

# Surfers:

## California hangs ten on the Northwest in search of rain puddles with waves

It had become a routine, but it was a comfortable routine and I enjoyed it. After a brisk morning jog on the soggy sawdust of Pre's Trail and an un-brisk afternoon of wading through soggy lectures, I always joined Ace and Sheila at Muffy's to trade solutions to the basic problems confronting the universe over a constantly expanding pile of emptied beer glasses. The McKenzie Marauders Electronic Washboard Ensemble was there most evenings, and their whispered croons and clacking boards provided the perfect background for our nightly ritual search for the galaxy's Ultimate Salvation.

It was during the most pleasant moment in one of these exchanges — the moment at which we were intoxicated enough to believe that we had found the Answer at last, but not too intoxicated to realize that it would take at least one more pitcher to clarify our plan — when a din erupted outside that shook the Boston Fern behind me to the tips of its tendrils.

We tried to ignore it at first, but soon the clamor swelled to a pitch that made conversation impossible, and even the Washboard Ensemble was forced to abandon its rendition of "French Pete Fandango."

"It's happened at last!" Ace screamed over the roar. I strained to make some kind of sense out of the wall of noise. It seemed to be made up of frantic wails and high-pitched screeches — an unearthly sound, yet somehow naggingly familiar.

Suddenly understanding swept across Sheila's face, and then, seconds later, an expression of sheer terror took its place. "Oh my God!" she cried, "It's... it's..." Her words were lost in a mammoth wave of sound, but in moments I came to the same ominous realization on my own. The high-decibel distortion made the barrage of amplified voices unintelligible, but a long-suppressed memory welled into my conscious mind and the raucous wailing became understandable:

*The Midwest farmer's daughter really makes you feel all ri-i-ight, And the Northern girls with the way they kiss, they keep their boyfriends warm at night...*

Muffled gasps swept around the room as the lyrics — and the event they foretold — became clear. I saw panic in the eyes of a couple Canadians, and an Alaskan friend of mine seemed on the verge of hysteria.

"Now just take it easy, everybody," I said at last, fighting to keep my own voice from quavering. "We all knew they would come sooner or later, and we've got to face up to it."

"But they're different!" someone cried.

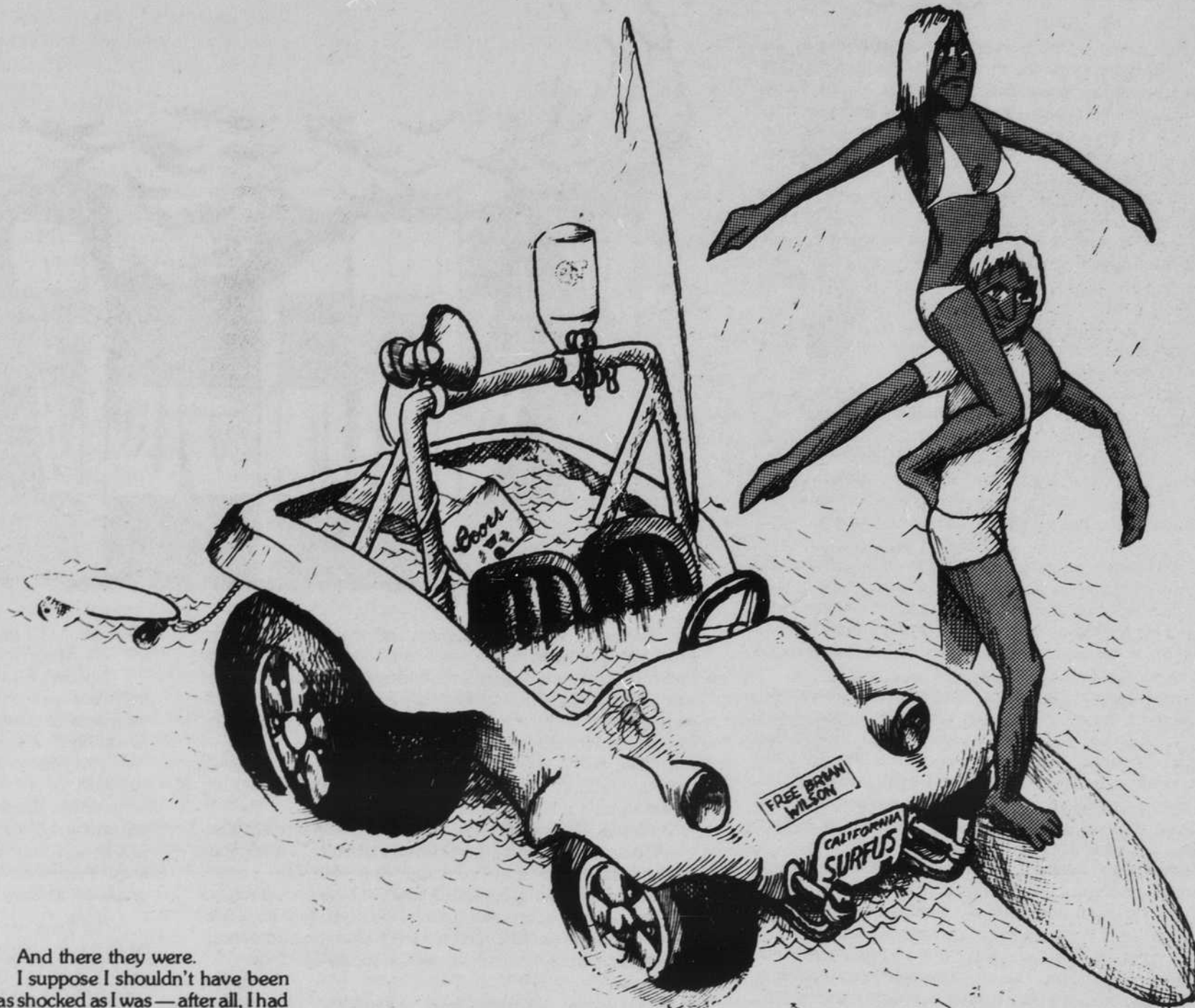
"They don't wear goosedown!" exclaimed another.

"They want to take our state away from us!" shrieked a third.

"I'm amazed at you — all of you," I said, trying to muster my most indignant expression. "You profess to be liberal, enlightened college students and here you are, petrified at the prospect of seeing a little tan skin. I'm going out there to meet them, and anyone who wants to come along," I scanned the crowd in secret desperation, "is welcome."

I waited as long as my dignity permitted, and seeing that there would be no takers, I pushed back the big oak doors and stepped hesitantly out into the drizzling evening.

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Graphic by Jon Combs

And there they were.

I suppose I shouldn't have been as shocked as I was — after all, I had seen them plenty of times before in Annette Funicello movies and in surfing competitions on Wide World of Sports.

But seeing two of them — up close, and in a dune buggy — well, it was a little unnerving.

"Uh, duck you and mellow out," I ventured over the noise.

"Bitchin', gremmie!" the male one cried, leaping over the buggy's metalflake door and splashing huarache-ed feet through the damp street until he reached me.

"Man, I haven't been this wet since I wiped out at Laguna and dinged my tandem. The name's Moondoggie," he bubbled, extending a tan palm, which I slapped gingerly. "And this chick is Deedee."

passenger area was slowly filling with rainwater. It was obvious that the car wouldn't survive — the wood paneling on the sides was already warping, and the custom plates, emblazoned with SurfUS, already sported a fringe of rust.

But even more than their car, the two Californians seemed totally unprepared for the exigencies of Oregon life. Moondoggie was clad only in his sandals, floral-print swim trunks and a "Fonz" T-shirt, and he was shaking violently as the rain unraveled the kinks in his bushy blonde hair. Deedee, who was wearing little more than her suntan lotion, looked similarly uncomfortable.

### She was rubbing on QT from a 10-gallon dispenser

He beckoned to a woman who was rubbing QT lotion on herself from a 10-gallon dispenser in the buggy's rear and she ran up to us, the drizzle beading up on her bronzed skin.

"Hang ten!" she yelled.

"Uh, howdy," I replied. "Say, do you suppose you could turn that thing down just a..."

"Oh, sure. Tape's almost over anyway."

They trotted back and the horrible screeching shrank to a bearable level. While they dug through a huge beach bag stuffed with cartridges for a replacement, I surveyed them with a mixture of fear and fascination.

Their buggy, first of all, seemed totally anomalous in a land where windshield wipers are as essential as a steering wheel. This vehicle had no windshield wipers at all, or windshield for that matter, and the

"Hey, forget about that stuff," I called. "There's music inside, and it's warm."

"Shoot the curl!" Moondoggie replied gratefully, and we ducked through the door and into the tavern's steamy warmth. Weaving through the maze of beer-stained tables and trying to dodge the angry stares of the patrons, we arrived at the table that I had left.

"Ace, Sheila, this is Moondoggie and Deedee."

"Howdy," Ace and Sheila mumbled.

"Outrageous!" the Californians chorused.

"Uh, Sheila's an anthro major who's trying to develop her Marxist consciousness," I supplied, trying to keep the conversation from dying. "And Ace is a hoedad."

"Hey," smiled Moondoggie, "I'm a bit of a hoedad myself, but its

not the sort of thing I go around admitting in public."

The sinews in Ace's massive forearms grew taut. "Just what kind of a crack is..."

"Yuck. What are those guys doing?" Deedee broke in, aiming a scarlet fingernail at the Marauders. "Do you call that twangy stuff music?"

"Yeah, where's the juke box?" chimed Moondoggie. "The Beach Boys, or the Captain and..."

"The Marauders," Sheila sniffed, "happen to be the finest bluegrass band in the Pacific Northwest."

"And if you don't like it," added Ace, "you can always..."

"What'll it be, folks?" I sighed with relief as Roscoe's familiar face floated above us in the smoky haze.

"Another pitcher of dark and some Reubens," I replied.

"BurgersfriesandCokes" Moondoggie and Deedee recited automatically.

"Right away." Though the silent moments that followed seemed decades long, Roscoe was true to his word and returned quickly with the requested dishes. Ace, Sheila and I began devouring sandwiches almost from the moment they were set before us, but the Californians seemed hesitant.

"Did we leave it in the car?" Moondoggie asked his friend.

"I don't think so... wait a minute, here it is," said Deedee, pulling a vial out of her terrycloth bag. They lifted off the tops of their hamburgers and began sprinkling the vial's contents onto the meat, and then on the french fries.

"Is that what you were worried about?" I said, smiling amiably. "Look, here's salt right here."

"Oh, this isn't salt," replied Moondoggie. "It's sand. Here, try some. I've found that food just doesn't taste right without it."

"Hey, what're you doing?"

roared Ace as the Californian began flinging handfuls of the gritty stuff at our plates. He picked up his sandwich as if it were a dear departed friend. "It's ruined!"

"Hey, look man, don't bend a rudder over it," smiled Moondoggie. "If there's a little too much on there you can always brush it off."

"I'll brush you off," growled Ace, "and bend your rudder too. Just who do you people think you are, coming up here and throwing sand on our sandwiches and making fun of our music and buying up all of our land and..."

"Who told you about the land?" asked Moondoggie innocently.

"See? He admits it!" bellowed Ace, balling huge fist and waving it under the Californian's peeling nose. "How would you like to take a quick trip to that land of yours — one way?"

"Oh, don't bother," Moondoggie replied easily, waving a hand at the walls around us. "You see, this is the property right here. Demolition begins tomorrow."

The shock reverberated around the room, and I saw Roscoe nod sadly.

"To make room for what?" Ace said icily.

"Why, a Jack-in-the-Box, of course," said Moondoggie. "You know, we haven't seen one since we left Eureka."

"That does it!" Ace roared, crumpling the "Fonz's" silkscreen face in his hand and lifting the petrified Californian into the air. "Your men may tear this place down, but you are going to have the privilege of making the first hole in the wall. One," he grunted, cocking his huge arm back, "two," he said as Deedee fainted, "thr..."

"Hold it!" I cried.

Ace froze, stunned, and every eye in the room riveted itself (Continued on Page 10)