

as this is what his audience wants, who am I to complain? It was a most enjoyable evening and I was very sorry when it ended.

Sunday, August 2nd.

Was spent on Maxwell Street in the morning; sightseeing in the afternoon and at Don Kent's place in the evening listening to some great blues.

Monday, August 3rd.

In the evening went with Don Kent, Bob Koester and Memphis Charlie to Diz's Club to see the legendary Robert Nighthawk playing one of his first club dates in years. The club was quite a small place and the group, including John Lee Granderson on rhythm gtr, just stuck in a corner. The atmosphere was quite electric and that night I felt closer to the Blues than I've ever been. Robert's voice is very exciting and his bottleneck guitar-playing was stunning. He did several numbers including his hit "The Moon is Rising" and several Elmore James numbers such as "Anna Lee" and "I held my baby last night". What a fabulous evening - I had to be dragged out of the place.

Tuesday, August 4th

In the evening went with a guy I met at Bob Koester's place named Tom Casey to see Otis Rush at Pepper's. Of all the artists I saw Otis had the most genuine musical talent - his voice is very fine indeed and his guitar was, believe it or not, even better than on record. Otis must certainly be one of the greatest of today's blues guitarists. Most of the numbers he featured were unfamiliar to me except for the highlight of his act, a tremendous ten-minute version of "So many roads, so many trains". Incidentally, regarding his style, Otis is left-handed, but strangely his guitar is tuned in the conventional manner, with bottom E at the bottom; and he strikes chords upwards!!! His band is first-class, consisting of Leonard Morris (gtr) King Everett (bs-gtr) Mickie Moss (ten) Billy Davenport (drums). Both Morris and Moss did vocals which were very good indeed.

Wednesday, August 5th.

My last day in Chicago and fittingly I went to see the "King", Muddy Waters. It's hard to believe how much better Muddy is in clubs than onstage in England. His band is now as follows: James Cotton (hca) Otis Spann (electric piano) James "Pee Wee" Madison (gtr) Jimmy Lee Morris (bs) and Willie Smith (dm).

Muddy was tremendous doing numbers like "Rock Me", "40 days & 40 nights", "The Same Thing" and (dare I mention?) "Muddy Waters Twist". I asked him to do "Country Boy" which he did and it was quite superb, Muddy's bottleneck solo being magnificent. Muddy said he'll be playing guitar all the time now - and on records.

While I was at the Copacopana I met sax player J. T. Brown who sat in for a few numbers. He told me he had several tapes of Elmore James and Hooker and would send them to me. I wrote him from London afterwards but haven't heard anything yet!

So ended my few days in Chicago - without doubt the highlight of my whole American trip.

HOWLIN' WOLF AT THE MARQUEE - November 26th - JOHN J BROVEN

Following his performances at Croydon and elsewhere, Wolf's first visit to an English club was eagerly awaited by local blues enthusiasts. He was accorded a great reception as he appeared, and the ovation lasted two or three minutes - sharp contrast, as Neil Paterson pointed out, to Sylvio's where his appearance is greeted with a few polite handclaps, his performance thereafter lost in the haze of alcohol and necessary conversation.

Accompanied by Hubert Sumlin and Chris Barber's band, Wolf came on well after 9.30, and apologies were made to the effect that Wolf had been detained by the BBC for filming "Beat Room", but this is no encouragement to fans at the Marquee. Such thoughts loomed up again as Wolf departed after four numbers. Admittedly these took the best part of half an hour and were superbly done. "Smokestack Lightnin'", "Can I have a talk with you", "Dust my broom" and one unknown (sorry!) were all fine with Wolf performing the kind of blues never seen in a European club. If only Muddy, Hooker and the rest would realize Europeans can take their blues the hard way! Though stunned by the early departure, we were fortified to learn Wolf would return, even if it meant missing last trains and buses and bedding down on Graham Ackers' extra rigid floorboards!

We were not dissatisfied. The second set started where the first left off. Wolf just got better and better. With Sumlin still not quite fulfilling the promise of recordings, but still good, (he seems to try to sound like B.B., the effect is far too sweet and does lack the bite of, say, "Goin' down slow") and Barber's band swinging surprisingly well, Wolf did a whole string of unbelievably brilliant numbers many of which were new to me - a refreshing change from the 'hits only' policy of some - and including a harmonica instrumental with odd verses to the order of "Who's that kissin' over there"; and a version to end all versions of "I asked for water" (and she gave me gasoline). Here was the modern blues at its very, very best. Thank you, Howlin' Wolf.

CALLING ALL HOWLIN' WOLF FANS! !.....The best work yet on this great artist - Collectors Classics 4 - has full biography and discography by John J Broven & Kurt Mohr. Ready now only 1/6d postfree, from B.U. Limited Ed'n - rush orders!! From: 38a Sackville Rd., Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex, U.K. or your usual supplier or agents.