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Fans sit in rain to see washout

By GAIL DEXTER

CALEDON EAST—This year's Mariposa Festival proved that the fans are more dedicated than the folk singers. They endure rain, black-outs, sound breakdowns and the surveillance of 40 security men.

The singers offered some uninspired performances.

Ian and Sylvia, the headline act, cancelled their Saturday evening performance because a power failure cut off the sound. And 3,000 drenched fans were told to come back for the Sunday matinee.

Those who returned heard two brilliant rhythm and blues songs by Sylvia and an otherwise dull performance. One of Ian's recent compositions bemoans the fact that the new Canadian flag weren't color-fast.

He compares their washed-out appearance to Canada's washed-out culture (of which his song was an obvious example).

Surprisingly, the audience let them go after only one encore.

LIGHTFOOT

Gordon Lightfoot was the other big Canadian name on the program. He was the best received entertainer, for many of his recent compositions have become hits across the continent. Lightfoot is also a tremendous performer.

The other Canadians were good but rarely good enough. The Country Gentlemen produced some fine bluegrass sounds. The Dirty Shames are a jug band that has an infectious good time on the stage. Joni Anderson is a beautiful blonde Joan Baez. And she sings her own compositions with a charming simplicity.

The outstanding performers were American. Son House is a 63-year-old blues singer from Mississippi who was rediscovered in 1964. His blues have a real emotional tone that held the audience even though the sound system broke down half-way through his performance.

Phil Ochs, a singer with a social conscience, also performed beyond the call of duty in Saturday's power failure. He sang for about a



HIP-SLUNG PANTS, short-short blouses were almost a uniform for gill campers. But, not-numbered 10 to 1, they could have stopped the show in gunny sacks.

half hour without spotlights or sound equipment. His compositions are of the Bob Dylan protest variety—only without the bite.

TOTAL INVOLVEMENT

John Hammond, also from the United States, sings big city blues. He means the words into the microphone and makes the mouth organ wail unearthly sounds. Hammond has a total involvement in the music—something rare at Mariposa, where most of the people were performers first, folk singers second.

Englishman Bill Price was almost booted off the stage when he sang traditional English ballads.

When asked to sing like the others, he said: "Those aren't folk songs, you peasants. I come from England and I know."

The smaller audience at Sunday's ballad workshop certainly knew. They gave him a huge applause.

Unfortunately, most of the folk music at Mariposa this year was an excuse for elevated rock 'n roll, bad poetry and shallow politics. But the audience seemed to love it. They sat for hours on wet ground straining to hear. On the other hand, there were no standing ovations. And the 200 folkies who gathered in the pavilion after the Saturday concert sang Beatle songs!



WILD ONLY IN CHOICE of footwear and costumes, about 6,500 young people settled down almost sedately at the fifth Mariposa Folk Festival this weekend. They may have been deterred by police demonstrating the use of nightsticks.