



British blues/rocker Mick Clarke will play with his band Hard Times at Taylor's, August 6.

MUSIC

Mick Clarke brings Hard Times

by Dennis Fitzgerald

Taylor's Tavern will welcome British blues/rocker Mick Clarke Thursday, August 6, for his first Eugene appearance. For the past three years, Mick Clarke has been taking blues audiences by storm all over the U.S. and Europe. This comes as no surprise to his fellow Londoners, who have praised Clarke as one of Europe's foremost bluesmen for over 20 years.

Mick Clarke formed his first group during the British blues boom of the late '60s. Named Killing Floor, the band recorded two albums, *Killing Floor*, released in the U.S. on Sire Records, and *Out of Uranus*, released only in Europe on the Penny Farthing label. The band toured all over Britain as well as in Germany, France and Switzerland and appeared on all the contemporary radio and TV rock shows.

In 1969-70 the band backed Texas

blues guitarist Freddie King on two U.K. tours and also worked with legends such as Howlin' Wolf and Otis Spann. In the years following the demise of Killing Floor, Clarke worked in several different acts, including Toefat, with British pop star Cliff Bennett. He also took jobs in a country and western group and a show band which toured U.S. military bases in Germany. Another of his later rock and blues bands, Salt, backed up Muddy Waters at a major London concert and appeared at the country's top rock event, the Reading Festival. They recorded an L.P., *All Wired Up*, on Raw Records, which has now become a collector's item.

The most recent recording project for Clarke is an L.P. called *West Coast Connection*, taped last fall, with his present band Hard Times. The disk has yet to be pressed but music reviewer Stuart Thomlinson of

The Oregonian heard the tape and said, "*West Coast Connection* has a live feel unfettered by production values. Clarke's strong and melodic mid-range tone . . . gives the record a gritty, get-down quality that pays homage to, while reinterpreting, American rock and blues."

Before long, Mick Clarke plans to return to his native London for club dates there and throughout Europe until February. In the meantime he is playing extensively at Portland's best clubs. He recently opened for San Diego's mighty rock-a-billy trio, The Paladins, and will soon do the same for legendary British blues/rockers, Savoy Brown, both at Portland's Pine Street Theater.

Mick Clarke's Hard Times will begin at 9:30; admission will be \$2 at the door. For more information, call Taylor's Tavern at 344-1222.

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