THE

BATTLES

OF THE

SOUNDS

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1995
The Battles Of The Sounds
1964 — 1972

Between 1966 and 1972 the Australian pop music scene was annually convulsed and excited by the occurrence of what appears to be a uniquely Australian phenomena known as the Hoadleys Battle of the Sounds. The Battle of the Sounds was a national rock band contest staged to promote local Australian bands and foster new talent. No other rock music occasion was looked forward to and so eagerly discussed (except for the arrival on our shores of overseas pop acts). When it started Australia was still resounding to the crash of the Beatles/Merseybeat boom. Australia was still suffering from the great cultural cringe and we musically looked to England, the land of Carnaby Street, for our musical influences, of which even our R’n’B came via the old country. When it finished in 1972 the era of the large Rock Festival and underground/alternative music was well underway and we looked to Woodstock and LA for our influences.

From April to June every year the living rooms, church halls, family garages and anywhere else available of Australia would echo to the sounds of would be rock stars. This sound was produced by mainly young males, playing 3 guitars and a set of drums, as they rehearsed madly (and often badly) for their mostly one opportunity to have a crack at “making the big time”. There was no entry fee. You just filled in the form, practised your heart out, turned up on the day and plugged in. Good or bad, you got your one big moment of glory in front of the biggest crowd of teenagers you would, in most cases, ever play to. If you were lucky and more likely were in the city, you might get your only chance of performing alongside some of the top rock bands of the day such as the Masters Apprentices or Sherbet. This was a time when it was the height of teenage social status to be in a rock band. For a time the girls would take notice of the pale, skinny guys instead of the local hunky footballers.

Most were doomed to return to the obscurity whence they came but some made the grade. Even of those bands that didn’t make the grade, the contest gave some individuals the taste of fame and hope to go on and reach greater heights in later well known bands and/or as individual musicians and solo artists. It would not be too much exaggeration to say that many of these would later have a profound influence on Australia’s later rock music scene.

Each year Everybodys magazine, until 1967, and from 1967 on, Go Set magazine, would print with great excitement the details of when and where the Battles would take place, and who were the hot favorites. Readers would wait with bated breath to see who had won the latest
heat this week. Was it their favorite local band The Wanderers from Mt David or The Wanderers from Wollongong? Bands with strange far out names such as Nanas Passion Poem, Theez Wuz, Olivers Twist and The Eight Feet would have their one moment of glory in print.

Hundreds of teenagers would turn up to the local heats. Thousands to the finals. Great controversies raged over who should or shouldn’t have won. Stalwart fans alternately cheered their favorites or ignored and booed other fans favorites.

So where did the great battles of the bands originate? Although the Hoadleys Battle of the Sounds officially started under that name in 1966, the idea of a national band/group contest seems to have originated 2 years earlier in 1964, the year The Beatles graced our shores. That was the year when national magazine Everybody's decided to stage a national talent contest called the The Big Sound of 1964. The contest was intended for bands and groups but did not feature live performances by contestants. Rather, the 80 to 90 entrants from around Australia were asked to submit tapes of themselves from which the judges picked the finalists. Only the 13 finalists were required to perform live on Jimmy Hannan's Saturday Date teenage TV show on Sydney's TCN-9. Very civilised but hardly very exciting!

1st prize was 200 pounds ($400), an appearance on promoter Harry M Miller's next Stadium Show, a radio interview and a single record release. First place getters in that contest were oddly enough, a folk group, Melbourne's The Green Hill Singers. Not really odd in retrospect though, given the then still conservative nature of the popular music industry. They went on to cut a long forgotten album, did some TV appearances and then disappeared without trace. 2nd place, which was a tie, was more in the rock vein though. It was shared between a Sydney hotel band called Bobby Gold and the Royals (hotel bands then were usually made up of older musicians who were generally Shadows/ Cliff Richards clones complete with The Shadows walk and nice suits), and by an instrumental band from Adelaide called The Mystics. Both equally shared the combined 150 pound prize, both released obscure singles and both disappeared back into obscurity. The other 10 finalists remain nameless.

However, the following year things began to hot up when the first, almost national, beat group (rock band) contest was held. I say almost national, because it only covered Sydney and Melbourne. But it was all live and it captured the Mersey Beat hysteria of the times. The Sydney finals, known as the 2SM Sound Spectacular, were held at no less a venue than the Sydney Stadium, place of triumph for such overseas headliners as the Beatles, and it was just as packed and hysterical. Each bands appearance was punctuated by screams from that particular bands

ENTER NOW FOR HOADLEY'S NATIONAL

BATTLE OF THE SOUNDS

FABULOUS PRIZES FOR THE TOP MODERN SOUND GROUPS

NATIONAL RADIO COVERAGE

Take in for details and progress of your local, State and National Battle of the Sounds to any of these Radio Stations:

VICTORIA

3DB Melbourne, 3MA Mildura, 3SH Swan Hill, 3MN South Gippsland, 3MS Shepparton, 3MC Sale, 3BF Bendigo, 3TH Warrnambool, 3GU Shepparton, 3AA Bairnsdale, 3HA Hamilton, NEW SOUTH WALES

2UE Sydney, 2AY Albury, 2MB Lismore, 2RM Orange, 2ND Newcastle, 2RA Kempsey, 2AC Camden, 2TH Broken Hill, 2PK Parkes, 2WA Wagga, 2TG Dubbo, 2CA Goulburn, 2SW Wagga, 2SC Kiama, 2NW Inverell.

QUEENSLAND

4BH Samford, 4BB Kingaroy, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

8AA Adelaide, 8AU Port Augusta, 8RM Murray Valley.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

8PR Perth, 8TX Bunbury, 8CI Geraldton.

TASMANIA

7TH Hobart, 7EX Launceston.

WE'RE HERE FOR HOADLEY'S NATIONAL BATTLE OF THE SOUNDS

No 20 Fm Elderbrook—Feb 19
fervent fans and supporters. At least you did have some chance of hearing the 65 (yes 65!) bands competing. Though, unlike when The Beatles were there. For the first time called The Battle of the Sounds, the contest was heavily pushed by magazine Everybody and sponsored by radio stations 3UZ and 2SM respectively in Melbourne and Sydney. The Grand final was held at Melbourne's Festival Hall (where it was held every year up until 1970) before an audience of 6000 and had 18 bands from these 2 cities battling it out live. There were streamers and balloons and the press in attendance. Top band of the day Ray Brown & The Whispers made a guest appearance.

Still however the contest must have been an inspiration to some of the entrants. Making the finals as well were bands such as Sydney's Showmen, 3 members at least going on to play in bands such as those legendary wild men The Missing Links and Pirana. Another band, Melbourne's Rising Sons contained Keith Glass later of Van Halen fame, a stalwart of the Melbourne scene for many years and more recently a respected country rock singer. Then of course, there were Melbourne's Pink Finks, two members of which, the Ross's Wilson and Hannaford, went on to such bands as Daddy Cool and Mondo Rock. Ross Wilson's influence on Australian rock music is still felt today.

Hotly contested by some of those two cities roughest, toughest sounding R'n'B groups it was actually won by an obscure MOR/latest hits/cover band from Melbourne with the unoriginal name of The Crickets. They won by doing songs such as the Beach Boys harmony ballad "In my Room" and the James Bond movie theme instrumental "Goldfinger." It seems that there was rather a mixed reaction to their win. As a prize they won a small van and a record contract with the then, new, up-and-coming, very mod, Go records. It seems the judges' (who included then pop idol Ray Brown) faith was not justified as they released a single (on the Leedon label, not Go) and they too returned to the obscurity whence they came.

Meanwhile not be left out, 1965 was the year Adelaide's thriving music scene had its own Battle of the Bands. Modest by the above standards, with only a dozen or so bands entering, it showed the shape of things to come though, with the then fledgling Twilights taking first place.

The success of these contests must have spurred the organisers on to even greater heights because next year in 1966 was held the first of the truly national band contests we all came to love, and some to hate, known as "The Hoadley's Battle of the Sounds". The contest was sponsored by the confectionery company Hoadleys, makers of Australia's own famous Violet Crumble Bar, and the Sitmar shipping line. The first prize was a trip for the winning band to the...
hallowed home of beat music, the UK, together with engagements there and $1000 spending money, a princely sum by the standards of the day. All nine grand finalists were to be offered a contract with Go Records, although as it transpired 2 bands were already signed to EMI. The contest was held nationally by having local heats sponsored/organised by 80 to 90 local radio stations in all states. In the cities these were held at various suburban locations such as high schools, church halls, etc., and in rural areas at larger country centres. Bands then progressed on to larger regional heats. In the larger states, NSW, Victoria and Queensland there was a Country and a City final. The winners of these would then go to a national grand final usually held in Melbourne or Sydney. Over 500 bands entered the first contest, including 100 from Sydney and 120 from Melbourne.

The contest was organised along the lines of a major sporting contest with rules (although there were some odd loopholes) and a set of criteria for judges. This was Rock music's equivalent of the AFL or Rugby League Grand Finals. The judging panel of 4 or 5 persons for the finals usually comprised of a popular solo rock star of the day, a music industry personage such as a music publisher or record producer, and representatives from the sponsors and press. At a local level there was usually a disc jockey or a representative from the local sponsoring radio station among others. Bands were judged on Sound, Originality, Presentation and Audience Reaction. As well they received bonus points for contributing something extra such as a new or unusual instrument. There were rules about where and when bands could enter. These were that bands could only enter one heat on the same day. They could enter another heat on another day and in a different place, subject to residential qualifications being decided by the local organisers. As it transpired this turned out to be one of the most controversial rules.

Of the other rules, one of the quaintest however, was that bands could only compete if they had a maximum of five members. One can only suppose that this was a carry over from the thought then that anything over that number would include other instruments that weren't in the usual rock band lineup of the day (i.e. three guitars, drums and a singer) or maybe the sponsors baulked at having to fork out the fares for more than five people to go to the UK. Whatever, and I suppose rather embarrassingly for the organisers, the grand final was won by Adelaide band The Twilights who had six members. Their lineup included two vocalists, Glenn Sharrock and Paddy Macartney. A rather unusual lineup for the time. However it goes to show Rock music was never meant to go by the rules! So in the Grand final, and presumably the heats, they had to
The Winners ... The Battlers

Listing of bands contesting in each heat, by year. This section is designed to be updated when new information is added.

1965

Grand final contestants & placing:
J. Crockett & the Shanes NSW
The Showmen NSW
Embers Qld
The Crickets Vic
The Pink Finks Vic
The Rising Sons Vic

NSW 1965

State Final:
Jimmy Crockett & the Shanes
The Showmen
Him & the Others
Kevin Bible & the Book
John L Cochrane & the Fenders

City/Metropolitan final:

2AD Armidale
2AY Albury
2BH Broken Hill
2CA Canberra
2DU Dubbo
2GN Goulburn
2GZ Orange
2KA Katoomba
2KM Kempsey
2LM Lismore
2KO Newcastle
2NZ Inverell
2PK Parkes
2UW Sydney
2TM Tamworth
2VM Moree
2WG Wagga
2WL Wollongong

Victoria 1965

State Final:?:

Country final:
The Dynamos 1st
The Valiants 2nd
The Rhythm Rockets 3rd

City/Metropolitan final:
The Crickets
The Pink Finks
The Rising Sons

3BA Ballarat
The Elois
3BO Bendigo
3CS Colac
3CV Maryborough
The Emeralds 1st
The Graduate Four
3GL Geelong
3HA Hamilton
3LK Horsham
3MA Mildura
The Rhythm Rockets 1st
The Crescents
3NE Wangaratta
3SH Swan Hill
3SR Shepparton
The Dynamos
The Valiants
3TR Sale
3UL Warragul
3UZ Melbourne
3YB Warrnambool

Queensland 1965

State Final:
The Embers

Country final:

City/Metropolitan final:

4BC Brisbane
Victoria 1967
City/Metropolitan final:

JBN & the Originals

City/Metropolitan final:

3BA Ballarat
JBN & the Originals

3BO Bendigo

3CS Colac

3CV Maryborough

3GL Geelong

3HA Hamilton

Theezy Wung

1st

LK Horsham

MA Mildura

NE Wangaratta

SH Swan Hill

SR Shepparton

TR Sale

UL Warragul

UZ Melbourne

WB Warrnambool

West Side Federation

South Australia 1967
City/Metropolitan final:

5AU Port Augusta

5KA Adelaide

5RM Berri

5PR Perth

6TZ/Cl Bunbury

Tasmania 1967:

7EX Launceston

Rejected

Mickey Finn 1st

Mystics 3rd

The Thing 2nd

Tazzmen

Shindigs

Section 4

The Trend

Lost and Found

Agens

Onceloved

Images

Confusion

Black Magic

Fugue

7HO Hobart

The Saints

Strings and Things

Electrons

Brotherhood of Myrtle 2nd

Dee Dee and the Avantis

Bitter Lemons

JA Madison 1st

Renowns

1968
Grand final contestants & placing:

The Groove 1st

Rain ACT

Marksmen NSW country

Tol Puddle Martyrs Vic Country

Shades of Blue Qld Country

Masters Apprentices 2nd SA

Doug Parkinson in Focus 3rd

Beat 'n' Tracks WA

Sect Qld

Abstract Image Darwin

Black Orchids Tus

NSW 1968
City/Metropolitan final:

The Marksmen 1st

Ides of Mann 2nd

The Silhouettes 3rd

City/Metropolitan final:

Doug Parkinson in Focus

The Affair

The Trojans

Carnival of Soul

Good Interests

This Hallelujah Chorus

Plastic Tears

Mecca

Victoria 1967
Country final:

2NZ Inverell

2PK Parkes

2QN Deniliquin

2RE Taree

2RG Griffith

2SM Sydney

2TM Tamworth

2VM Moree

2WG Wagga

2WL Wollongong

The Wanderers

1st

4AY Ayr

4BC Brisbane

4CA Cairns

4GG Southport/Gold Coast

4GR Toowoomba

4LG Longreach

4MK Mackay

4NA Nambour

4RO Rockhampton

4TO Townsville

4WG Warwick

2AD Armidale

2AY Albury

2BH Broken Hill

2BS Bathurst

2CA Canberra

Rain 1st?

2DU Dubbo

Ides of Mann 1st

2GN Goulburn

2GO Gosford

2GZ Orange

The Eight Feet

2KA Katoomba

2KM Kempsey

2LF Young

2LM Lismore

2LT Lithgow

2MG Mudgee

The Silhouettes

2MW Murwillumbah

2NX Newcastle

The Michael Scott Group

1st

Velveet Underground 2nd

2NZ Inverell

2PK Parkes

2QN Deniliquin

2RE Taree

Velveet Underground 1st

Friends of Rejection

Midnight Soul

2RG Griffith

2SM Sydney

2TM Tamworth

2VM Moree

2WG Wagga

The Impacts

2WL Wollongong

The Marksmen

Victoria 1968
State Final:

Groove

Tol Puddle Martyrs
South Australia 1968
Country final:
Tol Puddle Martyrs

City/Metropolitan final:
Groove
3BA Ballarat
3BO Bendigo
Tol Puddle Martyrs
3CS Colac
3CV Maryborough
3GL Geelong
Nineteen 87
1HA Hamilton
1LK Horsham
MA Mildura
NE Wangaratta
SH Swan Hill
SR Shepparton
FR Sale
UL Warragul
JZ Melbourne
TB Warmanbooth

Tasmania 1968:
7EX Launceston
Brian James Incident
Anti Clock-work
Action
Mickey Finn
iBO
Lost and Found
Life
S.P.R.
Tangerine Cobweb
Mystics
2nd
C.O.Z.
The Nameless?
PB and the Images?
Fugue?
The Packet?
Road Runners?
JA Madison
1st

Perth 1968
6PR Perth
6TZ/CI Bunbury

1969
Grand final contestants & placing:
Doug Parkinson
Focus
1st
Spice of Life
Vic
country
Avengers
Qld
4th
Tin Pan Alley
NSW
country
Valentines
Vic
3rd
Pepper Adams
Tas
Limit
SA
Chain
Sydney
5th
Proclamation
WA
Clockwork Orange
Tas
Chapter Three
Qld
country
Aesop's Fables
2nd

Vocal Section
Grandfinalists
(This was the only year to have a separate section for vocal groups).
Mark IV
WA
Travis Wellington Hedge
SA
1812
Tas
The Affair
NSW
New Edition
Qld

Queensland 1968
Country final:

City/Metropolitan final:
The Sect
Ayr
Brisbane
Cairns
Southport/Gold Coast
Toowoomba
Logan
Longreach
Mackay
Nambour
Rockhampton
Townsville
Warwick

NSW 1969
State Final:
Aesop's Fables
1st
Chain
2nd
The Cleves
Imagination
Tin Pan Alley
Autumn
Maple Lace
Midnight Soul

Tangerine Cobweb
Mystics
Fugue
Mickey Finn
Scogum Jade
Mojo Soul
3rd

Mirror Reflection
The Mint

Zonal final:
Newcastle

City/Metropolitan final:
Roselands
The Affair
1st
Port Jackson

2AD Armidale
The Finks
1st
2AY Albury
2BH Broken Hill
Moustrop
1st
2BS Bathurst
The Wanderers
1st
2CA Canberra
Union of Jack
1st
Kite
2nd
2DU Dubbo
Crying Shame
2GN Goulburn
Earls Court
1st
Hokum Jugg Blues Band
2nd
2GO Gosford
2GR Griffith
Echoes
1st
2GZ Orange
Jig Saw
1st
2KA Katoomba
New Age
1st
2KM Kempsey
Vendetta
1st
2LF Young
The Shades
1st
2LM Lismore
The Astranotes 1st
The Movement 2nd
The Passionfruit 3rd

2LT Lithgow
The Tree 1st

2MO Mudgee
Magic Enterprise 1st

2MW Murwillumbah
The Sonics 1st

2KO Newcastle
Midnight Soul 1st
Blues Movement
Mirror Reflection
Psychotic Symphonic
Paper Train
Parc Toubih
Power House
Daisy Chain
Cast Iron

2NZ Inverell
Satisfaction 1st
The Inner Souls
The Semanons
Scorpion
Love Byte
The Living Sound
The Bar Essentials
Doorway 41

2PK Parkes
Echoettes 1st

2QN Deniliquin
Quiet Day's Undertaking =1st
Bow Street Runners =1st

2RE Taree
Mirror Reflection 1st

2RG Griffith
2SM Sydney
2TM Tamworth
Packy Wack 1st
2VM Moree
2WG Wagga
Nann's Passion Flower 1st

Collection
Spiritual Feeling
Block Cheque
Tin Soldiers
Barry Stokes Tijuana Five
Creatures
Merry-Go-Round

2WL Wollongong
Tim Pan Alley 1st
Erls Court
Fantasy
Justin Arthur Groop
Psychedelic Beat

2XL Cooma
Undecided

Victoria 1969
Country final:
Oliver Twist
Tol Puddle Martyrs
Spice of Life

City/Metropolitan final:
3BA Ballarat
3BO Bendigo
3CS Colac
3CV Maryborough
3GL Geelong
3KA Kangaroo Island
3NE Wangaratta
3SH Swan Hill

Strange Brew 1st
Shapperton
Tol Puddle Martyrs 1st
Thymes
Sale
Tyme 1st
Warragul
Spice of Life 1st
Warraumbool
Stompin' Mallee Grubs 1st

South Australia 1969
State Final:
Zonal Battles:
Rockhampton
Toowoomba

Country Final:
City/Metropolitan final:
The Cast
Chapter 3

4AY Ayr
4BC Brisbane
4CA Cairns
Fireflies 1st
4GG Southport/Gold Coast
The Reaction
Rosemarie's Babies
Fourth IV 1st
4GR Toowoomba
The Cast
GY Gympie
Sweet Poison 1st
4LG Longreach
December Sun 1st
4MB Maryborough
Revolution 1st
4MK Mackay
The Crescents 1st
The Fourth Edition 2nd

4NA Nambour
Saint Fire & the Rest 1st
4RO Rockhampton
The Cast 1st
4TO Townsville
The Living Image 1st
4WG Warwick
Sweet Sydney 1st

Tasmania 1969:
7EX Launceston
Pepper Adams 1st
Blue Condition 2nd
Maie West 3rd
Symphony Sun 4th
Firewater 5th
Edison Frontline
Reserves
Final Chapter
Isaac Brown Organisation
Ezra's Cutts Crypt

7HO Hobart
Clockwork Orange 1st
Emphasis 2nd
Blue Condition 3rd
JA Madison 4th
Symphony Sun
**Fashion**  
Master Piece  
Thunderbirds  
1812  
Reuben Stewart  
Some Rustik  
The First Chapter

### Vocal Section:
- **1812 1st**  
- **Mojo Soul 2nd**  
- **Fashion 3rd**

### Northern Territory 1969:
- **8DN Darwin**  
- **8HA Alice Springs**

### 1970:
- **Grand final contestants & placing:**  
  - Flying Circus 1st  
  - Zoot 2nd  
  - Sweaty Betty Tas  
  - Sobar WA  
  - Musick Express SA  
  - Nova Express Vic  
  - Maya NSW country (Newcastle)  
  - Autumn NSW city 3rd  
  - Chapter III Qld country  
  - Jug Band Qld city  
  - Sons of Bacchus Tas  
  - Noddy's Crew Vic country

### NSW 1970

#### Country final:
- **Collection**  
- **Facade**  
- **Colarados**  
- **Green Ginger**  
- **Fantasy**  
- **Crying Shame**  
- **Maya**  
- **The Sheds**  
- **Bogislav**

#### Metropolitan Heats:
- **Sutherland**  
  - Elm Tree 1st  
  - Soma Maru Khan 2nd  
  - Marble Clock 3rd  
- **Merrylands**  
  - Clik 1st  
  - Grass Hrap 2nd  
  - Shades In Between 3rd  
  - Judas  
- **Hornsby**  
  - La De Das 1st  
  - Proma 2nd  
  - Trench 3rd  
  - Wildwood 7th  
  - Toby Jugg  
  - Simple Image  
  - Savage Rose  
  - The Magpies  
- **Cabramatta**  
  - Autumn 1st  
  - 1812 2nd  
  - Tymepeice 3rd

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**Victoria 1970**

#### Country final:
- **Town Criers =1st**  
- **Nova Express=1st**  
- **Ash**  
- **West End**  
- **Mask**  
- **Blues City Shakedown**  
- **Noddy's Crew**  
- **Beach Street Union**  
- **Parfuit**

#### City/Metropolitan final:
- **3UZ First Heat:**  
  - **Town Criers**  
  - **Nova Express**
- **2nd Heat:**  
  - **Nova Express=1st**  
  - **Zoot = 1st**  
  - **New Dream**  
  - **Spice of Life**  
  - **Thursday's Children**  
  - **Aftermath**

| 2TM Tamworth |        |
| 2VM Moree   |        |
| 2WG Wagga   | Collection 1st |
| 2WL Wollogong | Fantasy 1st |
| 2XL Cooma   | Pumpkin Flat Diggers 1st |

### Victoria 1970

#### Country final:
- **Town Criers =1st**  
- **Nova Express=1st**  
- **Ash**  
- **West End**  
- **Mask**  
- **Blues City Shakedown**  
- **Noddy's Crew**  
- **Beach Street Union**  
- **Parfuit**

#### City/Metropolitan final:
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  - **Town Criers**  
  - **Nova Express**
- **2nd Heat:**  
  - **Nova Express=1st**  
  - **Zoot = 1st**  
  - **New Dream**  
  - **Spice of Life**  
  - **Thursday's Children**  
  - **Aftermath**

| 2TM Tamworth |        |
| 2VM Moree   |        |
| 2WG Wagga   | Collection 1st |
| 2WL Wollogong | Fantasy 1st |
| 2XL Cooma   | Pumpkin Flat Diggers 1st |

### Victoria 1970

#### Country final:
- **Town Criers =1st**  
- **Nova Express=1st**  
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- **West End**  
- **Mask**  
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### Victoria 1970

#### Country final:
- **Town Criers =1st**  
- **Nova Express=1st**  
- **Ash**  
- **West End**  
- **Mask**  
- **Blues City Shakedown**  
- **Noddy's Crew**  
- **Beach Street Union**  
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#### City/Metropolitan final:
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  - **New Dream**  
  - **Spice of Life**  
  - **Thursday's Children**  
  - **Aftermath**

| 2TM Tamworth |        |
| 2VM Moree   |        |
| 2WG Wagga   | Collection 1st |
| 2WL Wollogong | Fantasy 1st |
| 2XL Cooma   | Pumpkin Flat Diggers 1st |
Beach Street Union 1st
3LK Horsham
3MA Mildura
The Cyners
The Hush
The Barnaby Plum
3NE Wangaratta
3SH Swan Hill
Blues City Shakedown
3SR Shepparton
3TR Sale
3UL Warragul
3UZ Melbourne
3YB Warrnambool

Queensland 1970
Country final:
Klub
Sonic
Sweet Peach
Chapter III

City/Metropolitan final:
Bentham G Cherry
Tree
Gentle Art
Ian Saxon & the Sound
Leroy
Movement
Spinning Wheels
Brown Sugar
Buckehot
Jug Band

4AY Ayr
The Klub 1st
The Living Image 2nd
Barbas 3rd
4BC Brisbane
4CA Cairns
4CG Southport/Gold Coast
Plumbloco 1st
4GR Toowoomba

4GY Gympie
Pece 1st
4LG Longreach
Undecided 1st
4MB Maryborough
Substitute 1st
4MK Mackay
Pece 1st
4NA Numbour
Coloured Sands 1st
4RO Rockhampton
4TO Townsville
Klub 1st
4WG Warwick

South Australia 1970
Country final:
City/Metropolitan final:
SKA Adelaide
5AU Port Augusta
5RM Berri

Perth 1970
6PR Perth: Grand Final
Scarb 1st
Bakery 2nd
6TZ/CI Bunbury

Tasmania 1970:
Grand Final:
Sweaty Betty 1st
Medium Cool 2nd
Clockwork Orange Bootleg 4th
7EX Launceston
Sons of Soulivee IMM
Sweaty Betty 1st
Sons of Bacchus 2nd
Fifth Avenue 3rd

ECC
Sons of Venus
Cathedral
Trek

7HO Hobart
Sons of Bacchus 1st
Medium Cool 2nd
Clockwork Orange
Fifth Avenue

(1812 2nd in a Sydney heat July 1970!)

Northern Territory
8DN Darwin
8HA Alice Springs

1971

Grand final contestants 
Metropolitan Heats:
Hornsby:
Gunga Din 1st
Driving Wheel 2nd

Cabramatta:
Autumn 1st
Sutherland:
Factory 1st
Trench 2nd
Flake 3rd

Beacon Hills:
Harry Young & Sabbath 1st
Wildwood

Northern Territory
8DN Darwin
8HA Alice Springs

1971

Grand final contestants & placing:
Fraternity 1st
Stafford Bridge NSW country
Jeff St John and Copperwine 3rd
Bacchus TAS
October Vic country
Langford Lever Vic
Pendulum Vic
Nutmeg Qld country
Jelly Roll Big Band Qld
Impulse SA country
Barrelhouse WA
Sherbet NSW city 2nd

NSW 1971
Country final:
Stafford Bridge

City/Metropolitan final:
Jeff St John and Copperwine = 1st
Sherbet = 1st
Galadrial
Whistler’s Mother
Autumn 2nd

2LM Lismore
2LT Lithgow
2MG Mudgee
2MW Murrwillumbah
2KO Newcastle
2NZ Inverell
2PK Parkes
2QN Deniliquin
2RE Taree

2NZ Inverell
2PK Parkes
2QM Deniliquin
2RE Taree
South Australia 1971

Country final:

City/Metropolitan final:

SAU Port Augusta 1st
SKA Adelaide 2nd
5RM Berri 3rd

Perth 1971

6PR Perth 1st
6TZ/CI Bunbury 2nd

Tasmania 1971:

7EX Launceston Clockwork Orange 1st
Bacchus 2nd

7HO Hobart

Blue Jade 1st

Cathedral 2nd

Clockwork Orange 1st

Jody Juriue

Mandy 2nd

Midnight 3rd

Midnight Soul 4th

Molly Brown 5th

Rokknuckles 6th

Thunderbirds 7th

Transit 8th

Uncle Bernies Farm 9th

Northern Territory 1971

8DN Darwin 1st
8HA Alice Springs 2nd

1972

Brand final contestants & placing:

Sherbet 1st
Jeff St John 2nd
Headband 3rd

Brandy Jody 1st

Tasmania

NSW 1972

Zone finals:

Newcastle:
Orange:
Wagga:

City/Metropolitan final:

2AD Armidale
Mantra
2AY Albury
Stagg 1st
2BH Broken Hill
2BS Bathurst
Eros 2 1st
2CA Canberra
2DU Dubbo
Railroad 1st
2GN Goulburn
2GO Gosford
Kahma 1st
2GL Orange
Confederates 1st
2KA Katoomba
Nemesis 1st
2KM Kempsey
2LF Young
Rockmelon 1st
2LM Lismore
Sticky Fingers 1st
2LT Lithgow
2MG Mudgee
Krinkle Wood Green
The Belmonis 1st
2MW Murwillumbah
Rous Country Band 1st
Tumbleweed
Geoff Dutton (vocal section)
2NX Newcastle
2NZ Inverell

Victoria 1971

Country final:

City/Metropolitan final:

Broadmeadows (Urban heat 4.7.71)

Total Fire Band
Atlas
Fat Mama
Marina Shroud
Oasis
Pomple Chook
Skitsafrenic
West End
Dalfyduck
Highway
Langford Lever
The Blind Light
The Outside Inn
Terraplane
Vehicle
Life's Creation

Kew (Urban heat
Langford Lever 1st
Dalfyduck
Terraplane
Atlas

3BA Ballarat
3BO Bendigo
Parfait 1st
3CS Colac

3CV Maryborough
3GL Geelong
3HA Hamilton
Sound Investment 1st
3LK Horsham
3MA Mildura
Bazaar 1st
3NE Wangaratta
3SH Swan Hill
3SR Shepparton
3TR Sale
Bats and Noggin 1st (Gippsland
3UL Warragul
3UZ Melbourne
3YB Warrnambool
The Carousels 1st

Queensland 1971

Country final:

Jelly Roll Jug Band 1st
Gentle Art 2nd

City/Metropolitan final:

Nutmeg 1st

4AY Ayr
Peace 1st
4BC Brisbane
4CA Cairns
4GG Southport/Gold Coast
4GR Toowoomba
4LG Longreach
Seventh Son 1st
4MK Mackay
4NA Nambour
Blackwater 1st
4RO Rockhampton
The Barrens 1st
4TO Townsville
4WG Warwick
Victoria 1972
Country final:
  Amber Light
  Shelta
  Bugshot Segal
  Samantha
  Roman Empire
  Leadbelly
  Bacchus
  Effigy
  Solid State
  Nemesis

City/Metropolitan final:
  Broadmeadows Heat:
    Fat Mama
    Cleves (guest)

3BA Ballarat
  Amber Light 1st

3BO Bendigo
  Shelta 1st

3CS Colac

3CV Maryborough
  Bugshot Segal 1st

3GL Geelong
  Samantha 1st

3HA Hamilton
  Roman Empire 1st

3Lk Horsham

3MA Mildura
  Chain Reaction 1st
  Cyld 1st?

3NE Wangaratta
  Leadbelly 1st

3SH Swan Hill
  Bacchus 1st

3SR Shepparton

3TR Sale
  Effigy 1st

3UL Warragul
  Solid State 1st

3UZ Melbourne

3YB Warrnambool
  Nemesis 1st

Queensland 1972
Country final:

Rockhampton Zone Final:
  Otis 1st

City/Metropolitan final:

4AY Ayr

4BC Brisbane

4CA Cairns
  Ramat Tan 1st

4GG Southport/Gold Coast

4GR Toowoomba

4LG Longreach

4MK Mackay
  Otis/Opis 1st

4NA Nambour
  Para Nova 1st

4RO Rockhampton
  Classical Gas 1st
  Country Pie

4TO Townsville

4WG Warwick

South Australia 1972
Country final:

City/Metropolitan final:

5AU Port Augusta
  Chamelon 1st

5KA Adelaide

5RM Berri
  Nosey Parker 1st

Perth

6PR Perth

6ZCI Bunbury

Western Australia 1972

Tasmania 1972:

7EX Launceston
  Jody 1st
  5 Wheel Drive 2nd
  Bitta Sweet 3rd
  Fifth Avenue 4th
  Chimes of Freedom
  Coachmen
  Kount Five
  Hellum
  Thunderbirds
  Janus
  Lyn Thomas Section
  Oceot

7HO Hobart
  Brandy 1st
  Feast of Friends 2nd
  Ginger 3rd
  Five Wheel Drive
  Bitta Sweet
  Bronco

Northern Territory 1972

8DN Darwin
  The Inspiration

8HA Alice Springs
  Forever 1st

[This listing accompanies the booklet, Battles of the Bands, written by Terry Stacey, 1995.
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temporarily drop one of the vocalists. Still, after they'd won the contest they came back on for a victory performance with Paddy Macartney joining them as a "guest". In their case it was obviously a good choice (Normie Rowe was one of the judges) because they went on to have a number of quality hit records and members Glenn Shorrock and Terry Britten went on to greater things. The former with Axiom and Little River Band and the latter as a songwriter/producer for such artists as Tina Turner, Cliff Richard and many others. The 2nd place getters, The Loose Ends, promptly changed their name to The Other Ends and sank back into obscurity after one single release. One young band who, whilst making the Victorian finals didn't make the grand finals, were Strings Unlimited, fronted by a youthful fellow called John Farnham. All the same whatever became of other finalists, Hobart's The Trolls or Perth's Clique?

In 1967 the pace hotted up even further. Winners this year were Melbourne band, The Groop, which included Brian Cadd. They were followed by NSW Country representatives, Sydney's The Questions, fronted on vocals by Doug Parkinson. 3rd place getters were Brisbane's The Flamingoes, who immediately disappeared from sight never even releasing a record! The Flamingoes have the distinction of being the only Brisbane band, and the only band outside of Victoria, NSW & South Australia, to make the top three places in the history of the Battles. Some note of cynicism of the original concept of a quest to find fresh new bands must be recorded here since The Groop had already had one hit record under its belt the previous year with the single "The Best in Africa". Contrary to popular perception in some quarters there was never a rule that said you were unable to enter if you had charted with a hit record!

This year too an example of the passions aroused among fans occurred in the Wollongong heats. The Wanderers, a band described as "a good versatile group but getting on in years now ... better suited to club work", beat up-and-comers, Reverend Black & The Rockin' Vicars, a long haired R'n'B band, who decked out in clerical garb and had a large vocal following. It was reported that the majority of the audience, other bands, and even members of The Wanderers expected Rev Black to win.

The rule about only being able to enter one heat on the same day in their own area came in for some criticism too. It was observed that in Victoria this rule was gotten around when bands who did not win their own heat re-entered in a different place on another day. In this case the band Therez Wunz were beaten by West Side Federation in the Warrnambool heats. Therez Wunz then entered in the Hamilton heats and beat JBF & The Originals. The latter then went into the Ballarat heats and

won. They eventually became Victorian Country Grand-finalists. Still they had little hope in the grand-final. The ultimate winners, The Groop, had already had to beat such local heavy-weights as The Vibrants, The Mixtures, The Groove and The Loved Ones to get there themselves. The Loved Ones were reported as being very disappointed at not making the grand-final. They had just been voted most popular band in the Go-Set Readers Poll poll, as well as having had 2 major hit records the year before!

By 1968 the 1st prize was up to $2000 spending money to go with the return trip to the UK. The number of grand-finalists this year was up to 12. 1968 saw yet another Melbourne band, The Groove, take out the honours, followed closely by Adelaide's Masters Apprentices and thirdly by Sydney's Doug Parkinson In Focus (a reconstituted version of the previous years place getters, The Questions). Given The Groove's subsequent success, this bore out their potential, although Masters Apprentices had already had three national hit records by then. Apart from these three bands however the other nine finalists all sank without trace. That is with the exception of one member of Perth's Beat 'N Tracks. Their lead guitarist, Phil Manning, went on to become a respected blues player with Chain and in his own right. This year's grand-final was also notable in that it was the only year that the Northern Territory had its own representative, The Abstract Image, and the third and last time that the ACT/Canberra was represented in its own right. By now too, Go-Set was also eagerly reporting the success or otherwise of the previous years winners trip to the home of beatdom.

1969 seems to have been the peak year for The Battle with around 1000 bands and groups entering. This year battle was also notable in that, for the one and only time, there was a separate section for vocal groups, as well as the usual type of band. There were two sets of prizes, 1st in both being, as before, a UK trip and $2000 spending money. The new section was to allow groups that concentrated on vocals and did not accompany themselves to compete, as well as bands that focused on close harmony. It was originally planned to have a separate grand-final for each on separate days too, but in the end both grand-finals were held at Melbourne's Festival hall together. There were 12 grand-finalists in the main section and six in the vocal section.

In the main section Sydney band Doug Parkinson In Focus finally cracked it, third time lucky, and took out first place representing Melbourne. In the vocal section a previously unknown band, The Affair from Sydney, took it away. With a lead singer such as Kerrie Biddell they could hardly do otherwise. This was the only occasion a first place in the national Grand finals was won by a band fronted by
a female lead vocalist. Second place in the main section were Sydney's Aesop's Fables. Still trying, but coming in third were the Valentines from Adelaide, who had last made the grand-finals in 1967. The Valentines, a six member band, went on to have a hit or two and national fame. One of their two lead singers, Ben Scott, later achieved everlasting international rock fame and martyrdom in superstar band AC/DC. By this time nothing was said about the old maximum five members rule. Aesop's Fables returned to Sydney but only went on to limited local success. And what of other finalists such as Adelaide's Limit or Launceston's Pepper Adams? They couldn't have been as disappointed as Flying Circus who had spent a week in the bush practising their harmonies for the vocal section only to have to drop out because their lead singer got a throat infection.

In 1970 the Grand Final, for the first time, was held in Sydney at the Capitol Theatre, with a Sydney band, Flying Circus, winning. Among the judges was pop star Johnny Young. By now airline TAA had taken on sponsorship and the 1st prize now included return tickets to Los Angeles. The change of destination as well seems to mark a re-orientation of Australian rock music influences and aspirations.

This was a year of great controversy for the battle. In Melbourne the all-white Zoot, recent winners of the Go-Set readers poll were beaten in the Melbourne finals by a virtually unknown band, Nova Express. Notwithstanding this, they both went on to represent Melbourne in the Grand Final. Sydney had more than its share when in the Sydney finals, Flying Circus, desperately trying to shake off their bubble-gum image with tight US West coast harmonies and top musicianship, beat brilliant popular local band Autumn, a band virtually unknown outside of Sydney. This decision was greeted by catcalls, boos and general derision by the capacity crowd. They too both went into the grand finals. To compound the controversy Flying Circus came first in the Grand final the following week, once again beating Autumn, who came 3rd after Zoot. This provoked an even stronger reaction than the previous weeks finals. This time 3/4 of the audience had left within minutes of the winners announcement! In Victoria there was controversy too about the residential qualifications as out of eight bands who entered the Morwell heats, three were from Melbourne.

This year's battle was notable as well as both the Sydney final and the grand final were taped by Radio Station 2SM (who had taken over promotion from 2UE) using studio quality multi-track recording equipment. Given that the Sydney final alone included such luminaries as Pyramid, La-de-das, Pirana and Freshwater, not to mention the Grand-finalists themselves, these historical tapes, which still exist, will surely make an interesting live album when released eventually. Indeed Autumn's performance of the cover "Yellow River" so impressed 2SM that they regularly aired a live recording of them playing it in the contest in prime listening time. This lead to them having a hit with it in Sydney.

Meanwhile, making the Sydney finals this time were a young local band called Elm Tree, which included on vocals, John Paul Young. The Hornsbys beats in Sydney also produced the youngest band ever known to enter the battle, The Magpies. Their average age was 12, and featured a five year old Go-Go girl! Notwithstanding their cuteness value they were still beaten by The La-de-das.

Compared to 1970, 1971 was quiet and without the screaming and hysteria of previous battles. It was Melbourne's turn this year to host the Grand final. Although this year Tasmania had only one entry, South Australia for the only time had an extra entry, Impulse, representing their country areas. This left the number of finalists still at 12.

Adelaide's Fraternity, a six piece band, took it out this year. This was a departure from previous years as they were more of an alternative music band who concentrated on album material. Certainly not the pretty bubblegum pop image bands who had won it before. Go-Set commented that the battle ended with one of the most popular decisions and was based on ability, not image. Fraternity's win also gave Ben Scott his second place in the finals since he had made it with The Valentines two years before. 2nd & 3rd were taken out by two Sydney bands Sherbet, who were fronted by Darryl Braithwaite, and Jeff St John & The Copperwine, the latter well and truly a veteran of the scene by now. Both had gone to the NSW and grand finals after tying in the Sydney metropolitan final. It was rumoured that in the metropolitan final, Copperwine had scored the highest points but the organisers were afraid of the crowd's reaction if Sherbet were not declared winner. Although Jeff St John could hardly be called a new talent, this was Sherbet's big break and from then on they went from strength to strength. Their piece-de-resistance for the battle was a version of Delaney & Bonnie's "Free The People" in which their bass player swapped his electric bass for a tuba, and played the bass lines "oompa-pah" on that. This would certainly have given them bonus points for contributing something extra such as a new or unusual instrument! As is known, of course, Sherbet realised their potential and went on to a long string of hits in Australia and a number 1 hit in the UK. Other finalists such as Tasmania's Bacchus and Perth's Barrellhouse, however, went back unheralded whence they came. It was observed however that even though a Sydney band, Stafford Bridge, made the grand-finals representing NSW Country, they were good
regardless of how they got into the battle.

The last of the Battles was held in 1972. Unlike previous battles, reporting of the results in Go-Set was lacklustre and sporadic. Even the names of all the grand-finalists were not published. This was put down to petrol strikes causing postponements of heats and postal problems which caused results to dribble in. As well their were hassle with the new categories. This year heralded a change from previous battles in that entry was not confined to just bands. Two new categories were introduced. As well as the usual band section, there was now a solo vocalist section and a songwriters section, the latter itself divided into amateur and professional sections. It became more of a talent contest. Times were changing and yesterday's screaming teenbopper audiences had now become older and more serious about their music.

The grand final was held in Sydney and this was the year that Sydney's Sherbet took out the Honors, winning $3000 cash and a $3000 trip to Los Angeles. Once again they were followed, in 2nd place this time, by Jeff St John & Copperwine. Adelaide's Headband, who made the finals the previous year, took out 3rd place. Solo vocalist was won by Michael Turner (of the band Michael Turner In Session), who was promptly never heard of again and in second place the ever perennial Jeff St John, a double header for him. The songwriters section was won overall by Brian Cadd who won a trip to Tokyo and $1000 cash followed by Glenn Cardier, a singer/songwriter in the introspective mould of the day.

Go-Set was moved to comment that the standard of new bands entering was very poor, singling out only one heavy metal band, Warlock, as showing any potential. It stated there was no competition for the established bands. It is possible that the battle was seen as almost too much part of the establishment, and this coupled with some cynicism about the previous years results, may have dissuaded many of the better lesser known bands from entering. In Melbourne a promoter did what was previously the unthinkable by staging two concerts elsewhere on the same day as the Melbourne finals. These featured major alternative and heavier bands such as Matchbox, Country Radio, Murcope, Tamam Shud & Band of Talabene. The promoter was quoted as saying he regarded the Battle of the Sounds as a ticket to oblivion, and an example of the general Melbourne disinterest in it, where (he claimed) no professional name bands had been entering for the past few years.

In a prophetically titled article, "When de battle is over", Go-Set printed what was almost an obituary when it stated that their needed to be a rethink of the battle for next year if there was to be one. Judging musicians and their talents was not like judging a beauty contest.

Maybe the industry and public perception of the battle, towards the end, can be gauged somewhat by names of important bands who didn't enter or were unplaced. Bands such as Daddy Cool, Company Caine, Tamam Shud, Blackfeather, Khavas Jute, Coloured Balls, Healing Force, Spectrum and Tully. Any idealism at the battles beginnings was lost in the commercialism and clashes of egos that are inevitably part of the entertainment industry.

The rock music industry has always had its razamataz King of Pop ARIA type awards where the nominators and winners are usually nominated and/or voted in by their peers. But the battle had a more democratic appeal. Anyone could enter and, by the gauge of audience reaction, everyone had a chance to have their say. Some cynically saw the battle as already decided, and just a way for already well known top bands to gain prestige and get one over their rivals in a formal sort of situation. However there were some genuine discoveries along the way even if they didn't make the grand finals or the local finals. The battle gave many a band that much needed exposure to a wider audience. This was in a time, particularly in the early days, when major record companies and radio stations ruled the roost almost completely and there was very little in the way of independent record releases or exposure for unknown bands to a wider audience. Not withstanding any of this, it cannot detract from the fact that attaining first place was a highly coveted accomplishment. Bands who reached that position represented the highest level of musicianship, vocal ability and presentation of their day. Bands who won or made the finals were highly respected. Even today it is a source of pride among musicians of that era to say that they were in the finals or won their local heat.