

MY THREE THRILLING DAYS WITH DAVID AND IT WAS WORTH EVERY BLISTER!

HOW would you like to meet David Cassidy? (Need we ask!)

For most of us, meeting David is just something to think about when we're alone with our dreams. But, for one "Jackie" reader, 1974 was the year her dream came true!

Sixteen-year-old Nicole Mutch was one of three lucky girls who won a trip to Los Angeles to meet David as first prize in a competition which involved doing a 12-mile sponsored walk around London.

Nicole says she was so determined to win that competition that she spent days going round from door to door in her home town of Ruislip in Middlesex, trying to persuade people to sponsor her on her walk.

And her tactics worked because, altogether, she managed to get 1000 sponsors, which meant that not only did she win her prize, but she also earned £221 to aid people suffering from muscular dystrophy.

"I was absolutely thrilled when I heard I'd won," Nicole told me. "I've been a fan of David's for over three and a half years, and I have all his records. My bedroom's completely covered with pictures of him - at the last count I had 5640 different photos of him!"

"I was keen to meet him because I wanted to find out what he's really like. He's always made out to be so perfect, such a goody-goody and I wanted to find out if that was true or not. Now I know he isn't like that at all!"

Along with the two other prize-winners Paula Howe, who comes from Barry in Glamorgan, and Nicky Price from Iwer Heath in Buckinghamshire Nicole was flown over to Hollywood, where the girls stayed in a hotel called the Chancellor, on Wiltshire Boulevard in Los Angeles.

The day after they arrived, the girls spent the morning being interviewed for the local radio station, and then, in the afternoon, they were taken on to the set of "The Partridge Family" where David was busy rehearsing for his last series with the show.

"When we got there, he was busily

learning his lines for the next scene, so we waited till he was finished, and he came over to see us.

"At first, he seemed even more nervous than we were! He said, 'Hi,' and then paused, as though he didn't know quite what to expect - but after a few moments he was chatting to us as though we'd known him for years.

"At that time, I wasn't sure if I'd have the chance to see him again, so I gave him a toy dog I'd brought over from England as a present for him. He seemed pleased with it!"

Next morning, Nicole went to Disneyland for the day.

"It was fantastic! There's a place called 'The Haunted House' which is like a really scary ghost train. At one stage a ghost gets into the car with you and you can feel its clammy hand touching yours!"

Then it was back to their hotel for dinner, before going to bed and lying awake, looking forward to the next day!

"Next morning, we went to the head offices of David's record company, and met everyone there," said Nicole. "And in the afternoon, we were allowed to watch David at work in the recording studio!"

"He took time off to show us all round the studio himself, and he explained how he records songs, how the different instruments are recorded on separate tracks, and how the final masters are produced."

But the three girls unanimously agreed that the next day - the last of their trip - was the best one of all!

"His record company laid on a chauffeur-driven Cadillac for us," Nicole told me. "We were taken on a guided tour of all the film stars' homes in the Hollywood hills, and we visited David's manager, Ruth Aarons, at her home - and, best of all, we went to David's house,

where he showed us round!"

"When we first went up to the house, we had to ask for him by name before the electronic gates would open. Because of the number of people who try the gates, he has special code names which he changes every week. When we went, we had to ask for William A. Bong! (Billabong, get it?)

"The house has about eleven rooms, and is E-shaped with a guest house at the back, where his mother sometimes stays. In the lounge there was a Union Jack painted on one wall, and I asked him why - and David said it had been there when he moved in so he had left it there.

"His bedroom is huge, and he also uses it as a studio - as well as his bed he has a large grand piano in there, four guitars, and a set of drums. It has built-in cupboards, mustard carpets and white curtains.

"His lounge is furnished very plainly with a striped suite, and a white-painted dining-room table and black chairs, with fluorescent lights, and all his gold discs, twelve of them, were framed and hanging in the hall.

"He had two bathrooms, both done out in blue and I had the impression that he seems to like cleanliness, but he's not too tidy! There are shoes and T-shirts lying around everywhere.

"He showed me what he calls his 'shirt collection' over 400 different T-shirts, stacked away in cupboards in a separate room - and he introduced me to his dogs, Bullseye, an English setter, Sam, who's a hairy mongrel, and his cat, poor little Boots, who was sitting on a cushion with a paw bandaged, looking very sorry for himself.

"David told us he'd wrenched a claw away from his foot while climbing a tree that morning, and that he'd had to take him to the vet to have his foot bandaged.

"Then we sat in the lounge for a while, and he told us about the house he wanted to build in Hawaii. He said he really wanted to live there, because it was the one place where he could get away from everything. He said he liked the people of Hawaii very much, because they always left him alone.

"And when he noticed I had on platform boots, he laughed and said he didn't know how I could wear them, because he always fell over when he wore them!

"That's one of the nicest things about him - he's a natural joker. When I first met him I said, 'How's your dog?' and he put out his hand at about waist height and said, 'About that high!'"

All too soon, it was time for the girls to go - but not before Nicole got David to autograph two LPs she'd been given by his record company.

So, what did she think of him?

"He's lovely," she said. "He was very kind to us. He struck me as a very honest person, and he's very good-looking - but he likes to think of himself as just an ordinary guy.

"In fact, he was just as nice as I'd expected!"

That's me. Can you tell I'm shaking?

