



PETER RUDGE, a 29-year-old Cambridge graduate, is in the thick of his seventh Rolling Stones tour of which he is the overall manager. He is getting three hours sleep a night, and has taken to chainsmoking and talking very fast with the air of a general putting the final touches to a dangerously out-sized campaign stretching across five European countries.

Rudge's own London company, Five-One Productions, has been working on the eight-week tour since November last year. He now has \$2m at risk, he says, and there is no going back. If one of the Stones should get sick or have an accident, the whole structure would crash.

No other band tours on quite the same scale as the Rolling Stones, nor pulls in such large audiences. The purpose is not so much to make money (tours are not usually very profitable) but for the Stones to do what they like doing best—playing to live audiences. In addition the tour should add 300,000 to 400,000 copies to the sale of their latest album.

Since February, the Rolling Stones Organisation has had 100 people employed full time on the tour. The projected cost is calculated at about £1m. The expense is partly due to the Stones' traditional need to put on a richly flamboyant show in keeping with their image of being "the greatest rock and roll band in the world."

For this, for example, they have a huge transportable stage. For the past three weeks, 12 "roadies" and construction men have been practising dismantling and erecting the stage in a studio at Shepperton.

On a good day, they hope to put it up in eight hours and take it down in five. On the first day they expect the whole process of construction alone, despite rehearsals, to take 16 hours. The cost of the stage alone, including "environmental effects," runs to about £150,000. The designer charged £25,000. The stage is lit with 300 lights. This operation has been contracted to a British firm, ESP, for £125,000. The lights weigh 15-tons and are suspended in mid air.

The public address system—mikes and loudspeakers—will cost £44,000. There are also some odd expenses. A man has been hired from Barnum and Baileys Circus as an "advance man" to check out every next town. He is paid £15,000. And a guitar tuner from the Ozark Mountains, Neuman Jones III, will look after Keith Richards's 18 guitars for £4,000. Then there is Mick Jagger's wardrobe, worth £25,000, and two fork-lift trucks which will cost £10,000.

In each city the Stones will have a welcoming committee in the form of the local promoter contracted to them. Five security men travel with the Stones, while one goes ahead to check on the printing of tickets. Rudge travels with two accom-

## It's only rock'n roll —but it's expensive

The Rolling Stones' new tour of Europe starts this week. The group's organisation is spending \$2m to bring five Rolling Stones, 13 articulated lorries, 15 tons of lights, a £150,000 stage with various "environmental effects," Mick Jagger's wardrobe and Keith Richard's 18 guitars safely round 12 cities. The tour will help to sell the group's new record—but even the Stones have tax problems. JAMES FOX reports from the South of France.

agents from a Wall Street firm, Herdman and Cranston. In every city the Stones have lawyers on 24-hour standby."

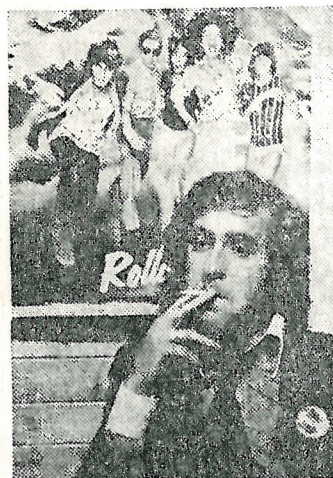
The scale of the operation is enormous. Some time today, for example, seven full-sized articulated lorries will leave London for Frankfurt with some of the basic equipment, needed. Another will leave Cannes with the Stones' personal baggage and instruments, including Richard's guitars and Billy Preston's light different types of keyboard. Eventually 13 articulated lorries will be used to haul the show around 12 cities. "It's only rock and roll," Rudge is fond of saying, "but it's expensive."

The cost of haulage is £25,000 and a further £30,000 has been spent transporting equipment from the States, left behind on the Stones tour last year. Rudge had planned to bring over an enormous mechanical lotus with hydraulically operated petals, from which the Stones would emerge on to the stage, but rejected the idea on grounds of extravagance.

As a concession to the recession, Rudge has tightened up on one or two items like telephones, which in the US tour

last year cost £20,000. He also has his own liquor wholesaler. "No more of this local promoter and his tame wine merchant stuff," he says.

The backstage hospitality bill will be a mere £5,000 and each Rolling Stone will get pocket money of £25 a day. Rudge, who failed the Foreign Office examination "for reasons of tempera-



Peter Rudge: "Managers used to rip you off; now it's tax."

ment," remembers a dinner with the Stones in Hawaii, where they drank Chateau Margaux and Rudge was left with a bill of \$2,500. He paid in lire.

There is, as always with the Stones much talk of tax. Their tax affairs are complicated enough and only a few people know exactly how many companies they own. The complications are doubled by their moving through and earning in five European countries including the UK, where their series of concerts starts on May 10. It is in the UK that they feel most harassed and say that the Inland Revenue has put a bound on their trail.

Already he has spent £50,000 on tax advice for the tour. Tax causes Jagger particular consternation. "In the old days the managers used to rip you off," Jagger says. "Now it's the tax man. It surely defeats the purpose of tax that we would rather put the money into unnecessary embellishments of the stage at Wembley, than let it go to the taxman."

The Stones are resident in France for tax purposes. Their touring company, Promo Tour, is based in Amsterdam. Rudge has two off-shore companies. So far he has drawn up and signed more than 80 contracts for the tour. "In the end," he says, "you have to pinch yourself to remember that you're really trying just to put five guys up on stage."

What will the Stones get out of it for themselves? Rudge says. "Anything from nothing to a quarter million dollars, but judging from past experience that figure is highly optimistic. They are the only ones not guaranteed a penny out of the tour."

As the final preparations get under way, the Stones, and their session men are hidden away in a villa in Cannes, guarded by an amateur free style wrestling champion from Cleveland and an arm wrestling champion from Buffalo. The two men were playing chess when I visited. A rather brigadierish English gentleman was employed using his car to block the driveway. Rehearsal time is 10 pm to 10 am — all through the night — and it's easy to hear that the Stones magic is still as solid as ever.

Rudge and I go to the athletics stadium in Nice where the Stones will play one of their 39 tour concerts. All the local officials are there, from the town hall and the police department. The first brush seems near when Rudge, who doesn't speak French, says: "Tell them no police in the stadium or the concert's off."

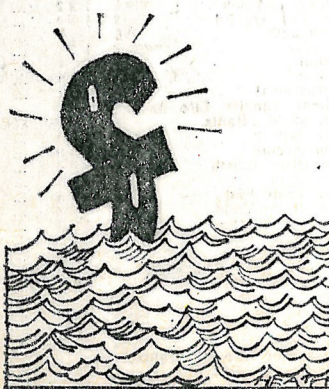
It turns out that the police have not the slightest wish to be in the stadium. "We haven't played in France for five years," says Rudge. "If you had the Stones, the police and the kids all looking at each other in the same compound it can in my experience get nasty."

### INSIDE

What kind of shops should we have? Many local councils have plumped for expensive modern shopping centres, but is really best for consumers, retailers, and our environment? Shop! looks at one town's battle against a plan to destroy beautiful old shops to build a huge new complex, and questions the concept of what could prove to be the high-rise flats of retailing.

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