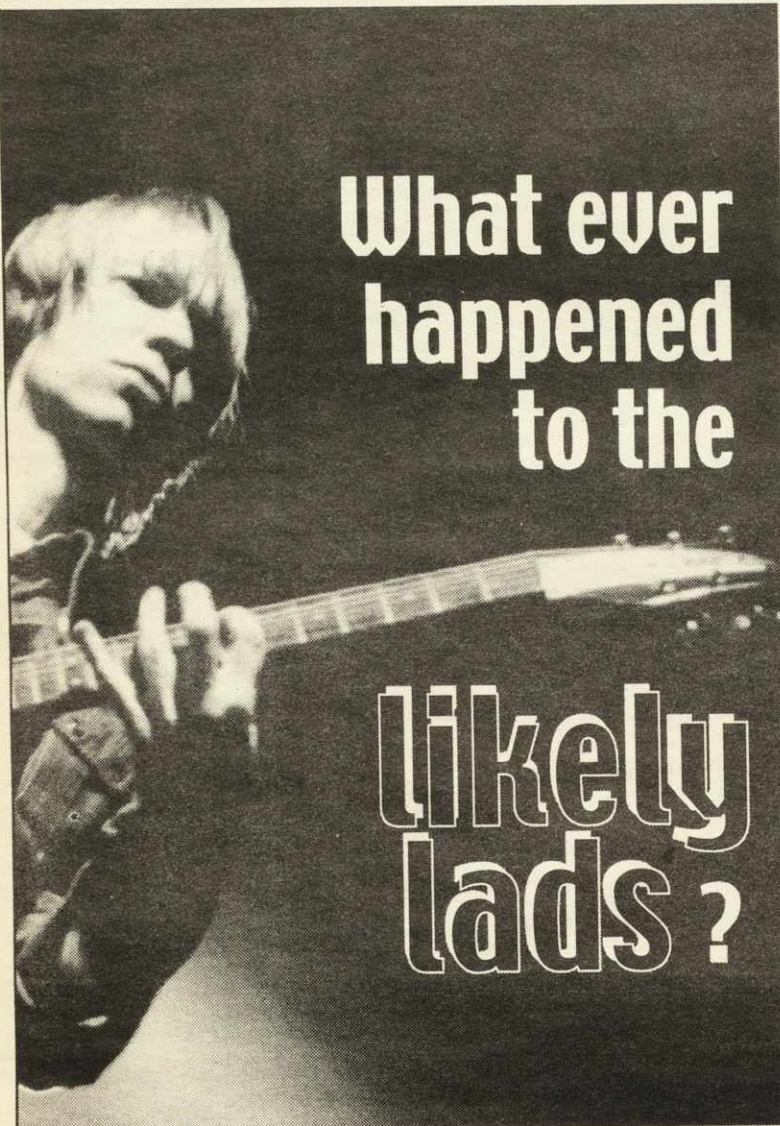


ARTS & CULTURE



What ever
happened
to the

likely
lads?

BY GAZETTE STAFF

When I went to see Sloan last weekend, I wasn't sure what to expect. I had seen them before, and although they put on an interesting show, I was somewhat surprised.

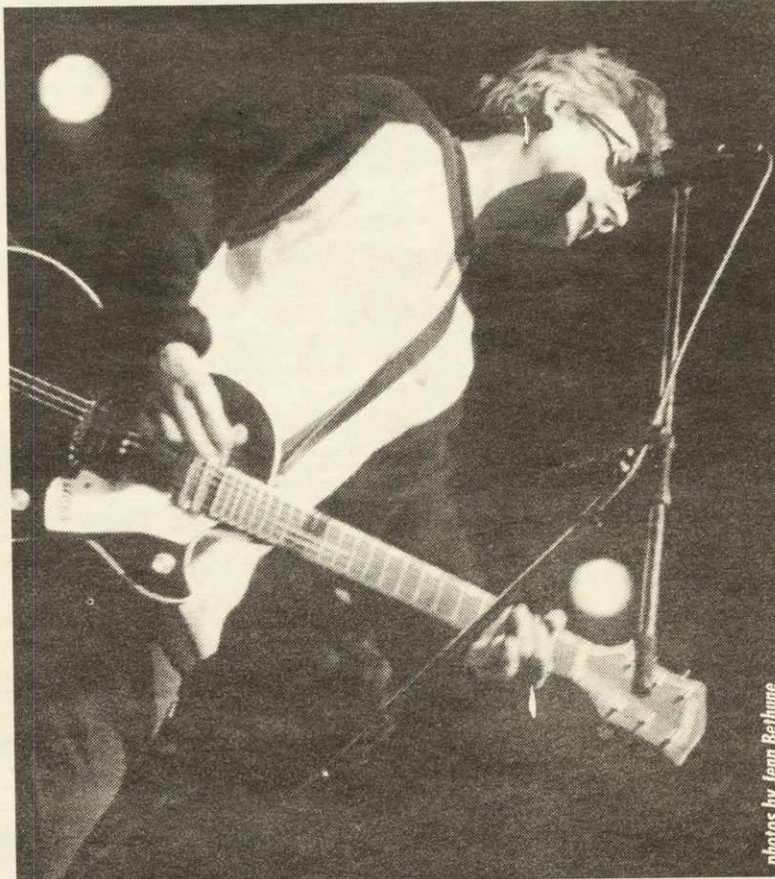
These guys have slowly declined, in my mind, from a new explosion on the Halifax scene to a mediocre Canadian band that only plays Halifax when they come home for a break. But after Friday night, I'm not sure this is the case.

The Electropolis was filled with an interesting mix of fans when the band made their dramatic entrance. They played mostly new tunes, mixing in some old classics, and the performance was solid, but there were a few weak points.

Chris Murphy pulled the old switcheroo, taking a seat behind the drum kit while the others mixed around, a very old stunt for the Halifax boys. Although this was interesting to watch, Murphy was not up to drummer Andrew Scott's calibre, and it was more distracting than entertaining.

Also, the band tried far too hard to entice the drunken crowd to participate. The sing-along worked once or twice, but it failed more than that. In the long run, it had a flavour of desperation.

The crowd was enthusiastic,



photos by Jean Belhumeur

but the stage presence was flat. The only song to really get the crowd moving was "Money City Maniacs," and that had more to do with the lights than the band. They bopped their heads, threw in the

occasional kick, and the sloppy madness on the kit was always entertaining, but no band can rock without putting their hearts into it.

The new material pales in comparison to older stuff like *One Chord to Another* and *Smeared* despite being remarkable similar in styles. It's a lot easier to appreciate quality music when a band works for it, like Sloan did all those years ago. Now they are recognised nationally, and although you can't fault anyone for success, it is harder to look at them in the same way.

However, despite all my criticism, I liked the show. Sloan may be no Journey or Richard Marx, but they do know how to entertain. They have the talent, but not the presence, to pull off a great live show. Their music speaks for itself on CD, but gets lost on stage. Give them haircuts, pump them full of drugs and alcohol, and let em rip — that's what Sloan's live show needs.



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