

'Little Feat' Has Gutsy Approach

LITTLE FEAT and DUCK SOUP. At the Main Point, 874 Lancaster ave. in Bryn Mawr. Shows tonight.

By DAVID FRICKE

THE BEST known unknowns in "ze biz," Little Feat, finally laid to rest any circulating rumors as to their dissolution with a Main Point set last night which opened much too shakily for comfort, but closed in a blistering bar-restaurant heat.

Despite their status as critical darlings of the hipper press, the Feat have found fame too elusive for their liking, with three previous albums ranking as genuine treasures but no commercial success to speak of. But now with a latest for Warner Bros., this band confirms already outspoken opinions of their gutsy approach to the rockin' art while offering a

stage show that, all things willing, genuinely wails.

Almost incessant feedback and an overly long break for equipment set-up only contributed to apprehension on the group's part. Even with a worshipful sold-out house, the music must work for the gig to go well. Yet the evening shaped up just fine, each "foot" stepping in the right direction.

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ON STAGE, Little Feat seems an insoluble entity, as loose and downright funky as the short but very solid Lowell George, contributor of gravely vocals and astonishing slide lead guitar, who slips and slides to every last beat. George practically couches under his trademark street cap, with an appropriate grimace for the blue-

siest of vocals and a smile for the craziest of licks. At least from the stage presence displayed here, it would appear that it is George who has kept the band alive with near-classic song material and a lackadaisical love for it all.

But dare not deny the Feat their due. Pianist Bill Payne and drummer Rich Hayward have been in on it from the beginning, what personnel changes there have been are only for the better. Little Feat is a walking monument to the nitty-gritty with expanded horizons to its credit.

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EVEN WHILE meddling in the street-level funk of "Cold, Cold, Cold," this band can smoothly steal into a medium rocker like "Dixie Chicken," inject some corny synthesized dissonance followed by a

sweetly rendered 50's doo-wop parody, and still finish out in searing style with the double-time jive of "Tripe Face Boogie," all in one twenty-minute segue.

Little Feat has fun and shows it, as do local killers Duck Soup, who sported opening honors without the luxury of a sound check in an imaginative pairing on the Point's part. The Soup have been circulating of late with the odd gig here and there, taking this opportunity to oil up some group standards ("Big Shoes," "Waterproof") and introduce some interesting new material. Guitarist Jimmy Hayne continues to search his fingerboard for new and dextrous riffs, with solid support from the rhythm boys and irrepressible humor, courtesy of pianist-songwriter Richard Grossman and singer-front man James Pabuarue.