

TOUCH AND GO

Oliver's Army Progress Nicely

Despite the fact that they've been together for less than a year, city-based 4-piece A Touch Of Oliver have managed to stir up some considerable acclaim among local musos.

The band (Diamuid sings, Brian plays bass, Hugh's on guitar and Willie bangs the drums) have just recorded their second 4-track demo in Xeric Studios and it displays an outfit finding their feet both creatively and technically.

Their first tape, while showing a definite ear for a tune, suffered from a lack of cohesion. That said, two of its songs, "Freefalling" and "Esther Rantzen", would grace any singles chart worth its salt.

The new demo opens with "Why" in which the Oliver's manfully try to ape The Pixies. It doesn't quite come off, but "Why" is a tuneful outing that's a welcome addition to the genre of the 'Teen Agnst Number'.

"Bedroom" is another nicely-written effort that rolls along jauntily and leaves a nice taste in one's mouth. The problem is that it could really be any one of a hundred Man-

chester indie bands and if A Touch Of Oliver are to go the distance, they'll need to summon up another spark of originality.

A direction they should give serious thought to heading in is hinted at on the demo's third and best track "Collapse!". A slower, more thoughtful approach is taken and the band appear to be playing with each other instead of at each other, which tended to be a problem on the first tape. While it does sound undeniably like REM, there's also a nice fresh feel to it that suggests there's a deep mine of talent lurking in the Oliver camp.

Finally, "Submarine Man" let's us know that the group members have several Byrds records in their collections. It's very 60's-ish and it's delivered with a steady and sure hand.

Live, the band tend to concentrate on the faster numbers and as they're still maturing technically, it's probably wise that they leave the slower pieces for the rehearsal room.

To date, they've supported Something Happens!, The Dixons and An



Emotional Fish and on each occasion, while not quite blowing the headlin-

ers off stage, they've held their own very well.

As it's exam time at the

moment, the band are more or less out of circulation but they will be

returning to our local stages come the end of June. They'll also be play-

ing at this summer's Lark in the Park. Look and listen out for 'em.