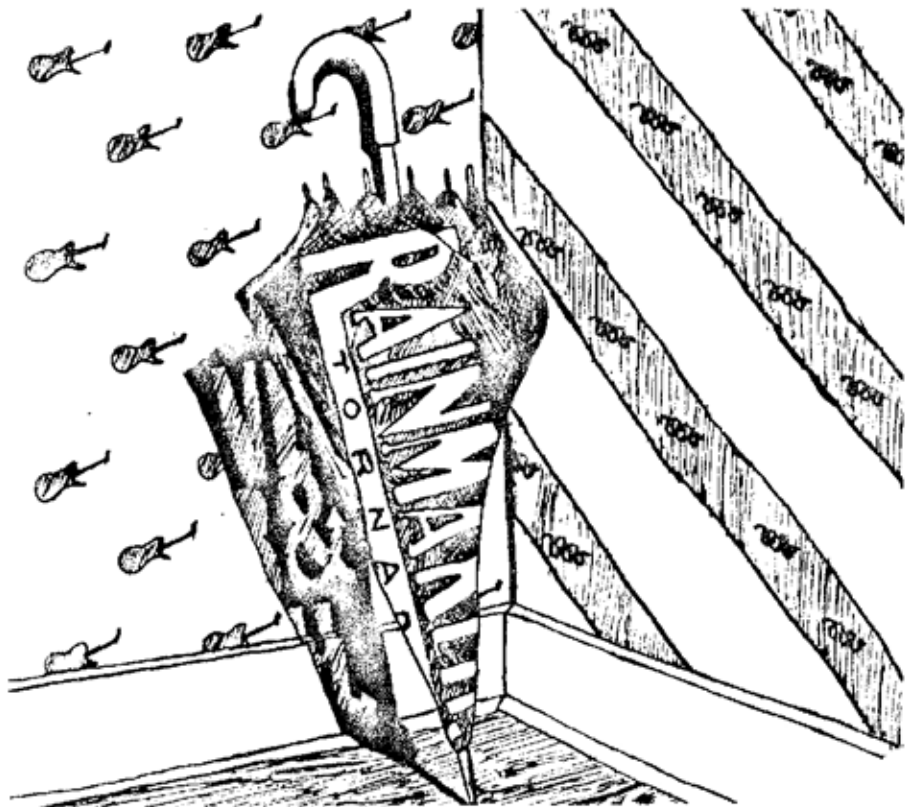
of "Tornado" in 1987. While it didn't receive as much fanfare as the first album, "Tornado" did spawn one single, "Small Circles." Their new album is due out in December or January.

Even though their name has changed from the old SBR days, the music hasn't. It's still fun-filled, thought-provoking rock and roll. You

kinda get the feeling that SBR (and Pat) wouldn't have it any other way.

* MGM *

Editors' Note: Quotes in this story were previously published in The Kansas City Star and The Kansas City Times.



Meet the Rainmakers

It seems to be an established fact that most accomplished drummers first started playing drums when they were very young. Pat Tomek is the exception to that rule.

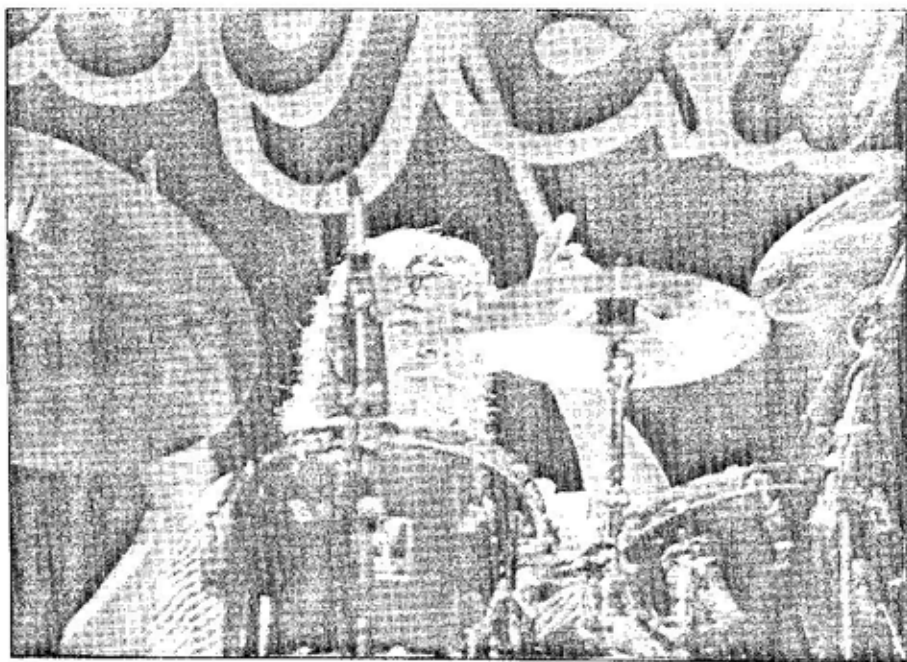
Born and raised in Wichita, Kansas, Pat, 35, didn't pick up a pair of drumsticks until he was in his late teens.

"I became interested in playing drums more or less by accident," Pat said. "I was well on my way to becoming a mad scientist when a friend of my brother's got a drum kit and let me pound around on it. Everybody thought I was really good, and it sort of entered my consciousness that

here was something I could do that was very different from anything I'd ever done before."

Pat attended the University of Kansas-Lawrence and graduated with a B.A. in psychology and an M.A. in speech. It was during his college days that he began professionally playing drums.

"I played frat gigs and stuff through college, and in the tedium of grad school I guess something snapped," he said. "I decided this was what I really wanted to do, rather than get a PhD and be in school for the rest of my life."



Pat at Worlds of Fun, 6/10/88, Kansas City, Mo.

Since that time Pat has played in more than 40 bands including The Secrets, Think Pink and The 4 Sknns—a '60s and '70s band that played Blaney's and Parody Hall, which is how he came in contact with Steve, Bob and Rich.

"I knew Steve, Bob and Rich from being around them," Pat explained. "I knew they were looking for a drummer and I never actually auditioned. Bob called me one day in December '85 and asked if I'd like to join the band. The rest, as they say, is history."

Pat will be the first to admit that touring leaves little time for a social life.

"In the past couple of months I've met hundreds, maybe thousands, of people," he said, "but touring just doesn't leave a lot of time to actually get to know most of them. That's too bad because I'm sure that many of them were very interesting people."

Even though touring and recording takes up much of his time, he still finds time to spend with Sharon—his girlfriend of two years. They began dating around the same time that Pat joined the band.

Pat also enjoys reading science, science fiction, mainstream fiction and poetry. He still writes some poetry and short stories. Stargazing is also high on his list of favorite pastimes.

"I like stargazing whenever possible, especially when it's combined with camping in the Southwest," Pat said. "New Mexico is the most eerily beautiful place I've ever seen."

He says that his biggest musical influence was the studio drummers of the '70s, naming Jeff Porcaro and Jim Keltner among his favorites. He also admires songwriters Peter Gabriel, Stan Ridgeway and Suzanne Vega for their literary approach to lyrics. Although he has at least a hundred "favorite" groups, he singles out Midnight Oil and Steel Pulse as his current favorites.

Although Pat enjoyed the opportunity to play the large capacity halls and venues when they opened for Rush in April, he found it to be a very impersonal experience.

"It was exciting to actually perform in front of that many people," he admitted, "but I would rather play the smaller places because you feel so much more in touch with your audience." * KKM *



*Pat at The Regency, 6/4/88,
Springfield, Mo.*

Meet the Rainmakers

If he wasn't a rock and roller, Bob Walkenhorst might be labeled a redneck for some of his views on welfare and drinking. But as it stands, the man only fits one label.

"I'm a songwriter," Bob said. "In the past couple of months, that's what's become increasingly important to me. Sometimes you get sidetracked worrying about whether people like your hair, or whether this song's funny or not. Or whether the band's loud enough or not. And, really, in the end, I've got to get through to them as a songwriter."

For someone who began singing at the age of three, a career in music seemed natural.

"Most people have a handful of things that they're passionate about," he said, "and they distribute that energy. And there's a lot of people that don't get very passionate about anything. But there's a small percentage of ones that have one thing they focus on, and very little else matters. In my life, it's music."

Bob, 35, grew up in the small community of Norborne, Mo. Singing in church and school functions became a way of life when there wasn't much else to do. Between schooling and his marriage to Tedi, Bob continued to follow the call to



Bob at Worlds of Fun, 6/10/88, Kansas City, Mo.

music. He was in and out of bands in Southern Missouri, including a country band named Stumpwater. But the call for rock and roll was persistent.

"I've always loved recording," he said. "Recordings are those things that last. People can take them home . . . and absorb."

"I really think music was probably my first love," Bob explained. "And I thought that that probably wouldn't work, so I needed to get involved in something else."

That something else was art. Bob holds a Fine Arts degree from Northwest Missouri State University where he graduated in 1979.

"I just came to the decision that visual art didn't have a helluvalot to do with the real world," Bob said. "I

think music affects everyone's everyday life. It's a relevant art form.

"I don't really feel the urge to draw because . . . I'm getting all that outta my system playing music. I don't have any of it left to put on canvas or paper."

Bob, whose influences include Mick Jagger and Buddy Holly, sees music as a way to make people think about their surroundings.

"I'm not a particularly political person, in spite of some of the political implications of some of the songs," Bob said. What upsets him, he said, is "when political matters suddenly steamroll over people who just happen to be in the way." • MGM •



Rich and Bob at The Regency, 6/4/88, Springfield, Mo.

A message from the band

Hello and welcome,
Since we rarely if ever get to talk directly to each one of our fans, this is a good opportunity to say thanks to everyone who has supported us through the years.

Looking back fourteen years ago when I first started playing guitar, I never dreamed of having a fan club; I never even thought of having fans. My motivation came from listening to music and lyrics that talked about life and taught me things I couldn't learn in school. It is my hope that people have these same feelings about our music.

It's obvious that the band will not be an "overnight sensation," seeing as how we're well into the fifth year since the inception of Steve, Bob & Rich in 1983.

It's been a bumpy road, but a fun and exciting one.

Thanks for hangin' in there and believing in us!

Steve Phillips



Hi, everybody,
I'm Rich and I first want to thank you for taking the time to care enough about our band to read about it. You are responsible for our success, and I am eternally grateful.

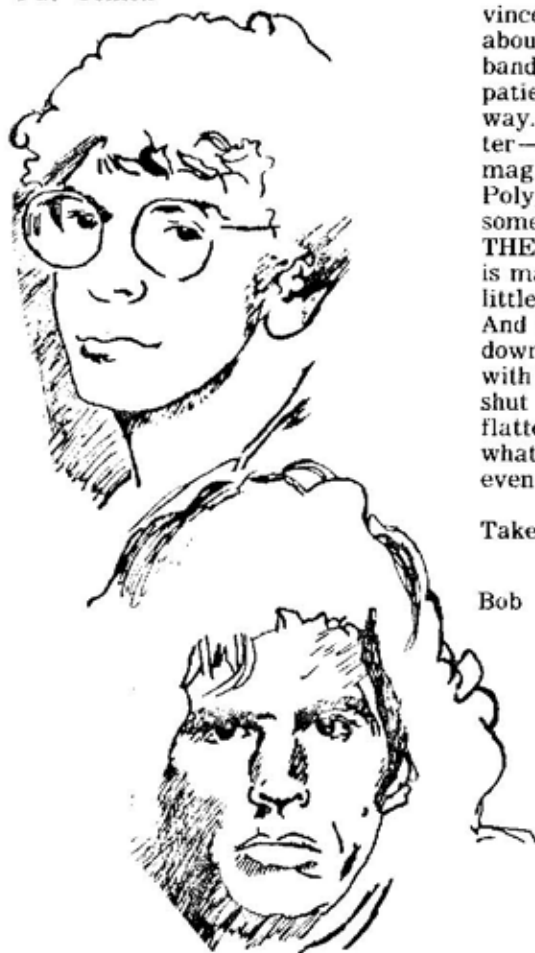
FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD seems a very appropriate name for this newsletter as we have been jet-setting (and, man, is my butt sore) all summer. Europe has been great to play in and see, but I'm looking forward to playing here at home again. Gotta go, so take care and get out there and have a good time, OK?

Rich Ruth



Hi, everybody! We really appreciate the interest you have taken in our band, and hope this fanzine will give you the information you want. Hope to see you soon, in person or on vinyl. Thanks again for all your support.

Pat Tomek



When Mia and Kim first approached us with the idea of a Rainmakers fanzine, I've got to admit—I had to think about it for awhile. I have a problem with that word, "fan." In fact, I have a strong aversion to that whole "I am a star. You are a fan. Let's talk about me!" kind of B.S. But Mia and Kim convinced me that I didn't need to worry about that, that people who like our band's music really wouldn't have the patience for that kind of thing anyway. (So who are they trying to flatter—you or me?) Anyway, this is *your* mag. The band makes music, Polygram makes records, somebody somewhere makes T-shirts. FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD is made by and for people who like a little substance in their rock and roll. And to keep you informed of the ups, downs, and sideways of some guys with guitars and drums who just won't shut up. I'm glad—yes, I'm a little flattered—and I'm anxious to see what this shapes up to be. Heck, I may even subscribe myself.

Take care of your ears,

Bob Walkenhorst