



'I SOMETIMES THINK I SOMETIMES GET MORE THAN I SHOULD'

Rob Sherwood

Loner With a Microphone

By IRV LETOFSKY

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Off the microphone Buff Setterquist of Cloquet, Minn., is friendly, mildly talky but soft spoken and bemused by life.

Behind the mikes at KDWB radio he (now Rob Sherwood) is, by self-analysis, "fast, loud and involved in the music."

Buff Setterquist, later Rob Lockes, later Robin Van Allison and lately Rob Sherwood, has the 7-to-midnight "teen shift" and he's just about the hottest property on local crystal sets.

HE IS admittedly well paid for his performance. "I sometimes think I sometimes get more than I should," he said. "I must have the tinge of the socialist at heart and think that maybe it's immoral to make more money than you can spend."

That's saying a pocketful for a 24-year-old guy who would rather be a wrestler: "I saw the Chain Gang the other day, guys running around in circles yelling 'Kill, kill!' That must be an absolute gas."

A recent hire from KDWB's mortal enemy, WDGY, Sherwood had great ratings on Wee-Gee, even whaling Goliath WCCO in winter season when the Minnesota Twins were resting.

KDWB hasn't collected any recent ratings,

but a station spokesman said the mail and telephone calls have quadrupled.

BASICALLY the median age of his listenership is about 14, ranging from a couple of years ahead of that to four or five years beyond.

This kind of glory doesn't sit particularly well on his flowing brown head of hair. "I have to admit that the Rob Sherwood is not necessarily the Buff Setterquist," he said. "I'm basically the loner and it's a real effort to come on like this."

"People hear me and think I must be the super extrovert, but I think of myself as basically a shy person, skinny and shy." (He adds skinny as a musing, since he is 6 feet, 1 inch and something over 200 slightly chunky pounds.)

Duluth born, Sherwood is the son of a grocer, Walt Setterquist. He studied classical piano for 16 years and sometimes thumps away in spare moments.

At Cloquet High School he did "every single play, skit, pep fest and third-floor wash-room bit" he could and came away with Bs and Cs. "I had other interests than Spanish and Latin."

KDWB officially refers to Sherwood as a devout Catholic who doesn't smoke or have

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other bad habits. "Well," he explained, "my mother doesn't think I smoke. I've quit six times. And she doesn't think I eat meat on Friday either."

He went through the choir boy period "and all that" and he would prefer to drive 25 miles from his bachelor's pad in St. Paul on Sundays to attend mass at the Basilica: "The few dollars I put in the collection plate mean more than those fat-cat churches in the suburbs."

After high school one day while he was tooling down Lake St. in Minneapolis, he sped past Brown Institute, a popular training school for radio announcers. On a whim he decided to enroll.

HE WON a series of jobs in Blythe, Calif., Austin, Minn., Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Green Bay, Wis., working mostly in top-40 music and occasionally in kiddies' TV, which he most dearly loved.

His six-night schedule "kills a great deal of social life," says he. Out at midnight, he is "very tight and wound up," which might be understandable after a five-hour workout.

"I might yak on the phone for a while or go for a ride (in his yellow Toronado) and get to bed about 2 or 3. But I'm an early riser by those standards and I'm up by 10 o'clock."

"Then I just be-bop around, play a little piano, a little sunning, a little swimming. Sometimes I've got a personal appearance and sometimes I like to go downtown in a big department store and walk through the toy departments."

IT MIGHT be some sort of lost childhood for a big kid who is wise enough to put his easily gotten gains into some apparently wise investments.

But it's true. He does tool through the toy stores for some reason he knows not what. He remembers with great glee his TV children's shows, the free-wheeling creativity, the live audience, the notoriety, and whereas he has won a high status among his radio fans, he looks to a future in TV. Exactly what he knows not.