



# DISC-ussion

By Mike Markle

## The Crossing

Big Country may be a relatively unknown band right now, but judging by the strength of their energetic debut LP *The Crossing*,

they may soon start a new trend in U.S./Scottish rock.

It has taken Scotland years to produce a major rock act to contend for a share of the U.S. audience, but Big Country was well worth the wait. The rhythm-heavy "big" twin-guitar sound on *The Crossing* is enough to blow away many American bands.

Big Country consists of guitarists Stuart Adamson (former

member of the U.K. punk group The Skids) and Bruce Watson, while the rhythm chores are handled by bassist Tony Butler and skin slammer Mark Brzezicki (both former session men for Pete Townsend).

Adamson and Watson combine their talents to produce a bagpipe-guitar sound that has to be heard to be believed, while Butler and Brzezicki provide an up-front rhythm aided by Steve Lillywhite's crisp, clean production.

Everything is "big" on this album, even the song titles are grandiose: "In a Big Country," "Fields of Fire," "The Storm," "Harvest Home," etc.

The tour de force tunes here are "In a Big Country" and "Fields of Fire" -- both songs

bearing an unmistakably Scottish sound.

"In a Big Country" opens up with a resounding rally cry of "Cha" before offering something uncommon in rock 'n' roll -- optimism.

"I'm not expecting to grow flowers  
in a desert  
But I can live and breathe  
And see the sun in wintertime"

"Fields of Fire" could easily be mistaken for the Scottish national anthem, with shrill lead guitar riffs and a heavy backbeat that packs enough wallop to get any Scotsman to kick up his heels.

"Chance" features a melodic, heart-rending chorus ("Oh Lord I never felt so low") that reinforces the gloomy tone of the song while the light-hearted "Harvest Home" utilizes scratchy guitars and catchy lyrics reminiscent of early Thin Lizzy.

*The Crossing* is an extremely strong debut album for Big Country -- one only hopes that they can deliver such high-quality goods on their next album.

Album courtesy FM 104

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