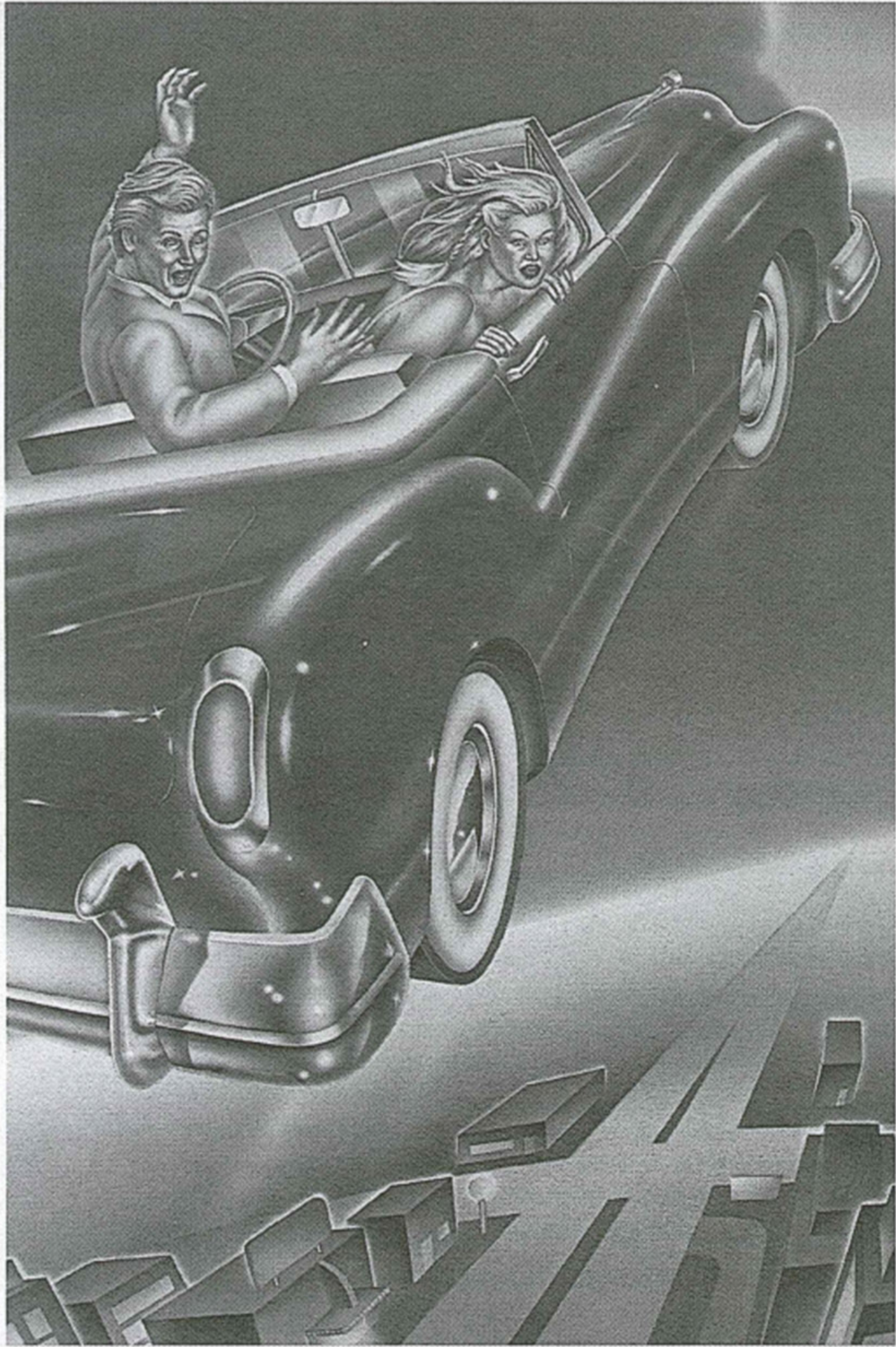


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Cover story: Red Rider - Major priority for Capitol





## Strong push by Capitol for Red Rider

### COVER STORY

by Terry Burman

Capitol Records is going all out on the debut effort, *Don't Fight It*, by Red Rider. A single titled *White Hot* was released February 5, followed by the album, released on February 11. The single was packaged in a new format. The sleeve opens to a poster of the album cover. 11,000 including promo copies were released, and 10,000 were packaged in groups of 25 in counter merchandising boxes which were placed in stores belonging to the major chains across Canada. Advance promotional copies were sent to all Capitol sales and promotion personnel. Red Rider was top priority in the Capitol promotion department.

The merchandising approach is twofold in regards to marketing and radio promotion. The initial marketing was done through specified key accounts, and included special cut-out display pieces and front rack exposure. As airplay gained momentum, the campaign was expanded into a general display campaign for which posters and flats became available. Radio ads are being developed for both AM and FM use, and J. Murphy Music Marketing have been commissioned for display work on the project. As well, Capitol is giving incentive to its internal branches through the chance to win a major prize for the best overall performance, which includes sales, airplay, merchandising, follow-up, etc. *White Hot* has been playlisted on stations across the country, and the LP has been receiving heavy airplay in Vancouver, with light to medium rotation in Edmonton, Winnipeg and Toronto, and medium rotation in Montreal.

"... We're basically a 1980's rock and roll band ..."

Formed in Toronto in 1976, Red Rider initially were a trio comprised of keyboardist/singer/songwriter Peter Boynton, guitarist/singer/songwriter Ken Greer and drummer Rob Baker. They toured in 1977 with Pure Prairie League, and followed with an appearance backing up veteran rocker Bo Diddley. In November of the same year, guitarist/vocalist Tom Cochrane joined Red Rider. Cochrane, now the group's main writer, had written



and recorded several singles and a fairly successful album, *Hang On To Your Resistance* for Daffodil Records, plus the original soundtrack for Al Waxman's film *My Pleasure Is My Business*. Bassist Jeff Jones joined the act shortly after Cochrane, and with drummer Rob Baker, forms the backbone of Red Rider.

Although *Don't Fight It* has an L.A.-influenced sound, Tom Cochrane insists, "We're basically a 1980's rock and roll band. We're no more a country rock band than Tom Petty is." Red Rider's music is a blend of rock and roll, R&B and new wave. About the band's sound, bassist Jones said, "The new wave influence doesn't really show through, as it's somewhat masked in the production. And although we tried to stay as far away from the country feel as we could, it still leaked through." *Don't Fight It* was recorded in Toronto at Manta Sound and Eastern Sound and in Los Angeles with producer Michael Jackson, known for his work with Pablo Cruise and Tom Snow. Prior to that, the band had done some demo recordings at Master's Workshop and Sounds Interchange in Toronto.

#### Red Rider and Bruce Allen - a mail-order marriage

Red Rider are out in Vancouver at the present with manager Bruce Allen, who also handles Prism, Bryan Adams and the Powder Blues. Tom Cochrane was quite positive about signing with Allen. "We chose Bruce Allen because it was like a mail-order marriage. It was a situation where we'd gotten so far with the record company, and we needed a manager fairly quickly. He was one of the best people available at the time, and he also showed the most interest." Cochrane also said that Allen could help the band better and work with them more closely in his own environment. Economically, it was more effective using Allen's sound crew and equipment. Jeff Jones expanded

on the move to the West Coast. "His (Allen's) base of operation is out here (Vancouver), and we decided that we should come and check it out. There is a better working situation happening out here than we had in Toronto. It gives us the chance to get the show tight before we go on tour." Cochrane said that Red Rider could move to B.C. permanently, although he still regards the Toronto music scene as vital and enjoys the grittiness of the bar band scene. Red Rider will play the Savoy in B.C. shortly, and will do a radio broadcast there. There is a possible spring tour with FM in the works; the tour would take in western Canada from Winnipeg back to Vancouver. Cochrane hinted at a possible Toronto showcase for Red Rider as well. But not the El Mocambo; said Cochrane, "We don't play beer halls!"

The next single from *Don't Fight It* will be the title cut. In mid-March, the album will be released in the U.S., but with some changes. The liner notes will differ, as will the order of the tracks. Also, the Peter Boynton composition *Talkin' To Myself* will not be on the American release. There are already some songs in the can for the next album, which will be different than the first effort. In terms of writing, Cochrane claims there will be more teamwork. The newer tunes that Red Rider already have down are bluesier and harder-edged than the material on *Don't Fight It*. Although the band won't be going back into the studio until at least the end of the summer, Cochrane said that the arrangements will be more direct and the approach will be away from the slick West Coast production and towards a rawer sound. Cochrane is very happy about the situation concerning Red Rider. "The company up here (Capitol) has been good to us. We can't complain about not getting record company support, that's for sure."