

I KNOW A MAN — WITH A HIT



—he's ROLF HARRIS!

VERY rarely does a record excite much interest before it has a chance to gain Pop 50 status. One of those rare occasions has come along.

The record—"I know a man." The singer—multi-talented Australian ROLF HARRIS, no stranger to the hit parade, though his last disc, "Johnny day," crept into the chart, teetered, and crept out again.



● IFIELD—"it's a hit!"

His new single can only go up . . . and up.

Question

The Beatles raved over it—"best record of the year." (See Blind Date, centre pages) and at BBC's "Pop inn" programme, in the stars' waiting-room, the cross-talk stopped as Rolf's record came over the speakers. Fellow Aussie Frank Ifield said: "That's going to be a hit, boy. I'll buy a few." "Thanks," said the bearded wonder of the pop world. "But will you dance to it? Ah hah! Can you dance to it? That's the question!"

Thinking

And he then left in great haste for Great Yarmouth with Mark Wynter, who is in the same summer show. In the taxi on the way to pick up his car for the drive to Yarmouth, Rolf talked about the record that nearly didn't materialise.

"I heard the demonstration record and thought—no, no, not

for me. It was all too American and I just didn't like it at all. George (Martin, Rolf's recording manager) said, 'I think you're silly leaving it. You could make it go.'

"Well, I left it for a week, but the melody . . . I couldn't get it out of my head. Dum-dum-dum-dum. So I started thinking about it. I did try to change the words but they said it would spoil the whole song.

Mood

"George thought we could make it different, using guitar like the Rooftop Singers. And the lyrics—they were so American I had to go aggressively the other way.

"I say 'gunna' which is dead Australian instead of American 'gonna' for one thing. And I tried to get the mood right.

Money

"I thought of a blonde sitting on a couch polishing her nails, and this poor bloke telling her about the man with lots of money and

saying 'You've got to tell this man to take his money and scam' and she's sitting there thinking 'Rich man, eh? Well, you're talking yourself out of it, chum.'

Harmonies

"He starts off confidently first—'I know a man who's SO RICH'—Rolf snarled the words out—"then at the end when he's losing, he sings it softly, almost miserably." After Rolf had recorded the first vocal, he wrote another higher part for himself and double-recorded it.

"The harmonies in it were beautiful," he said. "Like those French horn bits you hear—bom-da-bom, with another bit on top. Marvellous. Of course, when I heard it, I was pleased with the whole thing because we managed to do something different with it."

Jazz

Co-writer of the hit-that-isn't-but-will-be is Galt McDermott, who wrote "African waltz" and is a recognised jazz composer. Did Rolf feel that jazz writers should bring the extra-professional touch to pop composing, as in America?

"Can't say, because I don't know too much about it," he stated. "All I know is he did a great job on this one. The chord sequences were beautiful.

Top

"Yes, everyone likes it. Let's hope they're right."

POSTSCRIPT TO THE BRITISH SUCCESS STORY: ROLF'S OLD HIT, "TIE ME KANGAROO DOWN SPORT," IS ON THE EDGE OF THE AMERICAN TOP TEN, AND IS BEING TIPPED FOR THE TOP. —CHRIS ROBERTS.