



DISC-ussion

By Mike Markle

Eliminator

Z.Z. Top, that "little old band from Texas," is back on track again with their latest release *Eliminator* (Warner Bros.). Their

previous effort *El Loco* disappointed many fans with its glossy production and lightweight rhythms, but *Eliminator* will, uh, eliminate any doubts that this band is a force to be reckoned with.

Houston-based Z.Z. Top is the last of a vanishing breed -- the arena rockers. There aren't many of them around nowadays, so Z.Z. Top is a welcome relief to those who are tired of the Police and David Bowie.

The eleven tunes on *Eliminator* are co-written by all three

members of the band -- Billy Gibbons (guitar, vocals), Dusty Hill (bass, vocals), and drummer Frank Beard (ironically, the only band member without a beard). All the songs incorporate essential ingredients that make up the Z.Z. Top sound -- simple drum patterns, dirty bass riffs, wailing guitars, and raucous vocals.

Although they're only a trio, Z.Z. Top sure produces a "big" overall sound on *Eliminator*, probably due to the engineering talents of ace knob twisters Terry Manning and Bob Ludwig.

Side one contains the majority of the killer cuts -- "Gimme All Your Lovin'," "Got Me Under Pressure," "Sharp Dressed Man," and "I Need You Tonight" all combine to provide

the impact of the S.S.T. taking off at the Harrisburg International Airport. These tunes aren't full of social commentary, they're just three minute blasts of Texas-style rock 'n' roll boogie.

"Gimme All Your Lovin'" is intensified by Frank Beard's sparse drumming style, slowly chugging along with the rest of the band providing a nasty counter-rhythm while "Sharp Dressed Man" blends short and sharp guitar lines and rugged chords with Billy Gibbon's Texas howl.

A real gem is "I Need You Tonight" -- a slow, sparse tune opening up with scratchy guitars until Hill's low-down bass kicks in to set the mood -- this is real Texas Panhandle Blues at its best.

There are a few throwaways here, most on side two -- "T.V. Dinners," "If I Could Only Flag Her Down," and "Bad Girl" are fairly forgettable fillers.

Z.Z. Top is back on top again with *Eliminator* returning to their true roots -- down home Texas rock 'n' roll boogie.

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