

camped-up humour is well showcased by the obligatory romp through the *Six Million Dollar Man* theme. Not forgetting 'Minimal Love', a ridiculously repetitive finale that apes the MC5's 'Ramblin' Rose' and collapses within two minutes of its chaotic ignition.

Almost everything that was said about Spitfire is true: YES! They're retro. YES! They look stupid. And YES! They think they're sexier than they actually are. They're also five rapidly maturing loonies who spell death for blushing indie fops. Love them for it.

**John Harris**

## **SWALLOW** LONDON HAMPSTEAD WHITE HORSE

LIVE, SWALLOW are exasperating. Worse still they're dull,

uninspiring and tedious. Considering their recent startling debut album 'Blow' you'd expect somewhat more than a ride down Dreary Lane on a tandem with no wheels.

The creative duo of Mike Mason and Louise Trehy fall somewhere between Curve and the Cocteau Twins, all gossamer vocals and spiritual subtexts; however, all that's cherishable on record is destroyed before our expectant eyes. Their six-gig lifespan may prove to be a contentious factor but more so, it proves — along with Spiritualized and Spectrum — this style of music often fails dismally to translate into the live environment.

This is melancholic music for the discerning recluse, the bedroom thinkers, and it's far too introverted to be shared with a dripping mass of gig-going indie kids. Swallow are certainly

composers of beauty and heavenly radiance, yet tonight they seem bored with their own shadows. Trehy, looking slightly punk in a baby doll nightie, is the entire focal point and she can't take the pressure.

Nerves poke through a thin set which involves too few high points; their cover of The Undertones' 'Julie Ocean' is wonderful, as is the brief instrumental which allows the two extra guitarists to feel, at last, part of the band. One of Swallow's major disadvantages is refusing to employ a bass player. Whenever their songs drown in a bottomless pit of whirlwind guitar effects and airy melodies it's because there are no solid foundations to stabilise the euphoria.

If there's one record you should buy this month it's Swallow's 'Blow'; if there's one gig you should be thankful for missing it's tonight's shambled affair.

**Gina Morris**