

SHORT TAKES



SONGS OF FAITH

Ken Greer has Big Faith in his band.

The former pedal steel player in Tom Cochrane's Red Rider realizes his latest project — a pop/rock outfit with older, pedigreed players and more than a little funky flavor — might not be quite suited to The Junkyard, a serious hard-rock bar in the Portage Village Inn.

"It's a heavy bar, but I think we're not going to have a problem musically because ... we can sound like a rock band at 120 decibels too," Greer says from a Toronto studio last week, before coming here to play Monday and Tuesday.

But he says the same type of music fan that enjoyed Red Rider tunes should appreciate Big Faith's music.

"People who want to hear music rather than see lights and bombs," he says, confiding Rider almost called it quits out of frustration before a record company finally woke up.

"It was a real struggle to get that stuff figured out. If it wasn't

for Capitol (Records) willing to take a chance on it, we were ready to split up. It had just gotten to that point."

And that's the reason Greer and the men of Faith — Chapman stickster Fergus Marsh (Bruce Cockburn's band), drummer Mike Sloski (Cockburn, Mary Margaret O'Hara), vocalist Chris Tait (Chalk Circle) — decided to release their debut full-length album independently.

Greer says Faith had some sniffs from record execs, but no bites, and the band tired of waiting around.

"We wanted to pretty much do what we wanted to do and (the music) evolved," he says. "We didn't want to worry about it being formatted and so commercial to the point where we had to have a hit on it."

"Everybody comes from a background where we had that anyway."

