



B I O G R A P H Y

THE ENGLISH BEAT

Dave Wakeling	*****	Vocals, Guitar
Ranking Roger	*****	Toasting, Vocals, Percussion
Andy Cox	*****	Guitar, Mandolin
David Steele	*****	Bass, Banjo
Everett Morton	*****	Drums
Dave Blockhead	*****	Keyboards, Piano
Wesley Magoogan	*****	Saxophone, Clarinet
Saxa	*****	Saxophone

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One of the happiest bands to watch live and one of the most infectious when it comes to dance riffs, the English Beat are a remarkable band. They are seven (enlarging to eight to incorporate Saxa on very special occasions) people bringing together their musical influences to make music to dance to, music that says something, music that matters, as exemplified on their new album, Special Beat Service (I.R.S. Records). The LP, which contains 12 of the hottest dance tracks around, sees the band moving on somewhat from their social commentary phase into one concerned more with personal and sexual politics.

The English Beat, based in Birmingham, remain articulate and intelligent representatives of the young generation and are one of the most critically respected bands in England. Their concert appearances are almost always sure sell-outs and they have a string of U.K. singles and two Top 5 British albums to their credit.

The English Beat first formed as a four piece in the winter of 1978 (Dave, David, Andy and Everett) and played their first gig in March of the following year. It was at that show they first encountered Roger, who was drumming with the headlining punk band. Roger began to toast (Jamaican version of rapping, which it preceded) with the English Beat during their set and gradually became a full-time member. On a support tour with the Selecter the band met the Specials, who had just begun Two Tone records, a dance label. Impressed with what they heard, the Specials offered the English Beat the chance to cut a single. A saxophone player was required for the session so Saxa, then 50 years old, was recruited from his steady pub gig and whisked away into the studio to assist. He enjoyed it so much he stayed on with the band.

In Autumn 1979, the English Beat released their first single on the Two Tone label. The old Smokey Robinson, Motown classic "Tears Of A Clown," was given the full Beat treatment and clocked up a Top 10 U.K. chart hit for them. It was a double A side backed with a group original, "Ranking Full Stop." In early 1980 they formed their own label in England, Go-Foot, and licensed it to Arista Records. Their first Go-Foot single, "Hands Off . . . She's Mine" b/w "Twist And Crawl," was another Top 10 U.K. smash.

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