

Bayon Pearnik



Cambodia's ORIGINAL FREE Tourism and Information Magazine Volume 3 Issue 43 Feb - Mar 2000



Photo: DAVID MAN DEL VERN

TO PREAH VIHEAR ...the Hard Way

Story and photos by Colonel Sanders

This dry season offers great opportunities for exploration of previously insecure areas of Cambodia. Whole sections of the country, cut off for years or decades by war and banditry, are becoming secure and are possibly safer than the streets of Phnom Penh. My plan to visit the temple of Preah Vihear on the Thai border from the Cambodian side was, however, nearly derailed by the travel advice released by my embassy on 24 December. "The rainy season in Cambodia is well underway..."! Rain would surely mean that we would be unable to negotiate the neglected northern Cambodian road system to reach the temple.

Consultations with Cambodian friends confirmed that "sudden floods affecting roads and bridges" were unlikely in this season and I decided to risk it!

Leaving Siem Reap on Boxing Day, my companion and I passed through Angkor Thom before turning onto the red dust track heading for Banteay Srey. It was a fine, cool morning. The colours were beautiful, the road was dry and in better repair than it had been on previous visits and my mind sailed away on dreams of the achievement we'd feel cruising up to the temple ... at which moment a camouflaged divet loomed from nowhere, seized my front wheel and the bike skidded nose down to the ground. My face buried itself in the dirt and I lay with legs tangled under the bike. Far more embarrassed to have crashed so pathetically in front of my friend than hurt, I had only minimal facial abrasions and a broken mirror; we were back on the road in a matter of minutes.

Past the turnings for Kbal Spien and Phnom Kulen the road took us into jungle as we left the cultivated area of the *srok*



Ferry, sir?

srae behind us. As we pressed on the road surface deteriorated, and signs of human habitation became increasingly less frequent. There were patches of sand and alternative side-tracks around particularly difficult sections of road, where differing routes had been favoured by two- or four-wheeled vehicles. We passed, and were in turn passed, by two pickup trucks full of laughing, shouting locals, who seemed to be finding the trip just as much of an exciting adventure as we were. The jungle became denser, the sand deeper, the bikes and their riders hotter and hotter until we suddenly emerged from the bush onto a level, graded, three-car-wide highway. This was the end of the road from the provincial capital Samrong, and we cruised into Anlong Veng.

Slumping in front of a fruit juice stall, the horrified looks of the stallholder and her retinue of assistants reminded me of the facial damage the Cambodian road surface had inflicted. A fellow drinker insisted I smear myself with the anti-septic cream he had in his pocket. It was difficult to tell whether the wounds had scabbed over or were just caked with road dust. Thirst slaked, we dragged our aching carcasses off to the sole guesthouse in town and collapsed.

We left Anlong Veng the next morning, on a very good, graded road. The air was so cold that my ears (rarely described as small) started to ache and I had to stop to stuff them with toilet paper. I am continually grateful that Cambodia only gets this cold for about two weeks every year, and was reminded why motorcycling had never been quite so enjoyable in England. In the village of Trapeang Prasat we met the village chief and broached the subject of the road to Preah Vihear temple. "Oh, very difficult, very far... maybe you can't go." We got the feeling that the chief's pessimism might be due to his fears that these foreign guests would go wandering off to get lost in the forest. At a village coffee shop we managed to elicit more helpful advice from a gentleman who had himself visited the temple. Whilst admitting the road was tough, he cast an appraising eye over our trail bikes and judged that, despite our quite obviously being foreigners of limited intelligence and stamina, we should be able to make it. Haing thanked the gentleman for his kind advice, we plunged into the jungle once again.

The wide, level track by which we left Trapeang Prast lasted no more than a few kilometres before deteriorating into deep sand. Speed reduced to a crawl, it was necessary to fight to stop the front wheel digging in and flipping the bike to the ground. Time and again we floundered and ended up with bikes perpendicular to the desired direction of travel. The streams were all dry or contained only dry season dribbles, but crossing the stream-beds involved negotiating their steep and rocky banks. More than once, the roadside vegetation grew above head-height and we found ourselves engulfed, searching for the line of least resistance, which we reasoned must be the "road". It was fortunate that another motorbike *CONT NEXTPAGE*



had already made the journey earlier in the day, meaning that we did have tyre tracks to follow.

After many wrong turns and unplanned dismounts into the dust, we emerged from the bush at the small military village of S'aem, slumped exhausted on a stall on the "main street" and demanded liquid. Some lukewarm cans of winter melon tea were ferreted out of storage for us. We were soon surrounded by a crowd of soldiers whose initial air of suspicion melted into friendliness with a little conversation. The friendship was cemented when we lent our motos out for joyrides around the village. Eventually, a young and smartly-dressed man riding a brand-new Honda Dream, who had been watching proceedings at a distance, approached. As commanding officer of the village and troops, he offered us dinner and a place to sleep overnight in the village hall—the temple was still too far away to be reached that day. As darkness fell we ate and chatted. Our host pointed out the positions on which artillery had previously stood to bombard the Khmer Rouge to the north. When we told him where we had eaten the previous night in Anlong Veng, he laughed, telling us that the restaurant we had been in belonged to him, and that he had constructed it using the timber from Pol Pot's and Khieu Samphan's now-demolished Anlong Veng residences.

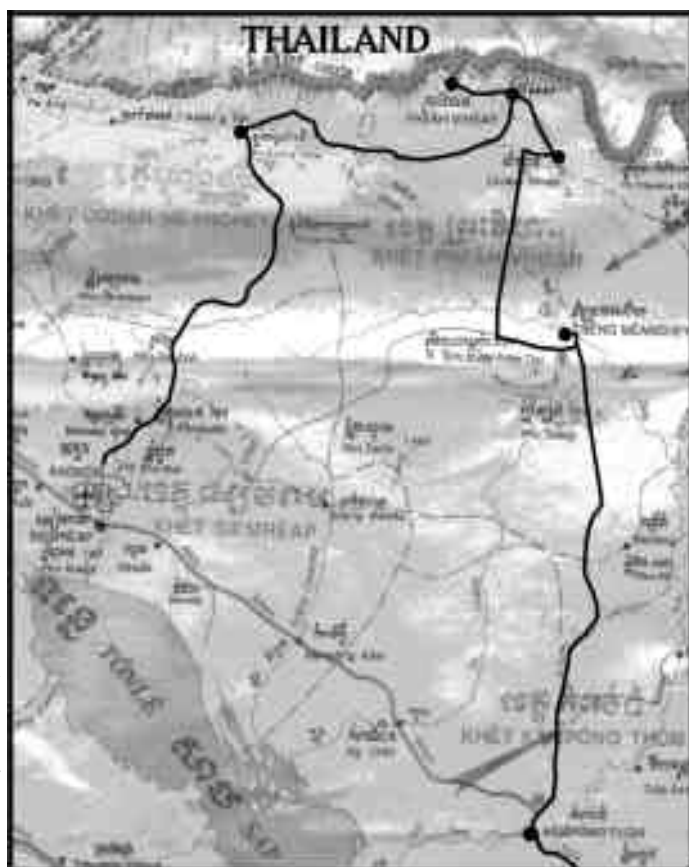
The next morning, a search of the village for petrol on sale proved fruitless. We had enough fuel to reach the temple, now a mere 25 kms away, but maybe not to

get back again. We enquired about other villages along the road—there were none, but perhaps we could buy petrol from the soldiers at the base of the Dangrek Mountains. Reaching the foot of the escarpment at mid-morning, we left the bikes with the soldiers there and started the trek upward. The trail is good, clear and easy, though the surrounding forest is reportedly heavily mined. Apparently, at one time motorbikes could be ridden up the track, that this would now be impossible. Two and a half hours later, we reached the top and the temple.

While lacking the grandeur of some of the larger temples at Siem Reap and the intricate decoration of other Khmer ruins, the setting of Prasat Preah Vihear makes it special. Perched on the escarpment's edge, a clear day yields a panoramic view over the northern plains of Cambodia. We could see the tiny dots of the soldiers' huts and our bikes far below, and the thin red threads of Cambodian roads leading to Samrong and

Choam Ksan. In the opposite direction, a tarmac highway crested a hill and headed into Thailand.

(Cont. on page 13)



PINPEAT: How to Enjoy the Music You Hate to Love

It's that sound that foreigners say drives them to madness, "that plinky-plonky music that goes on and on." They're talking about the sound of the *pinpeat* orchestra, a traditional Cambodian musical ensemble that relies almost entirely on percussion instruments. Maybe they have a right to complain—for many tourists and Phnom Penh-based expatriates, the only time they're exposed to this music is when tape recordings of it are played, at ear-splitting volume, during local ceremonial gatherings, sometimes for hours on end.

It is a shame then that one of Cambodia's most traditional and charming sounds is known mostly as a source of irritation to outsiders, who mostly come from places where the concept of music blaring from crude public-address systems at full bore in residential neighborhoods from the earliest hours onward is considered extremely antisocial, and sometimes illegal behavior.

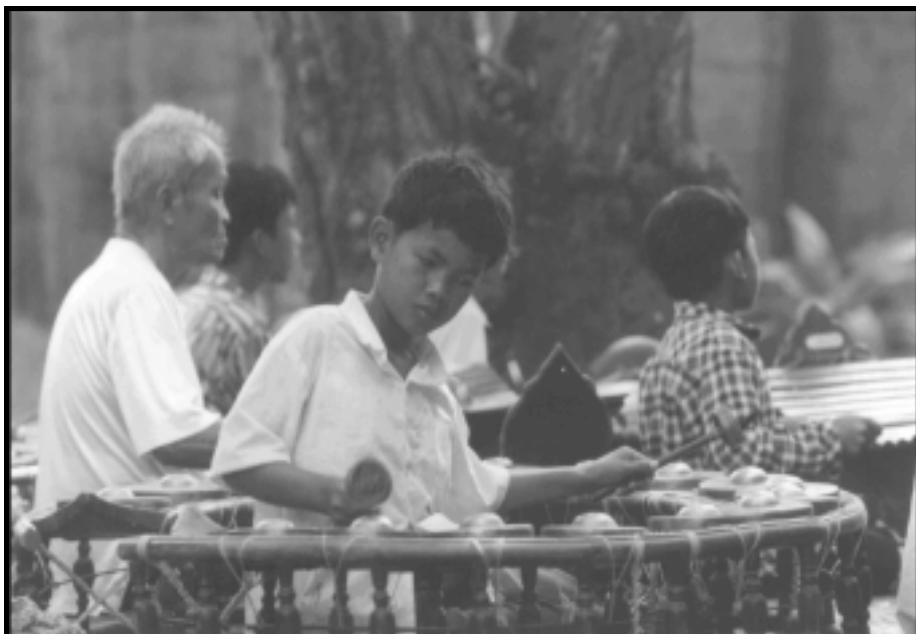
A proper setting is key to the enjoyment of music of any sort, and *pinpeat* is no exception. This music is an old form, its roots stretching back a millennia

to Java, where *gamelan* is a close cousin, and to India before that. The music has no written notation, instead its tunes are passed orally from generation to generation, and this tradition stretches back all the way to the days of the Khmer Empire centered at Angkor. It follows then that a perfect setting for lis-

tening to *pinpeat* music would be one of Cambodia's classical temples.

And the opportunity presents itself, continually, a mere 40

kilometers south of Phnom Penh at Tonle Bati. The village and popular picnic spot boasts a 12th-century Khmer temple, and *pinpeat* players can often



A young student plays on the khong thom, a set of 16 tuned gongs

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the temple's inner court. The acoustic fullness and mellow sound of the music, played live in this peaceful setting, will surprise anyone who has only endured it blaring from a loud-speaker.

57-year-old Yao Seng has been blind from the age of five and says he learned how to play the *roneat k'aek*, a boat-shaped hardwood xylophone, by trial-and-error memorization. He plays at Tonle Bati frequently, either solo or in the company of some of his students who range in age from eight to 33.

Yao Seng says, with a guile that is almost convincing, that Cambodians also find the blaring broadcasts of *pinpeat* music unpleasant, and therefore often hire him to play live and unplugged at festivals and ceremonies. The abundance of taped *pinpeat* music, he says, is due more to the lack of available musicians than any love of scratchy recordings.

"Before the Khmer Rouge, every pagoda had a *pinpeat* orchestra, but by the end of that time they had destroyed all the instruments," he says. "In Cambodia today, few people want to learn to play this music because the skill will not make them rich."

Yao Seng himself is not getting rich, but he supports himself as a *pinpeat* musician. Be-

cause the private gigs depend on a seasonal cycle of festivals, he also teaches the skill "one by one", to willing youngsters, and plays for donations at Tonle Bati every week he is entitled to, except Mondays and Tuesdays. Two weeks out of a month, Yao Seng's teacher Preap Kong plays instead, bringing along an ensemble of young *pinpeat* students.

Vistors to the temple, especially those who have only been exposed to *pinpeat* via a loud-



Yao Seng on the roneat k'aek xylophone

speaker, will likely discover a pleasant experience. Show up in the cool of the early morning, sit back and sip on a coconut. And don't forget to leave a little in the kitty—you'll be making a direct contribution to the survival of one of Cambodia's most

TRAVEL ADVISORY

Recent arrivals via Poipet report that business visas are now available at a charge of 1200 baht at the border. Our sources say latest attempts by border officials to milk foreign tourists include a one-dollar lubrication charge for visa application forms and, worse yet, attempts to levy a 50-dollar fine on anyone entering the Kingdom without an updated international vaccination certificate. One certificateless traveller reports that while fellow arrivals acquiesced, he met these strident demands for payment with equally strident refusals, and won out without much difficulty. We are hearing also that Moc Bai/Bavet is now a visa-on-entry crossing.

also indicate that if you find yourself heading northbound out of Stung Treng and are in possession of a valid Lao visa, Cambodian immigration police in Stung Treng will issue you a "special permit" allowing you to exit the country at the locals-only border crossing for a fee of \$45. This document is apparently also honoured on entry by Lao officials on the other side. We understand that a similar arrangement cannot be made by those wishing to cross in the opposite direction. Officials and travel agents in Phnom Penh say that crossing to Laos overland is completely impossible so let's just keep this between ourselves, and send us a note telling us how it all worked out.

Reliable sources



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Traffic Re-education Zone

Recently-announced plans to improve Phnom Penh's insanity-standard traffic are most welcome and long overdue but seem a little over-ambitious. If Cambodian drivers achieve international driving standards in a few months it would be nothing short of a miracle.

Cyclos will have to wear grey uniforms (how can they afford it when the bulk of them barely eke out enough money to eat?). They will not be allowed to smoke or drink on duty (may reduce the amount of



No passenger limit on cars—yet

photo: Murray Wray



Be alert for surprises on Phnom Penh

kamikaze traffic manoeuvres).

Cyclos and motos can no longer ride three abreast—great! Frustration is not the word to describe being stuck behind three motos loaded with seven or eight passengers, all having a social chat as they putter along the street.

Motos will have to be registered (even if there is no database to check them by), everyone will have to wear a helmet (how will they afford them?) and only one adult and a child on the back (some families will find this one difficult).

All this is reminiscent of the rule they attempted to impose several years ago

where everyone had to sit side-saddle on the back of a moto. The reason given for this bizarre rule was that it is more difficult for side-saddle-sitting riders to throw grenades. Of course everyone ignored it.

To help everyone learn these rules, lines and pedestrian crossings have been painted on Monivong and police have been standing in the middle of the street to keep people on the correct side of the road. Having witnessed two policemen nearly run over by overtaking cars, do they get danger money?

Police with bullhorns at major intersections bark at traffic to get back off the pedestrian crossings whilst waiting for the traffic lights. Failure to comply results with a whack on the arms by a PM with a stick (wonder where they learnt those tactics).

All these ideas are good, but perhaps a simpler solution is needed. Make everyone take a driver's test instead of just buying the driving license, or in the case of motos, not needing one. Then people may have a faint idea of what the signs and signals mean along with correct road positioning (i.e. pulling over to the far left is not the correct thing to do just before turning right).

Look on the bright side: it may not be perfect but at least something's being done to address the problem.

There was a rude interruption to the smooth flow of traffic on Monivong near Calmette Hospital in early February when four policemen were spotted chasing a

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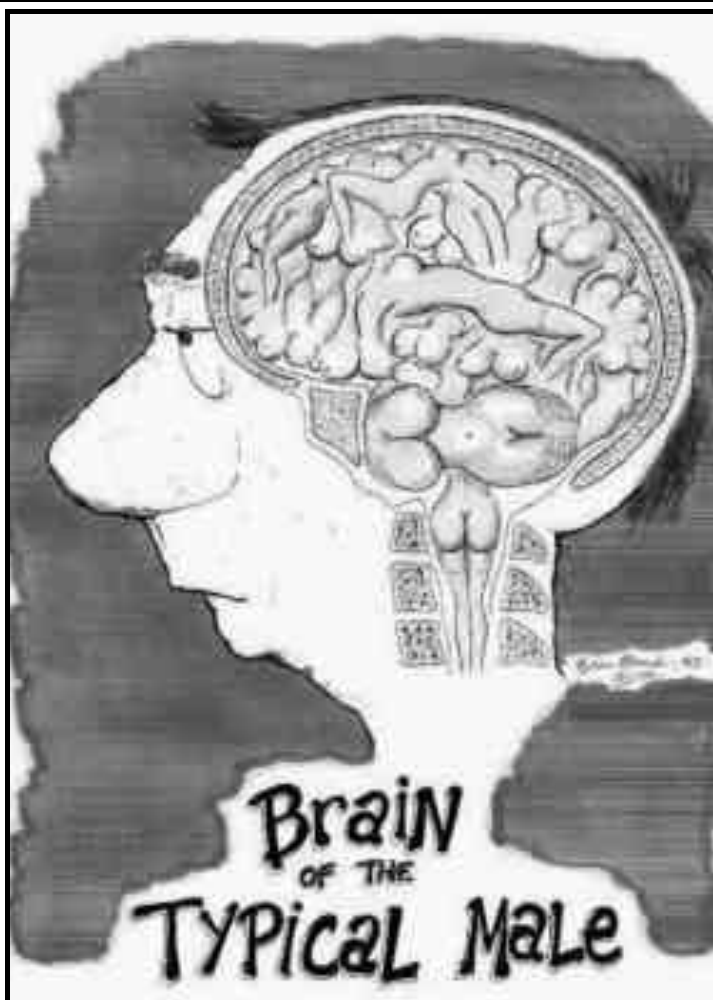


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Unverifiable Information

- If you yelled for 8 years, 7 months and 6 days, you would have produced enough sound energy to heat one cup of coffee. (Hardly seems worth it!)
- The human heart creates enough pressure when it pumps out to the body to squirt blood 30 feet.
- A pig's orgasm lasts for 30 minutes.
- Banging your head against a wall uses 150 calories an hour. (Still not over that pig thing, are ya?)
- Humans and dolphins are the only species that have sex for pleasure. (What's the deal with the pigs?)
- On average people fear spiders more than they do death.
- The strongest muscle in the body is the tongue (Unless you are a pig).
- You can't kill yourself by holding your breath.
- Americans on the average eat 18 acres of pizza every day.
- Every time you lick a stamp, you're consuming 1/10 of a calorie.
- You are more likely to be killed by a champagne cork than by a poisonous spider.
- Right-handed people live, on average, nine years longer than left-handed people do.
- A crocodile cannot stick its tongue out.
- The flea can jump 350 times its body length. It's like a human jumping the length of a football field.
- A cockroach will live nine days without its head, before it starves to death. (Creepy!)
- The male praying mantis cannot copulate while its head is attached. The female initiates sex by ripping the male's head off ("Honey, I'm home ...what the ...")
- Some lions mate over 50 times a day. (In my next life I still want to be a pig...quality over quantity!)
- Butterflies taste with their feet.
- Starfishes haven't got brains.
- After reading all these, all I can say is, "Damn Pigs!"
- Now every time someone calls you a pig, you can say, "I wish."



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Chemical Enhancement

A recent scare in Vietnam sent health officials cracking down on makers of *pho* soup noodles, many of whom had been using formaldehyde to keep their wares "fresh". Be that as it may, industry sources say that a significant percentage of the vegetables shipped here from our neighbours to the east are treated in a similar manner, and will doubtless continue to be for the foreseeable future.

Surfing

An interesting edition of the *Cambodia Daily* a few weeks back covered the Internet in Cambodia, featuring plenty of information and a list of sites dealing with the country.

Oddly, the *Daily's* own web-site was not listed. This may be due to it having virtually nothing on it, especially no news. Come on, Bernie, you may be tight but you *could* give a little bit of information away free!

Alert

Following the Bin Laden bull-shit affair wherein security was heavily tightened and all non-essential American embassy personnel were sent home (leaving only the ambassador, but he was busy bimbaling around the streets at night being robbed at gunpoint). Immigration officials at Pochentong airport were put on alert for possible Pakistani terrorists.

One London-based Pakistani arrived from England only to be told he was not welcome here as "we have many bad people here already," however, if he paid one hundred dollars he could (and did) walk through immediately. Nice to see that they're taking the job seriously and that chequebook terrorism is given a chance.

Weed Clampdown

Smokeable herbs haven't been openly on sale in local markets for some time, but now things seem to be getting even tighter. A pizza establishment was recently raided by

warrant-wielding police who confiscated one of their most popular toppings.

Although the parlour in question reports the situation is currently resolved (they wouldn't say how much), other pizza purveyors in the capital say they're being more secretive about their ingredients in the future. Police are widely rumoured to be aiming for higher earning potential by nabbing foreigners having a

puff in bars and other public establishments. This should be taken seriously as even the Rizla rolling paper distributor (not that he knows anything about joints) is warning his customers to be careful.

Authorities might do well to keep the broader economic aspects of the issue in mind—easy availability of the herb is one of Cambodia's few major tourist draws, along with Angkor Wat and cheap sex.

Red Flag to a Bull

Yes, three people attempted to steal the Japanese flag on the riverfront. Deutsche Presse gave one of them a sex change by stating it was "three men" in a story which the *Daily* ran in their own patch without checking ... Jo was presumably not amused.

In a bizarre twist, another local expat endured a blast of rage from his wife after she read the names in a Khmer paper—the names as ran matched those of himself and two of his drinking buddies, all renowned for silly stunts. A verdict of guilty was rapidly passed, once again without verifying the facts, because this was a completely different set of people.

Three foreigners went out one night looking for the biggest pole available with which to shaft themselves. This is it!



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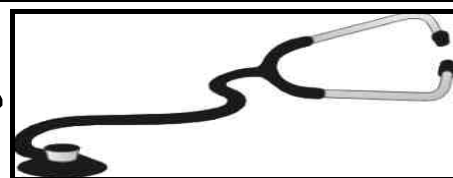
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NEW TREATMENTS



OBESITY : A FAT BLOCKER FOR FATTIES

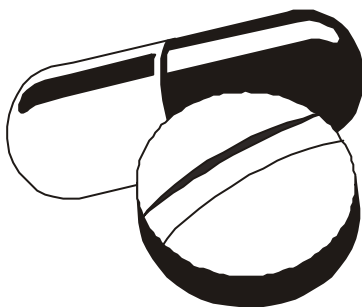
Obesity has become a global epidemic, posing a serious threat to public health due to the increased risks of diabetes, gall bladder disease, elevated cholesterol, sleep apnoea, heart disease, high blood pressure, arthritis etc.. In Europe and the U.S.A. between 30 and 50 percent of adults are overweight. The effects of being fat on health have been known since the time of Hippocrates, who said that "sudden death is more common in those who are naturally fat than in the lean."

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Flu every year is something anyone with chronic chest we are used to, but every ten (e.g. asthma), chronic heart years the protein coat of the and chronic kidney diseases, influenza virus changes in a diabetes, and for the elderly. major way so that the partial Stocks of the vaccine have immunity from last year's been exhausted in major illness gives us little protection. This year is such a year, Asian cities, but more is on the way from the U.K. which is why persons of all Orlistat and this years influenza vaccine are only and hospitals in the U.K. are available from the Tropical full. This year then the vaccine and Travellers Medical Clinic is of use to everyone and Clinic.

—Dr. Gavin Scott

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6. The FLQ.
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8. The province with the oldest, nastiest hookers.
9. NON-smokers are the outcasts.
10. You can blame all your problems on the "Anglo bastards."

Emergency Telephone Nos.

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Fire: 118

Ambulance: 119

Calmette Hospital: 426-948

Tropical & Travellers' Medical
Centre: 015-912-100

Raffles Medical Centre:
(023) 426-288 ext 650

Ta Cheng Hospital: 219-248/9

NMCEmergencyNo: 011-811-175

Phnom Penh Medical Services:
012-800-883

Police patrols (if attacked or
robbed): 366-841/2

Police for foreigners: 724-793

Dental emergency: 362-656

Airline Offices

Aeroflot: #101 St. 128 Tel.
326-008-11

Air France: Cambodiana Hotel
Tel. 426-288 ext. 669

Bangkok Airways: #61A St.
214 Tel. 261-707

Dragonair: UnitA3, Regency
Square, 168 Monireth Blvd
Tel. 217-665

Kampuchea Airlines: #19 St.
106 Tel: 427868

Malaysia Airlines: #172-4
Moni-vong Tel. 426688

Royal Air Cambodge: #206A
Norodom, Tel. 428 891-4

Silk Air: #219B Monivong Tel.
364-545

INFORMATION

Thai Airways #319 St. 106 Tel.
722-335

Vietnam Airlines: #35 Sihanouk
Blvd. Tel. 366-496

**Getting Around
Town****Taxis:**

Cars can be hired outside most
large hotels, \$2-4 a trip daytime
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Best bet is Taxi Vantha 023-982-
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Moto Taxis:

Drivers are recognizable by the
standard uniform (baseball cap).
Prices run 500-2000 riel depen-
ding on the length of journey.
Add 500-1000 riel at night and
try to use one you know .

Hiring motorbikes:

This should only be attempted if
you are used to driving motor-
bikes and can cope with the un-

predictable traffic coming at you
from all directions. Best place is
on Monivong opposite Street
184. Small motos \$3-4 per day.
Larger dirtbikes \$6-8 per day.
They will need your passport as
security.

Communications**Telephone:**

Use the public MPTC or Cam-
intel cardphone boxes when
phoning IDD. They are half the
price of anywhere else. These
are dotted on sidewalks around
the city. Cards are available at
shops near the phones and
many other outlets in denomina-
tions up to \$50. Calls at the
weekend are even cheaper.

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Most hotels and business cen-
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(cnr. Norodom & Pochent-
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Letters:

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able.

Visas

There are two visas available
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Business \$25 valid for one
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the Bureau des Etrangers
Street 200 (100 meters from
Norodom Blvd). Passport and
photo are required. Cost: 1
month extension \$30, 3 months
\$60, 6 months \$100, 1 year
\$180. This takes 3-4 weeks and
is very hard to get. A higher
price ("express service") is
available and the only one of-
fered (e.g. 1 year \$260, 6
months \$150), 2-3 day
turnaround, enquire at the of-
fice. Visa overstay is charged
at \$5 per day.

Warning: Tourist visas can
only be extended for three

BAR GUIDE RESTAURANTS

Please phone in updates.

60's BAR 60s, 70s, 80s theme disco and bar. Foot-tapping fun. 107-113 Monivong Blvd.

AFRO BAR African food, drinks and music. Beside Hong Kong Centre, Sothea's Blvd.

BLUES ROCK CAFE Live music, relaxed atmosphere. Opposite Cambodiana. #413 Sisowath Blvd.

CAFE FREEDOM On Boeng Kak Lake. Keep left at the mosque

CASA NIGHTCLUB Discotheque with Thai band. Shara-ton Hotel, north of Wat Phnom

CASABLANCA North African cuisine, cyber cafe, nightly BBQ. Street 84 north of Wat Phnom.

CATHOUSE Filipino style bar. Cnr St 63 & 118

CHEZ SIMONE Bar and Disco. St 230

DMZ BAR Food, Weekend Breakfast. 83 St. 240.

ELEPHANT BAR Historic bar in the Hotel Le Royal.

ETTAMOGAH PUB Australian bar with a good menu. 154B Sihanouk Blvd.

GARDEN BAR Curbside on the riverfront. Cnr. 148 & Sisowath Quay.

HEART OF DARKNESS Drinks, free pool. 26 St 51.

HOLLYWOOD CLUB. Discotheque & KTV. Parkway Square, Mao Tse Tung Blvd.

KIM'S KIWI BAR Sports bar and Kiwi meeting place. #180 St 130 Tel: 012 815 884.

LES BEAUX-ARTS French-style cafe & bar, 37 St 178.

MANHATTAN BEER GARDEN Outside disco bar with food, 332 Monivong Blvd.

MANHATTAN Discotheque & KTV. Holiday International Hotel, St. 84

MARTINI Discotheque, beer garden with food, giant screen movies. 402 Mao Tse Tung Blvd

MOGAMBO American bar & grill. 139 Monireth, Tel. 881-462

NEXUS Discotheque, Western run, cool sounds till the wee hours. #68 Sihanouk Blvd.

PINK ELEPHANT PUB Cheap drinks & good music on the river. 343 Sisowath Quay

RENDEZVOUS Curb side bar and restaurant. Cnr. Sisowath Quay & St 144

RISING SUN English run bar, cheap drinks #20 St 178

SAN MIG PUB Bar & Filipino foods. 221 Sisowath

SHARKY BAR American bar, free pool, good food. 126 St. 130

SONTAPHEAP CAFE Western cafe with excellent sandwiches St. 86

THANH CAN BAR Vietnamese bar with food. 14B St. 278

TOM'S IRISH PUB Bar and snacks. 163 St. 63

TRAVELLER'S BAR Bar with top pub grub, excellent Western breakfast. No 86 Street 63

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\$-<\$5 \$\$-<\$10
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**Prices are based on one person,
 one meal, one drink.**
**For updates or additions to the
 guide, please call the Bayon**

Antony Pizza, 94 Wat Phnom, 012 809 597 / 012 825235: Pizza, pasta, \$-\$

Baan Thai, 2 St. 306; 023-362-991: Thai foods, \$

Bamboo House, 43 Sihanouk; 012-841-302: Filipino food, \$

Banana Leaf, 273 Sisowath; 023-724-508: Indian & Sri Lankan food, \$

Bayon Hotel Restaurant, 2 Street 75; 023-430-158: French cuisine, \$\$

Blue Dog Cafe, 33 Sihanouk; 023-212-444: sandwiches, snacks, Western & Asian foods, \$-\$

California II, 317 Sisowath; 023-982-182: Western & Asian foods, \$-\$

Central Cafe, City Central Hotel, Monivong & K. Krom; 023-722-022: Western/Asian buffets, \$-\$

Chao Praya, Mao Tse Tung Blvd, Thai foods, \$-\$

Chef's Deli, 023-218-922: Western & Asian foods, \$-\$

Chiang Mai, 227 Sisowath; 011 811456: Thai food, \$-\$

Club 51, corner Streets 51 & 172; 012-804-836: European cuisine \$-\$

Comme a la Maison Delicatessen, French food, Closed Mondays. 20 Street 75; \$

Dong Bang Cafe, 114 Sihanouk; Korean food, \$-\$

Eid, 327 Sisowath Quay; 023-367-614: Thai food, \$

Ecstatic Pizza, 193 Norodom; Pizza & pasta, \$-\$

Festival, 50 Sihanouk; French food, ice cream & crepes, and desserts, \$

Fiesta Caravan, 50 Sihanouk; Filipino food, \$-\$

Foreign Correspondents Club, 363 Sisowath; 023-427-757: International foods, \$\$

Garden Bar, 271 Sisowath; 018-814-992: Italian, International foods, \$-\$

Globe Restaurant, 389 Sisowath; 023-215-923: Western, Vietnamese, and other Asian food, \$

Guesthouse No. 1, Ms Hoa Boeung Kak Lake, 012-884-650 Western, Asian, African food \$-\$

Happy Herbs, 345 Sisowath; 023-362-349: Pizza & pasta, \$-\$

Happy Pizza, 295 Street 110; Pizza & pasta, \$-\$

Happy PP Pizza, 157 Sisowath; Pasta, \$-\$ Tel: 023-300-157/ 012 -866-470.

Heisal, 357 Sisowath; Japanese foods, \$-\$

Helen's Bakery, 93 Monivong Blvd: Western/Oriental foods \$-\$

Ichiro, 59 Street 240; Japanese foods, \$-\$

Indian Heritage, Street 352, Indian food, \$-\$

Indian Restaurant, 81 Monivong; Indian foods, \$

Istanbul Turkish Kebabs Restaurant, 315 Sisowath Quay; 023-368-590: Turkish Kebabs

Khmer Surin, 9 Street 57; 363-050: Khmer & Thai foods, \$-\$

Kim Lee, 336 Monivong; Asian & Western foods,

\$

Kolap Tep, 150 St 188; Indian food, \$

Kon-Tiki, 95 Sisowath Quay, 012 847625 Asian & Western foods, \$-\$

Le Bistrot, 76 Street 108; French pastas, \$-\$

La Casa, 4 Street 257; French foods, \$-\$

La Croisette, Sisowath ; French foods, \$-\$

Le Deauville, Wat Phnom; 012-801-955: European foods, \$-\$

Le Pasha, 193 Street 208; French foods, \$-\$

La Paillote, 234 St. 130; 722-151: French foods, \$\$

La Taverne de Rio, 373 Sisowath Quay; 023-725-258 Brazilian, French, Khmer foods, \$-\$

Le Casablanca, 47 Rue de France; 012.805.816: Moroccan & Mediterranean foods, \$

Little India, 6 Street 217; 023-217-373: Authentic Indian foods, \$

Lucky Burger, 160 Sihanouk; Western fast food, \$

Mamak's Corner, 52 Street 217; Malaysian foods, \$

Mount Everest, 98 Sihanouk Blvd, 023 213821, Nepalese/ Indian Cuisine. \$-\$

Nagasaki, 39 Sihanouk; 023-218-394: Japanese food, \$-\$

New Park, #42Eo Sihanouk Blvd, Indian Food, \$-\$ Tel: 012 883271

Nike's Pizza House, #160 St. 63, Pizza & Pasta \$-\$ Tel: 015-839-689

No.1 Bar & Restaurant, 79 St. 63, 023-217903: French/Chinese Thai cuisine, \$-\$

One Way Restaurant, 136 Street 308; 023-215-621: Khmer & Western food, \$-\$

Paparazzi, 35 Street 214; 720-273: Italian foods, \$

Palms Cafe, Holiday Hotel, St 84, Chinese food \$-\$

Phnom Khieu, 138 Sihanouk; Asian foods, \$

Pho Number 1, 226 Monivong; Vietnamese foods, \$

Pon Lok, 319 Sisowath; Asian foods, \$-\$

Red, 56 Sihanouk; 012.831.407: European foods, Closed Sunday, \$

River Pavillions, Sisowath Quay, Khmer & Western foods, \$-\$

Rendezvous, 239 Sisowath; 023-723-835: Asian & Western foods, \$-\$

Royal India, 310 Monivong; Indian food, 023 300080 \$-\$

Russian Restaurant #2 St. 120; 023-722-188: Russian cuisine. \$-\$

Seri Paun, Street 178; Malaysian foods, \$

Saigon House, 121 Sisowath; Vietnamese foods, \$

Scandic Restaurant, #4 St. 282; 023-302-388: Scandinavian, European food, \$-\$

Sharky Bar, 126 Street 130, American food, \$-\$

Shanti Lodge, St. 93, Boeung Kak Lake: 018-820-840: Indian Food, \$

Tamarind, 31 St. 240: Khmer, European food, \$-\$

Thanh Can's, 14B St. 278; 012-870-158: Western & Vietnamese foods, \$

The Mex, 116 Norodom; 023-360-535: Mexican & Western foods, \$

Topaz, 102 Sothea's; 012.807.347: Thai & Western foods, \$-\$

Trellis Restaurant Outside dining, French style #36 St 214 \$-\$

Veijo Tonle Restaurant, 237 Sisowath; 012-847-419: Pizza, pasta, Khmer food, \$-\$

Wagon Wheel Restaurant, 353 Sisowath; 363-601: German, Western, Khmer foods, \$-\$

William Tell, 13 St. 90; German food and beer garden \$-\$

TRAVEL INFO

Feb-Mar 2000

Want to go somewhere but don't know how? Here's a quick summary of options and prices.

Coaches/buses depart from Ho Wah Genting Bus Terminal at the S.W. of Central Market.

Chbar Ampov market is the other side of the Vietnamese bridge. Taxis & pickups leave from the N.W. corner of Central Market unless otherwise stated.

Boats leave from just north of the Japanese Bridge (Route 5).

Times are given for departure (taxis etc. often won't go after this time). Journey time is in bold type. Prices are one-way, per seat. Hard haggling is required to get some of these prices, and they can fluctuate, so use them as a guide.

Kampot/Kep:

Taxi: 10,000 riel. Pickup 6,000 riel. 5-1 p.m. Doeum Kor Market, Mao Tse Tung Blvd. (near the Inter-Con Hotel). Minibus 7000riel. **3hrs.** Train: 6:30am, 2800 riel, **6hrs.**

Reasonable road. Take the train if you have the time: Kep is the forgotten beach resort in Cambodia.

Siem Reap:

Express boat: 6:30-7am, \$25 **5hrs**
5-9 a.m. Taxi: 20,000riel, pickup 15,000 riel. **8hrs**
Minibus from the Capitol Guesthouse: 6.30am, \$9, **8hrs.**

The road gets bad past Kompong Thom.

Slow boats go but have no schedule; enquire just up from the express boats and haggle over price. Take a hammock and refreshments as it takes up to 36 hours. Relax and enjoy the scenery.

Sihanoukville:

Coach: 7.30-1.30 pm, 10,000 riel. **4hrs.** Taxi: 5-3pm. 10,000 riel, & Pickup: 6,000 riel, **3.5hrs.** Train: 6:30am, 4,500 riel, **12hrs.**

Excellent road. Pickups may stop a few times on the way; the coach stops once for refreshments. The train journey is idyllic if you have the time. Views from the roof are stunning.

Kampong Chhnang:

Bus: 7-2pm 7000riel. **2.5hrs.**
5-3pm. Taxi: 7000riel. Pickup 4000riel. **2hrs.**
Reasonable road.

Battambang:

Train: 6 a.m., 4,500riel **12hrs.**
Taxi: 5-11am. 25,000 riel, pickup 7000riel. **7-8hrs.**
Motocross track for a road, wear padded clothing & look at it like a very long fairground ride. Again the train is the way to go if you have the time and enjoy scenery. A lot of short stops and you're bound to meet some interesting people.

Kampong Cham:

Express boat: 7 a.m. 18000riel **2hrs.** Taxi: 5-3 pm. 7,000riel. Pickup: 3500riel. Minibus: 5,000 riel **1.5hrs.** Excellent road. Slow boats also go, journey time up to 7 hours (see Siem Reap). Great scenery but get them coming back downstream as it's faster and quieter as the engine isn't labouring, making snoozing in your hammock eas-

Vietnam Border:

Chhbar Ampov market, 5-9am. Taxi: 10,000riel; Pickup: 6,000 riel; Minibus: 8,000riel. **4hrs.** Bad road. Capitol Guesthouse does a bus ticket all the way to Saigon for \$6 leaving at 6.45am.

Poipet (Thai border):

5-8.30am. Taxi 35000riel. Pickup 15000riel. **10-12hrs.**
Road has holes you can park trucks in. See Battambang, then add a further three hours of

Koh Kong (Thai border by sea):

Get to Sihanoukville, then get the express boat from the fishing port at 12pm. 500 baht. Then you have to cross the river by dinghy (20baht) get a taxi or motorbike to the border (20 baht sharing, 10 minutes).

Kratie:

Express boat: 7 am. 30000riel **5hrs**

You can go to Kampong Cham and pick up the express boat from there (15,000 riel approx). Trucks also go from Kampong Cham but the road is terrible and it is strongly not recommended.

Udong:

Bus: 7-2pm 4500 riel. **1.5hrs**
Taxi: 5-3pm. 5000 riel. Pickup: 3000riel, **1hr.**
Reasonable road.

Kampong Thom:

6-12pm. Taxi: 6000riel. Pickup: 4000 riel. **2hrs.**
Good road.

Palin:

Get to Battambang. Taxis leave from Phsar Le in Battambang, 6-2pm. Taxi 10,000 riel. Pickup 5,000riel. Crap road. **4 hrs.**
Bring back some rubies.

Prey Veng:

6-12pm. Chhbar Ampov Market. Taxi: 6,000riel. Minibus: 5,000riel. Pickup: 4,000riel. **3hrs.**
Bad road.

Svay Rieng:

6-12pm. Chhbar Ampov Market. Taxi 7000riel. Minibus 5000riel. Pickup 4000riels. **3hrs**
Bad road.

Mondulhiri:

It is possible to get a truck from Kampong Cham, but not in the wet season. Fly there.

Stoeung Treng/

Ratanakiri: It is possible to go from Kratie but the road is unsafe and the river, many robberies and shootings have occurred. Don't risk it, fly.

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Fri - Sat 11am - 2pm & 6pm - midnight.



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TEN DELUSIONS FOR CHINESE NEW YEAR

1. Non-stop neighborhood wedding and parties, volume cranked to the max.
 2. Critics of Khmer culture and contemporary social conditions in Cambodia sentenced to write 10,000 word essays on "Present-Day Implications of the Glories of Angkor Wat".
 3. French critics of recent American policies in Southeast Asia to attend remedial history classes covering the period 1850-1954.
 4. Punitive fines to be assessed on foreigners wearing white socks under open-toed sandals, \$50 per day.
 5. Foreigner wearing one of those blue-and-white shirts with a teddy bear and a cute saying on the front, \$100.
 6. Foreigner wearing international driving standards in two months flat.
 7. Foreigner wearing "Tin-Tin au Cambodge" T-shirt, \$300.
 8. Foreigner wearing krama, \$10,000 plus immediate and permanent deportation from the Kingdom.
 9. Foreigner wearing Quorum requirement for National Assembly reduced to two members, but first attempt to convene fails.
 10. All future Letters to the *Phnom Penh Post* from Claude Rabour to be published only in *Cambodge Soir*—in English. Violation to result in his being placed under 24-hour house arrest on the grounds of Euro-Disney.
- And a Happy Chinese New Year to all...



**COME DOWN FROM YOUR TREE AND
EXPRESS YOUR WILD INSTINCTS AT THE
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#36 STREET 214**

Preah Vihear

(continued from page 3) A hundred or so Thai and foreign tourists were scrambling over the ruins. A dozen Cambodian soldiers and a few Thai military sprawled, trying to gain some warmth from the pale sun battling through the cloud cover. To visit the temple from the Thai side, it's necessary to purchase a \$5 entry ticket. Once we'd explained that we had, really, come through Cambodia, we were not only not asked to buy a ticket, but the tourism officials gave us the fuel we needed to get home. Our attempts to pay for the petrol met with adamant refusal.

If we were to get to Choam Ksan and the relative comfort of the guesthouse there before nightfall, we needed to hurry. We trotted back down the path carrying the petrol in water bottles, recharged the fuel tanks and hit the road once more.

Returning through S'aem, our hosts of the previous night looked up from their game of volleyball and waved as we sped past, with no time to stop if we were to reach Choam Ksan before dark. We didn't reach Choam Ksan before dark. At 6:30 we were asking directions from the inhabitants of a very isolated hut and I was getting worried. By 7:00 however, we had arrived at the charming Son Sann guesthouse: huge wooden rooms with beaten earth floors, fans, mosquito nets and a palm-shaded area at the back to sit, eat and drink.

We woke well-rested in our compara-

tively luxurious surroundings, facing only a three- to four-hour stretch to Tbaeng Meanchey, the capital of Preah Vihear province. This seemed to be the day for water obstacles: scary single-plank bridges; steep-sloped plunges into streams and easily-capsizable ferry canoes. We finally made it to the tiny administrative centre, which, after our journey, felt like a full-scale metropolis.

The final section of the journey, back to the more populated region of Kompong Thom, was a breeze. I reflected on

how different my new perception of this stretch of road was from the first time I had ridden it, only three months earlier in the wet season, and cursed its potholes.

(This sort of trip is for experienced riders only—the ability to speak Khmer is almost essential in order to get around. Bring a good map, plenty of water and travel in a group as it is easy to get lost in the middle of nowhere for a few days. Stick to well-worn paths and trails as there are still plenty of mines out there. Cambodia is no longer a war zone but given the amount of guns and explosives left over, travellers are wise to



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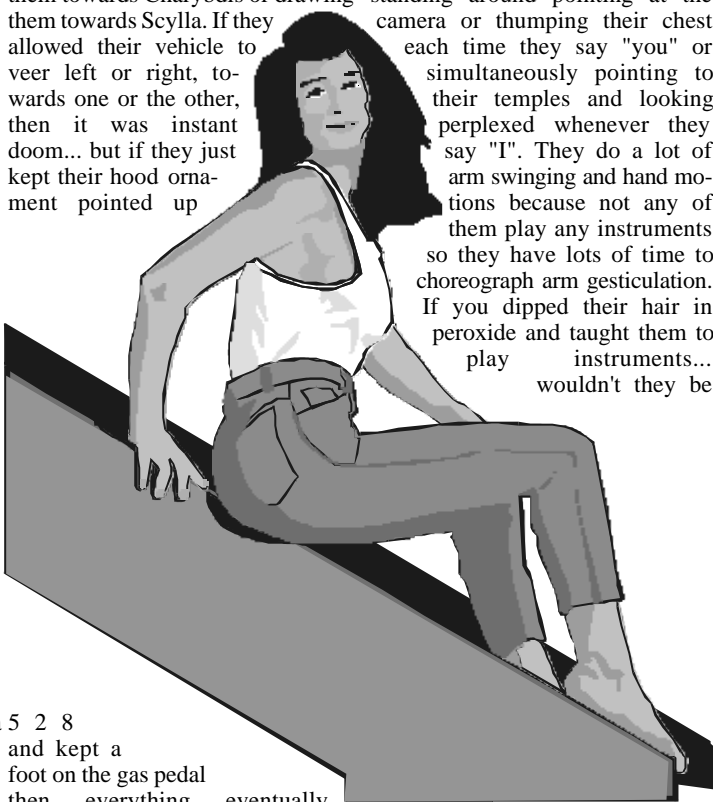
LOLITA

Movie Review by
Cletus J. "Bubba" Huckabee Jr.

Now, if you ask me, there ain't nothing in the world quite as irritating as that girlie pop trio from England what they used to call the Police. They had a song what they used to sing called "Don't Stand So Close to Me" which always bothered me because of the literary reference to this here movie called *Lolita*. Later on they made another esoteric reference, this one to Scylla and Charybdis—two towns in Chesterfield County not to far from where I come up. My old hunting and baseball playing buddy Jethro Wallace come up in Scylla, and he eventually married Betty-Mae Wallace from Charybdis (pronounced as spelled). On account of them having the same family name they had a heck of a time at the courthouse in convincing the Justice of the Peace they wasn't blood relatives... see, unlike England, we ain't allowed to marry our sisters in Chesterfield County. Now, I know you are sitting there reading this thinking to yourself, "what an idiot" because you reckon I am all confused about the Police ... but I ain't. I now the drummer was from the USA, so just keep your panties from getting in a ruffle and bear with me.

I also know that this here movie is based on a book and the book was banned by the Catholic church. Jethro was brought up a Catholic in Scylla and Betty-Mae was always a Baptist in Charybdis. The Baptists banned *Catcher in the Rye*, but they ain't made a movie of that one yet as far as I know. They ended up buying an old homestead about halfway between the two in a little place that they used to call

Midland out on State Road 528. Now his people always wanted them to bring up the young'ns as Catholic, and her people always insisted that they stick to the Baptists' way. Whenever any in-law or relative would pass through Midland they used to swear that it was as if an unseen force was drawing them towards Charybdis or drawing them towards Scylla. If they allowed their vehicle to veer left or right, towards one or the other, then it was instant doom... but if they just kept their hood ornament pointed up



but there are a couple places where I reckon they could have used a little mindless noise like the song "Walking on the Moon" or "Message in a Bottle." Now we got all these talentless "boy bands" what are popular in Asia. They all are comprised of four or more lard-colored young unemployed youths standing around pointing at the camera or thumping their chest each time they say "you" or simultaneously pointing to their temples and looking perplexed whenever they say "I". They do a lot of arm swinging and hand motions because not any of them play any instruments so they have lots of time to choreograph arm gesticulation. If you dipped their hair in peroxide and taught them to play instruments... wouldn't they be

wouldn't they be just another gesticulating "Boy Band"? This here movie ain't about a boy, though... It's about a randy old guy what falls in love with a slip of a girl and kind of pervs on her so much that he allows his life to be wrecked.... but in the process he has a good time. I guess anybody that pervs has a good time for a while until the reality of the situation catches up. Sin is fun for a season. Now don't go thinkin' I'm preaching at nobody—I ain't. That just come to mind because I was thinkin' about the church in Charybdis (or maybe it was the church in Scylla) what has a radio program on Tuesday nights back home. The preacher said "sin is fun for a season" once when I flipped past looking for the baseball game. I remember because I went from that little ol' weak AM 820 in Charybdis, to the 50,000-watt Voice of Chesterfield County at AM 825 what plays the Minor League baseball games in the summer and the announcer, Jim "The Voice" Runny, was plugging ticket sales and just as the preacher was commencing to preach and it came out "Brethren and cistern, sin is fun for a season... ticket discounts are available for all veterans or anybody who shows up at the box office in a uniform ... or part of a uniform. So come on down and become part of the Wildcat team today and bring the family out this weekend!"

I give this one three thumbs up because I like baseball movies. And I like uniforms... especially schoolgirl uniforms. This flick was banned in the U.S. of A., so see it before you depart Cambodia!

the Police of the '90s?

Then again, if you were to go back and force the Police to let their hair return to its natural color and took away their instruments...

Now this here movie doesn't deal much with songs by the Police,


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RACISM

You know you're from Canada when ...

1. You only know three spices: salt, pepper and ketchup.
2. You design your Halloween costume to fit over a snowsuit.
3. The mosquitoes have landing lights.
4. You have more miles on your snow blower than your car.
5. You have 10 favourite recipes for moose meat.
6. Canadian Tire on any Saturday is busier than the toy stores at Christmas.
7. You live in a house that has no front step, yet the door is one metre above the ground.
8. You've taken your kids trick-or-treating in a blizzard.
9. Driving is better in the winter because the potholes are filled in with snow.
10. You think sexy lingerie is tube-socks and a flannel nightie with only eight buttons.
11. You owe more money on your snowmobile than your car.
12. The local paper covers national and international headlines on two pages, but requires six pages for hockey.
13. At least twice a year, the kitchen doubles as a meat processing plant.
14. The most effective mosquito repellent is a shotgun.
15. Your snowblower gets stuck on the roof.
16. You think the start of deer season is a national holiday.
17. You head south to go to cottage.
18. You frequently clean grease off your barbecue so the bears won't prowl on your deck.
19. You know which leaves make good toilet paper.
20. The major parish fund-raiser isn't bingo, it's sausage making.
21. You find -40C a little chilly.
22. The trunk of your car doubles as a deep freeze.
23. You attend a formal event in your best clothes, your finest jewellery and your Sorrels.
24. You can play road hockey on skates.
25. You know four seasons: Winter, Still Winter, Almost Winter and Construction.
26. The municipality buys a Zamboni before a bus.
27. You understand the Labatt Blue commercials.
28. You perk up when you hear the theme from "Hockey Night in Canada".
29. You actually get these jokes and forward them to all your Canadian friends.

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Horror-Scope

Agro Vänker, Scandinavia's best-loved diesel mechanic and odd jobs man, is having a break. So Fred Twisted (evenly balanced, he has a chip on both shoulders) reads your stars.

Aquarius (January 20 - February 18)

Child of the Eighties, is that you? Bring yourself around things that made you happy in your childhood. Return this month to that feeling inside, the one the Nineties screwed up... when cheesy love songs and Brat Pack movies lit up your life like a Christmas tree on crack. After you put out the fire in your lab, sit back down to enjoy this time with friends.

Pisces (February 19 - March 20)

It's a new road; things are diverting into the obscure. Concentrate on your chosen path, the one you decided on before obstacles fly at you this month. Also, keep patient with someone annoying. You may set a new standard for friendship, just don't share too much of your party goods. Save some of that for the weekend.

Aries (March 21 - April 19)

Interesting advances in your life may pull you in different directions. Stay on track, and be cautious of those that want to get too close to you. Being a better person tends to suck at times, especially when situations like this should have been present earlier in your life. Push yourself deeper into work and/or studies. You'll find the rewards soon. May the Force be with you.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

Do you know who you really are anymore? Things tend to flourish everywhere around you, but you've lost your marbles. Catch up on your overdue list this month, don't fall behind or the Jones's will come back to kick your ass next month. Remain more centered, or try to find a centre as the case may be.

Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

You can be a real asshole sometimes; you can say things you don't always mean. You have a tendency to create your own version of reality to suit your needs. This month, if you can, try to become more of a human being instead of a god. Put yourself on our level, so that we can exchange blows, that's blows not blow.

Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

Alcohol is your friend, become a budding junkie of the liquor this month. Stock up on a few cases and cheap sparkling wine before reality hits. Do you think the power will go out? Hell no, imagine the party-goods crisis you would be facing. That's the real scary thing.

Leo (July 23 - August 22)

It's a new month, and things are looking good. The environment around you makes up for the look of your personal life. Does this mean you should go on a nature trail to meet someone special? Hell no, enjoy the outdoors and make yourself better doing it. You know, I heard somewhere that we all have to learn how to breathe eventually. I brought my inhaler for this moment.

Virgo (August 23 - September 22)

A building is only as strong as the foundation it sits on. Damn, I have genius at work here. Foundation doesn't have to literally hold up brick. It needs to flex with every emotion you have. Who flexes near you for all that you go through? If there is someone, you are the lucky one. If there isn't then look again, you're looking the wrong way. Also ... dance. It makes you feel pretty good.

Libra (September 23 - October 22)

There is a book out there, with every word ever written. Does this make life obsolete? No, because it's not the words themselves that hold all the content. The way you talk to someone is half the communication. Tone, it's the greatest alibi you can have. Tone-Loc is a rapper who hasn't really been around since he had a couple of hits ages ago.

Scorpio (October 23 - November 21)

You can be a bitch sometimes, and this is going out to all the guys as well. Tighten up your act or else you will have rejects as friends. You want to hold onto something precious, don't let the satire kill it off. Being funny hides a lot of pain for you. Shit, that Horror-Scope could be for anyone out there. Generic horoscope insertion #666. Heheheh...

Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21)

You hold your own well, and your worries only wreak havoc on occasion. Remember that you've given a lot before, and it will return to you tenfold. Try to worry less and push on through your month well. Superman will come to save the day, and when he does, tell him his ass looks nice in tights.

Capricorn (December 22 - January 19)

Money makes you worry more than normal this month. Secure yourself by putting a little to the side, the next few weeks may seem a little tight. A payoff should appear soon if all goes well. Love? Worry about that next month. Did you think this was one of those crappy horoscopes that says everything will be all right? HA!

TNGO: Fact or Fiction?

by Jeff Elson

The Pearnik continues its serialization of Tales of TNGO, the saga of a fictional aid organization that may be more real than you think. This month, the stakes are high as TNGO staff are confronted with a kidnapping crisis.

CHAPTER 6: TNGO BEATS THE ODDS

Brad Erskine, TNGO's Senior Program Officer, yawned. It was 2:30 p.m. on a hot, slow Tuesday afternoon. Outside his office, the streets of Phnom Penh were hushed and empty. He leaned back in his chair and propped his feet up on his large mahogany desk.

Brad was thinking about his conversation that morning with Dr. Harvey Murtch, TNGO's Resident Director. Dr. Murtch had refused to give him even a small raise although Brad had gone two years in Cambodia without one. Then Dr. Murtch had cajoled him into taking on the extra responsibilities of serving as TNGO's Political Science Expert, flattering Brad that he was more knowledgeable than anyone else at TNGO about the local political situation.

Brad picked up the latest issue of the *Cambodia Daily* and looked at the headline on the first page.

"Huh," he said.

"What?" said Lillith-Marie Bennington-Smith, TNGO's Senior Program Analyst.

"Did you know there was an election here last year?" Brad asked.

Before she could answer, the telephone rang. Brad picked it up.

"Listen carefully," the voice on the other end told him. "We have kidnapped Dr. Smurtch. If you want to see him alive again, the ransom is \$600,000, payable by three o'clock."

"Never heard of him," said Brad. He hung up.

"Who was that?" said

Lillith-Marie.

"Wrong number or something," said Brad. He thought for a moment. "What's Harvey Murtch's middle initial?" he asked.

"S," I think," said Lillith-Marie. "Why?"

"Just wondering," said Brad. "Do you know where he is?"

"He said something about taking next month's payroll and doing some research on an investment that could double our funding."

The telephone rang again.

"Dr. Smurtch is now begging for his life," said the voice. In the background, Brad heard a fainter voice saying "Not 'Smurtch'! 'Murtch'! 'Murtch' with an 'M'!"

"Who is this?" said Brad.

"Just a minute," said the voice. The sounds grew muffled, as if a hand had been clamped over the mouthpiece.

The voice returned. "Khmer Rouge," it said.

"Yeah, right," said Brad. "Who is this really? Is that you, Francis?"

"Listen carefully," the voice said. "If you don't pay at least \$300,000 before three o'clock, Dr. Smurtch will be tortured. To death."

"Jeff? This is Jeff, isn't it?"

"I told you, we are the Khmer Rouge. We have kidnapped Dr. Smurtch and—"

"Never heard of him," said Brad. He hung up.

Lillith-Marie looked at him quizzically.

"Prank call," he said. He picked up the *Cambodia Daily* again.

The telephone rang.

"All right," said the voice. "We are reducing our demand to \$100,000, but you must act immediately."

"Listen," said Brad, "if you really are the Khmer Rouge, prove it. Who's your leader?"

"Just a moment," said the voice. There was another muffled conversation. Then the line cleared up.

"Our leader is Mr. Ah Ba'nya'ha?" The voice sounded doubtful.

"Wait a minute," said Brad. He covered the mouthpiece of his telephone with his left hand and turned to Lillith-Marie. "Who's the leader of the Khmer Rouge?" he said.

Lillith-Marie looked at him in disgust. "You're the Political Science Expert at TNGO," she said. "A position I was denied *only* because I'm a woman, I'm sure. *You* figure it out, Mr. Political Science Expert."

"Come on, Lillith-Marie," Brad said. "Please?"

"What on earth is going on?" she asked.

"Here," he said. He held out the telephone to her.

"Hello," she said. "Yes. Yes. No, I don't know how much the Thai company paid to ransom its lumber workers. No. No, it isn't. I don't know the combination to our safe, and we never have much money in it anyway. From who? Well, I'll ask, but I don't think it will do any good." She hung up.

"They want us to ask FORGOVAID for \$5,000 to ransom Dr. Murtch," she said.

"They told me it was some guy named Smurtch," said Brad.

"I don't think you were listening carefully, Brad," she said. "Anyway, whoever it is, we've got to try to help. Go see if any of the drivers are around while I call FORGOVAID."

When Brad came back Lillith-Marie was hanging up the phone. She picked up her large woven shoulder bag. "Let's go," she said. "I've got the delivery instructions for the ransom. We've got to

get over to FORGOVAID right away and get the money," she said.

"They're giving us \$5,000 to ransom Dr. Murtch?"

Lillith-Marie shrugged. "It's too near the end of the month, and they said they had to keep some cash on hand for their electric bill," she said. "But they thought they could raise



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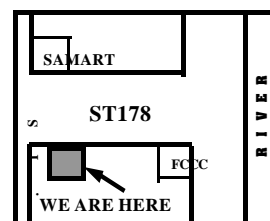
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about \$80 or \$90 if they took up a collection. Did you find a driver?"

"Well, Brian's here," he said.

"Oh, God," she said. "All right, come on."

In the end the final total of FORGOVAID's effort to pass the hat was only \$30 and a few dirty, tattered 500 riel notes. Unfortunately many of the FORGOVAID staff members had already gone to Lucky Market for their weekly shopping during the lunch hour—or so they claimed, once they learned who the ransom money was for. Lillith-Marie stuffed the money in her shoulder bag and raced back to TNGO's Land Cruiser. Brad was sitting in the front seat, looking greenish and vaguely nauseated. "Jesus, Brian," he was saying to the driver. "Where'd you learn to drive? Did you ever learn to drive?"

"Never mind that," said Lillith-Marie. "Get in the back seat if you don't feel well."

"You got the money?" said Brad.

"All they could raise was \$30," she said. "Drive to the Nada, Brian. Quickly. It's five minutes before three o'clock."

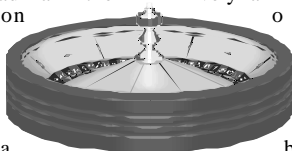
When Brian rounded the corner on two wheels and pulled up beside the Nada Casino, Lillith-Marie thrust the car door open. She leaned out of the front seat and alternated cursing Brian's driving skills with being conspicuously sick in the Nada's parking lot. She thrust her shoulder bag at Brad. "Take it inside," she said. "Table 8. Tell them you're playing for 'Dr. M,' and then put all the money on red. *Hurry.*"

Upstairs Brad pushed through a phlegmatic crowd of Taiwanese

gamblers and found Table 8. "I'm playing for Dr. M," he told the croupier.

"Dr. M?" said the croupier. "I thought it was for Dr. S."

"Hsst," said a voice to Brad's left. "Hsst!" Brad glanced over. A chastened-looking Dr. Murtch was seated at the roulette table, closely flanked by two very large, very serious Chinese gentlemen in dark silk suits. The gentlemen's faces had all the lively anima-



of frozen beef.

"Just put the money down!" Dr. Murtch whispered to Brad. "Put it on red! Quickly, man! How much did you get?"

Brad opened Lillith-Marie's shoulder bag and fished around inside it.

"It looks like thir— er, twenty dollars," he said.

"That's all?" said Dr. Murtch. "That's all? Twenty dollars for my life?"

"Where are the Khmer Rouge?" Brad asked.

"Never mind about that," said Dr. Murtch. "Put the money down on red, *now!*"

Brad withdrew \$20 from Lillith-Marie's shoulder bag and thrust it onto the gambling table.

The croupier spun the roulette wheel.

Red won. The croupier put another \$20

down on the table next to the FORGOVAID cash.

"Double or nothing?" he said.

"Sure," said Dr. Murtch. "Why not?"

"Dr. Murtch—" said Brad.

"Not now, Brad," said Dr. Murtch, "not now."

Brad watched in horrified fascination as the little ivory ball in the spinning roulette wheel clicked and tumbled and bounced. But every time the wheel spun, the little ball landed on red. Fourteen times in a row. Every time the money on the table doubled, and every time Dr. Murtch said "let it ride." In a short time there was \$600,000 piled high in front of Dr. Murtch's seat.

Dr. Murtch picked up the money and gave it all to the heavysset Chinese man on his left. The Chinese man grunted, counted the money and put it in his pocket. "All right," he said to Dr. Murtch. "You go now. But next time, no credit."

"Come on, Brad," said Dr. Murtch.

Brad clutched Lillith-Marie's shoulder bag against his side and surreptitiously fished the remaining \$10 out of it. He slipped the money into his pocket as they pushed their way through the crowd of Taiwanese gamblers.

Brad said, "Those two guys in the suits were the Khmer Rouge? I thought they all lived out in the jungle near Anlong Veng and wore black peasant clothing."

"Urban branch," Dr. Murtch explained. "The most dangerous kind. You should know that, Brad; you're TNGO's Political Science Expert."

"Right, right," said Brad. "Gosh, you won a lot, Dr. Murtch."

"Well, I was due, Brad. God, was I due! You wouldn't believe the string of—well, never mind that. It's just too bad we didn't have more than \$20 to bet; we could have cleaned up for ourselves—I mean, for TNGO."

"Uh," said Brad. "Well, actually, in fact—"

"Not a word about this to Lillith-Marie or anyone else, okay, Brad? They might not understand the—*political* nuances of this situation as well as you do."

Brad thought for a moment. "If my understanding of the *political* nuances were rewarded a little more generously—" he said.

"You have my word on that as TNGO's Resident Director," said Dr. Murtch. "I mean, you have my word that we'll *talk* about it, as soon as circumstances permit. If I can raise a few bucks, I'm coming back here Saturday night and—well, never mind about that. In the meantime, not a word to anyone else, right, Brad?"

"You have my word on that as TNGO's well-paid Political Science Expert," said Brad.

Dr. Murtch stopped walking. He turned to look at Brad. "You drive a hard bargain," he said. "But all right. We understand each other, then?"

"Sometimes we do," said Brad.

They smiled skeptically at each other, then turned and walked together out of the casino and into the sunlight.

To be continued ...

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TAKE 26 PERSONALITIES Kompong Cham in two hours. FROM NINE countries, throw them on top of an equal number of loud high-powered motorcycles and give them one goal: travel from Phnom Penh to Sen Monorom, the capital of Mondolkiri Province in two days. You would have the second annual Mondolkiri Rally Raid, the brainchild of Aussie expat and operator of Angkor Dirt Bike Tours, Ben Laffler.

By noon the mood at the starting point of the Bokor Caltex was one of anticipation, excitement and curiosity. Riders fine-tuned their bikes and wandered the lot admiring the array of machines. All facets of off-road motorcycles were represented: from two-stroke Kawasakis to Honda XLRs and Degrees, and even a couple of misfit BMW Paris-Dakars as well, on their way to London. Perhaps a wrong turn put them with us.

Shortly after 1 p.m. on Jan. 15th the group departed to the sound of horns honking, Khmers cheering, and crowd-pleasing wheelies. The first day of riding would be simple, to allow everyone to familiarize themselves with their machines, and to allow the support vehicle to catch up, which suffered the first in a series of mishaps by breaking down on the Japanese Bridge.

Our route took us from Phnom Penh into the province of

Kompong Cham in two hours. For those already accustomed to the riding their machines it was a welcome respite from the paved roads of Phnom Penh.

Once in Kompong Cham town we all retired to our rooms to unpack, shower and head for a proper feed at the Apsara restaurant. The friendly staff there were more than happy to receive such an unruly crowd of heavy drinkers.

After a restful sleep, all

gathered in the parking lot for a final briefing.

First goal, Memot: a 90

k. trek through vil-

lages lined with wide-

eyed locals cheering us on. This route pre-

sented a perfect op-

portunity for those wishing to

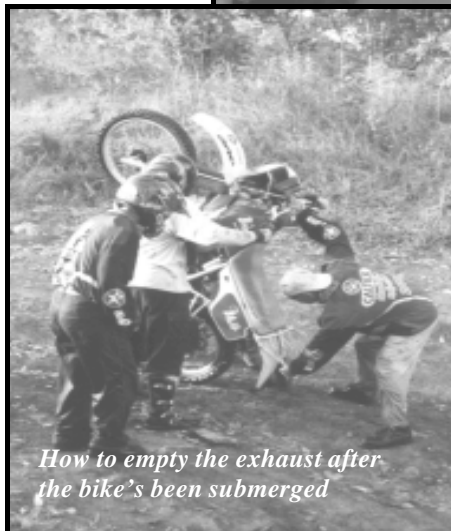
test the forces of gravity on plenty of whoopdee-dooos and bumps and jumps. Some riders required several changes of underwear.

From Memot it was on to Snoul over a simple 45k. road used for servicing rubber plan-

tations and logging operations (except the sup



This is why they ride bikes!



How to empty the exhaust after the bike's been submerged



Relaxing due to exhaustion



The posse enters the gate at Sen Monorom

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port vehicle which, due to an accident, covered it at night, taking out a checkpoint barrier in the process). The road quality improved dramatically with many bikes taking this section at top speed. The thin layer of chipped stones added just enough excitement to keep a rider awake, the rear wheel occasionally drifting sideways for his inspection.

The ultimate leg was the 130 k. to our destination of Sen Monorom. Here the landscape began to change. As we pressed on, the roads became quite treacherous for some. Boulders, rainy-season runoff ditches and logs blocked the path. The first half of this leg saw a dramatic increase in altitude before the final descent into Sen Monorom. Passing clear mountain streams feeding pools along the road, we saw great vistas of far-off valleys and some of the most beautiful birds and butterflies ever seen. As dusk fell the first of the riders arrived to cold showers and

even colder beer—a perfect finish for a perfect day.

The next few days were spent tuning/repairing bikes and bodies (especially Ben Laffer after illegally felling a tree with his head during a spill). Mondolkiri has some surprisingly beautiful water-

falls and an abundance of jungle terrain to track through. Some took the opportunity to press a bit farther, for a photo op at the Vietnam border 60 k. from Sen Monorom.

A few sadistic souls went farther than that, and embarked on a whole new challenge, up an ox

cart track into Rattanakiri. All in all everyone had a great time and a great adventure.

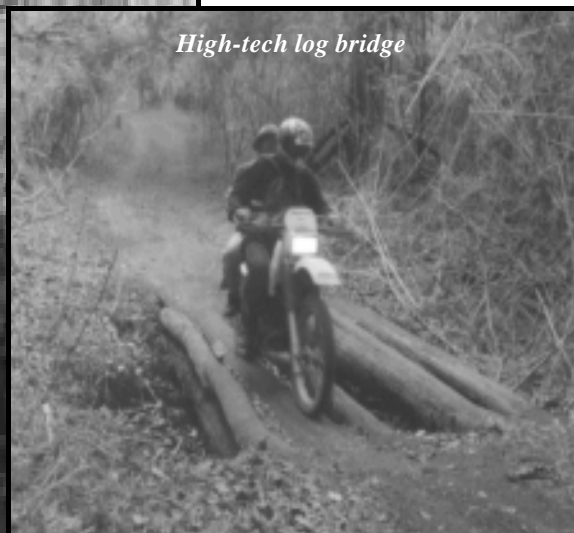
The next Angkor Dirt Bike Tours event is rumoured to be in December, with a route encircling the Tonle Sap lake with some very interesting side trips to Angkor Wat included.

—EZ



A main road with no traffic problems

Photos: David van der Veen



High-tech log bridge

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LOVE FM 97.5MHz CD REVIEW

Each month Love FM 97.5 will review some of the CD's available in Phnom Penh. Most of the CDs played on Love FM can be purchased right here in Phnom Penh. Love FM's job is to make your search for music a little easier each month.

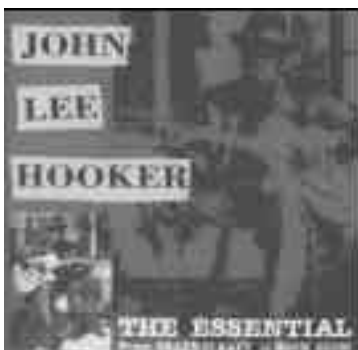
The CDs reviewed in this months issue are available from CDWorld and Selected Caltex StarMarts.

BLUES ON 97.5 WHAT'S AVAILABLE

BLACK AMERICA'S MOST VALUABLE contribution to the world of music has influenced all styles from jazz to rock 'n' roll to pop to heavy metal to reggae. From its conception at the beginning of the 20th century until now, a hundred years later, it's gained in popularity every decade. Talkin' about the blues—the sound that continues to inspire has found its way to Phnom Penh's airwaves, 97.5 has the blues every Sunday 8-9pm. As part of our CD reviews here are some recommendations of a number of blues CDs that can be

bought here in the city at CD World.

For early blues—Leadbelly, Big Joe Turner and the likes of Robert Johnson. *Blues Legends*, a three-CD set compila-



tion. Classic John Lee Hooker "the essential" 17 tracks including "Blue Bird", "Boom, Boom, Boom, Boom", and "The Waterfront". One of the best compila-



tions is the four-CD set *Still Got the Blues*, not a disappointment, over 70 blues-kickin tracks. Other compilation sets include *The World of Blues* (CD 1 has the classic "Every Day I get the Blues" by B.B. King). "Nothing

But the Blues', 'Real Australian Blues 'Plus' Blues, Blues, Blues' and 'Living with the Blues'.

Individual artists include Ste-



vie Ray Vaughan, Johnny Winter, Lightnin' Hopkins, Muddy Waters, Buddy Guy, Howlin

Wolf, Robert Cray and lots more. "When I was growing up in the south, you sang gospel in church on Sunday and blues on the back porch every evening."—B.B. King.

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12 - 2pm Mobitel Lunchtime DJ: Soap
2 -3.30pm Two O'clock Jump DJ: Uncle Tim
3.30-4.30pm The Blues Brother DJ: Blues Bro
4.30 - 6.30 pm Caltex Drivetime DJ: Capt. TK
6.30 - 7pm The Funky Monkey DJ: Banana
6.30-7pm Dr English (Tues & Thursdays)
7 - 9pm French Connection DJ: Gilles
9 -11pm Late Night Show DJ: Tim/Kevin/Mark

11-12pm The Blues Brother DJ: Kevin
12 -6.30am All night music

Weekend Schedule

6.30-8am Breakfast Show DJ: Sotheany
8-11am Brunch Break DJ: Kookaburra
12-2pm Smile Radio DJ: Sotheany
2-4pm Mixed Hits DJ: Tim / Nick
4-6pm Trademark Show DJ: Mark Trade
6-7pm DMZ DJ: Sam
7-8pm Request Show DJ: Ong
Saturday Only.
11-12pm Evian Top 10 Countdown DJ:Edward
8-11pm Saturday Dance Mix DJ: Tony
Sunday Only

