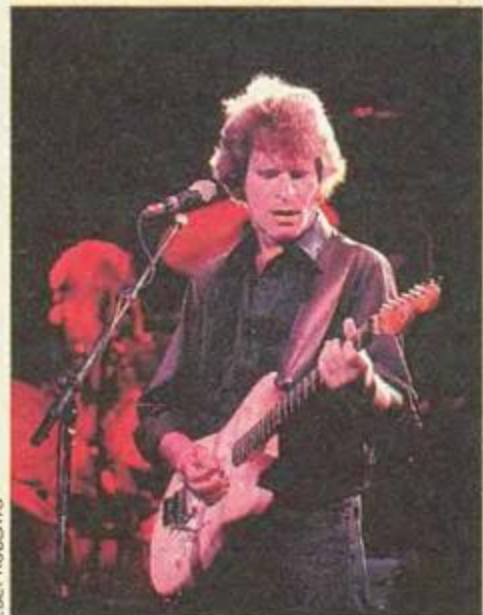




EBET ROBERTS



CHRIS CLIFFORD / VISAGES



EBET ROBERTS



ROSS MARINO



NEAL PRESTON / CAMERA 5

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Veteran rockers hit the road in '86. Elton John, who had threatened to retire from the stage in 1984, returned to the boards in full regalia for one of this year's most successful tours. With David Lee Roth out and Sammy Hagar in, Van Halen went in for the kill during its crunching summer tour. The boys reeled off hours of party rock as loyalists waved banners that read, "David Who?" Roth took up the challenge with his show — rocking hard through his own album and a few VH burners. For his latest tour, Elvis Costello varied his show nightly, playing some nights with the Attractions, others with the Confederates (a group of veteran session players), doing sets alone and with special guests. Despite dancing girls and the Spectacular Spinning Songbook, Elvis still found time onstage to rag on critics whose reviews he didn't like. Bruce Springsteen returned to the stage for the Bridge benefit, organized by Neil Young's wife, Pegi, to raise funds for the Bridge School for handicapped students. Springsteen used the acoustic format of the show as the occasion for some dramatic musical revision, rewiping up no-frills versions of "Born in the U.S.A.," "Mansion on the Hill," and Elvis Presley's "Follow That Dream," among other tunes. The Boss's opening acts weren't too shabby, either: Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, Don Henley, Tom Petty, Nils Lofgren and Robin Williams. Even though Bob Dylan was playing with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, the best band he's had since the Band, this summer's True Confessions Tour seemed offhand, even haphazard. On his first tour in fourteen years, John Fogerty continued his feud with his old label: nary a Creedence song was played. As good as the shows were, a lot of fans still wished he'd bury the hatchet.

Bob Dylan and Tom Petty (top); Elvis Costello, a.k.a. Napoleon Dynamite (center, left); John Fogerty (center); Elton John (center, right); Stephen Stills, Graham Nash, David Crosby, Bruce Springsteen, Neil Young and Nils Lofgren (bottom, from left)